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This Week's Readings

Rector's Ramblings

I hope you had a very happy Thanksgiving surrounded by friends and family. Now, there are just 31 shopping days left until Christmas and I suppose it time to announce our schedule of services for that weekend. It has been difficult to create a schedule due to the way the calendar falls this year.

Prepare for Rant--Rant on.

This year Christmas falls on Monday, which means that Christmas Eve is on Sunday. That Sunday, in the Liturgical Calendar, is IV Advent. As Episcopalians we are a calendar people, and while there are some churches not in our tradition who will celebrate Christmas "Eve" on Sunday morning, we cannot. We will celebrate IV Advent on Sunday morning and hear the incredibly important Gospel of the Annunciation.

Which brings me to my struggle every year, what to do about Christmas, especially knowing that no matter the choices made, someone(s) will be unhappy? Of course, that most likely will be me. :)

Why? Because liturgically there is no "Christmas Eve". There is provision for an early Mass on Christmas, but there are no liturgical propers (readings, collects, etc.) for Christmas Eve like there is for Easter and Pentecost. In short, there is no "Vigil" appointed for Christmas. The feast is expected to be celebrated on Christmas Day. It is our cultural traditions that push it back earlier and earlier.

The Good News

November 22, 2017



Women's & Men's Breakfast

There will be no breakfast in December.

Advent Study

Adult Formation during Advent will focus on reading St. Maximus' the Confessor's "Four Hundred Chapters on Love/Charity".

This is not a long book, in the time of Maximus a "chapter" was roughly equivalent to what we might call "sound bites".

Since Advent provides us less Wednesdays this year, to complete this walk through the chapters together, we will meet on 12/6, 12/13, 12/27 and 1/3.

Copies of the chapters will be made available, but if you wish to purchase a copy they can be found at [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com).

Midwest Food Bank

St. Matthew's will be volunteering at Midwest Food Bank on Wednesday, December 20.

We will work from 6-8PM, so mark your calendars for this evening of service and community building. All ages are welcome to help.

Theology Uncorked

A new ministry of theological discussion for young adults will meet again on 10 December immediately following Evensong. Invite your friends and anyone who might be interested.

Now, please do not misunderstand, I am thrilled with family gatherings and celebrations and encourage these whole heartedly. I do wonder whether our religious observance (Christmas Eucharist) should be scheduled around family festivities, or whether our gift giving and feasting should be scheduled around Christmas Eucharist? For me and my house the latter has been the tradition for the last 24 years.

Of course, the difference between a liturgist and a Godfather is that you can negotiate with a Godfather! :)

OK. Rant off.

So what about our Christmas schedule?

12/24
7:30AM Celebration of IV Advent.

4:30PM Evensong and Holy Eucharist for the Feast of Christmas.

10:30PM Candlelight Christ Mass. No hymn sing this year, we begin promptly at 10:30.

Christmas Day
9AM Rite I Mass

In Christ's love,

Dave Halt, Rector
309-660-8515

Ministry Links

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

McLean County Parish News

Fr. Halt will be meeting with the Mission Leadership Team of Christ the King on Tuesday 11/28.

Mission Leadership Team

St. Matthew's MLT will meet at 7PM on 11/27 in the Parish Hall. All are welcome to attend the meeting.

The Daily Devotional Reading

is available by clicking of the link below:

[Good News Daily](#)

Serving Schedule

26-November

7:30

Greeters: Ray Durham
Lector: Mona Johnstone
E.M.: Chris Bennett

10:00

Acolyte: SB Carter
Thurifer: Sarah Halt
Crucifer: Brad Bauman
Lector: Susan Long
E.M.: SB Carter
Monday Counter: Gary Ploense
Coffee Hour: Phyllis & Dave Halt

2-December

7:30

Greeter: Doug & Dede Dyson
Lector: Chris Bennett
E.M.: Bill Johns

10:00

Acolyte:
Lector: Karyn Smith
E.M.: Emily Lavikoff
Monday Counter: Pam Laws
Coffee Hour: Smith/Levine family, Char Wald, Carole Cox

Outreach Opportunities

ITEMS-OF-THE-MONTH

Why the big white box in the hallway across from the office?
That's where we're asking you to place clean, gently used coats you

no longer wear. We will deliver them to The Salvation Army's local headquarters for distribution to needy people this fall and winter. We'll also collect other gently used winter wear (gloves, hats, scarves). THANK YOU! The Outreach Committee

St. Matthew's Schedule for the week of November 26th

Coffee Hour follows 10:00 a.m. worship in the Parish hall

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

Sunday-5:30 p.m.-Evensong

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

Monday-5:30 p.m.-Brownies in lower level

Monday-7:00 p.m.-MLT meeting in Parish Hall

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

Tuesday-10:00 a.m.-Quilters

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

Wednesday-5:30 p.m.-Light supper for study participants

Wednesday-6:00 p.m.- Adult formation & CGS

Thursday-7:30 a.m.-Holy Eucharist and breakfast

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

Saturday-10:00 a.m.-Lew Garrison visitation & Requiem Mass

Office Hours: Monday through Friday: 9:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m.

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.

Readings & Music for November 26, 2017

Old Testament

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24

Thus says the Lord God: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land. I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord God. I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice.

Therefore, thus says the Lord God to them: I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. Because you pushed with flank and shoulder, and butted at all the weak animals with your horns until you scattered them far and wide, I will save my flock, and they shall no longer be ravaged; and I will judge between sheep and sheep.

I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. And I, the Lord, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them; I, the Lord, have spoken.

Psalm 95:1-7a

Venite, exultemus

1 Come, let us sing to the