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Rector's Ramblings

As we gather to celebrate the Fourth Sunday of Advent, we will hear of the Angel's message to St. Joseph.

The Angel brings comfort to Joseph in proclaiming the child borne by Our Lady is of God, not of sin. He brings an obligation in directing Joseph to fulfill his betrothal vows. He brings challenge by announcing that this same Holy Child, who shall be named Jesus, a singular child born for a singular purpose: to save his people from their sins.

I cannot imagine Joseph's stress, or thoughts, or feelings, on that night of the Angel's visit, but I am thankful for his obedience, love, and devotion to Our Lord.

As we approach Christmas, we will be beset by various stresses, thoughts and feelings. Yet, in eternity, none of those things matter. What matters for us are the same things that Joseph displays: obedience, love, and devotion.

Blessings,

Dave+
309-660-8515

Ministry Links

St. Matthew's Webpage
The Episcopal Diocese of
Springfield
Rector's Blog

The Good News

December 16, 2016



Christmas Eve & Day Schedule

Since this is a year when Christmas and the Lord's Day coincide, it makes planning a bit difficult. Do we keep a regular Christmas Eve schedule, or do we keep a regular Sunday Schedule? The only easy answer is that Christmas is a major feast day and should be celebrated on the day of the feast, in addition to any vigil/evening celebrations.

In planning, we have decided to treat the Christmas feast like Easter Day, with a liturgy on the Eve and a regular schedule of Sunday liturgies.

Candlelight Christmas Eve will be celebrated at 10:30. Sunday will have both a 7:30 Rite I liturgy, and a 10AM Rite II sung liturgy with carols. Children are invited to bring any gifts they wish to be blessed to the 10AM liturgy.

We pray you are experiencing a blessed Advent as we prepare for His arrival.

Parish Education

Continues meeting on 12/21.

Funeral Planning

Fr. Dave is holding a Funeral Planning Session, Sunday December 18th, following the 10 AM Service.

Evensong.

Evensong will be celebrated at 5:30PM on Sundays during Advent. This is a time for meditation and prayer. Coffee and conversation will follow, for those interested.

Coffee Hour

Here's a New Year's Resolution to benefit St. Matthew's: " I resolve to host Coffee Hour at least once during 2017. " A new Coffee Hour schedule will be coming out in February, and we'd like to see your name on the list. You need not go into debt to serve light snacks and keep the coffee brewing. Please pray about it, ask us questions, and let us know if you'll join us.

Thank you for considering this important ministry. Ann Sokan, 664-1639, and Linda Thomas, 242-7160.

Morning Prayer - Standard Schedule

Morning Prayer is offered at 7AM on Monday and Tuesday, 8:30 AM Wednesday and Friday, and at 7:30 AM on Thursday. The fourth Thursday at 7:30 AM is often Holy Eucharist. Fr. Dave will not be available for Holy Eucharist on 12/22, so this will be a regular Morning Prayer.

Intercessory Prayer - Fall Schedule

Intercessory Prayer is offered at 8 p.m. on Monday, and on Thursday at 12:15.

Guild of the Holy Rosary

Meets immediately after the 10:00 service on Sunday morning and Wednesdays at 5:30pm.

Outreach Opportunities

Help keep someone warm this coming winter by donating your discarded but gently used coat to the **Salvation Army's annual coat drive**. It's easy - just place the coat(s) and any used gloves, mittens and hats in decent condition into the big white box in the hallway across from Pat's office. The outreach committee will deliver them to the Army's west Washington St. headquarters.

Thank you for helping those in need.

Mitten Trees

It is tradition at St. Matthew's during the Advent and Christmas seasons to collect new mittens, gloves, hats and scarves for children in need. Please help decorate the "mitten trees" located in the narthex and in the hallway outside the parish hall.

January & February Items of the Month

During the cold winter months of January & February 2017, the Outreach Committee will be collecting items for the Salvation Army, with emphasis on products for its local shelter. The shelter houses and feeds men, women, and children in need of a warm place to sleep and a good breakfast and dinner.

You can help by filling the outreach baskets with such items as: 1.

Cleaning Products: laundry detergent, dish detergent, bathroom cleanser, bleach; Paper & Plastic Products: toilet paper, napkins, 40-45-gallon garbage bags, latex gloves; Personal Hygiene Products: razors, shampoo, deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste, foot powder, lotion; Miscellaneous Products: dish towels, face towels, coffee, gift cards from Sam's Club (for general operation of the shelter).

We will continue to collect gently used coats and other cold-weather garments for the Salvation Army through January 2017. If Santa brought you a new coat for Christmas, bring your old one to church and place it in the big white box opposite Pat's office.

Many, MANY thanks for your marvelous generosity to those in need in our community. The Outreach Committee

Parish Schedule for the week of December 18

Coffee Hour follows worship, in the Parish Hall

Sunday-11:00 a.m.-Guild of the Holy Rosary

Sunday-5:30 p.m.-Advent Evensong

Monday-7:00 a.m.-Morning Prayer

Monday-8:00 p.m.-Intercessory Prayer

Tuesday-7:00 a.m.-Morning Prayer

Wednesday-8:30 a.m.-Morning Prayer

Wednesday-5:30 p.m.-Guild of the Holy Rosary

Wednesday-5:30 p.m.-pot-luck supper

Wednesday-6:00 p.m.-Catechesis of the Good Shepherd &
Adult Bible Study

Thursday-7:30 a.m.-Morning Prayer & Breakfast out

Friday-7:00 a.m.-Morning Prayer

Saturday-10:30 p.m.-Christmas Eve Mass

Office Hours: Monday - Friday: Mornings, 8:00 a.m.- noon

If you have anything you would like added to the schedule or announcements in the bulletin and news letter please send an email reply to the newsletter, or call the office.

Good News Daily

This Week's Good News Daily is [here](#).

Readings & Music for December 18, 2016

Hymns: #66, #262, #56, #249

Old Testament

Isaiah 7:10-16

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted."

Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18

Qui regis Israel

1 Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; *
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

2 In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, *
stir up your strength and come to help us.

3 Restore us, O God of hosts; *

show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

4 O Lord God of hosts, *

how long will you be angered

despite the prayers of your people?

5 You have fed them with the bread of tears; *

you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

6 You have made us the derision of our neighbors, *

and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

7 Restore us, O God of hosts; *

show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

16 Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, *

the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.

17 And so will we never turn away from you; *

give us life, that we may call upon your Name.

18 Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; *

show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

The Epistle

Romans 1:1-7

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Gospel

Matthew 1:18-25

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

Ministry Assignments for December 18 & 24 & 25

18-December

7:30

Greeters: Doug & Dede Dyson

Lector: Mark Gibson

E.M.: Diane Gardner

10:00

Acolytes: Jack White & Nolan White

Thurifer: Sarah Halt

Crucifer: Brent Baughan

Lector: Chrissy Stoffer

E.M.: SB Carter

Monday Counter: Roy Laws

Coffee Hour: Martha Lakin & Linda Stawick

24-December

10:30 p.m.

Acolytes: Alley Roberson & SB Carter

Crucifer: Alex Davingman

Lector: John Stoffer

E.M.: Jack Pitts

Monday Counter: Roy Laws

25-December

7:30

Greeters: Ray Durham

Lector: Liz Gordon

E.M.: Bill Johns

10:00

Acolytes: Christian Pitts & Liam Halt

Thurifer: Collin Bennett

Crucifer: Sarah Halt

Lector: John Stoffer

E.M.: Bill Pitts

Monday Counter: Gary Ploense

Coffee Hour:

Birthdays & Anniversaries December 18 - 24

Birthdays

John Larson

Eric Owens

Jack White

Holly Dyson

Collect for December 18th

We beseech thee, Almighty God, to purify our consciences by thy daily visitation, that when thy Son our Lord cometh he may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Contact Information

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

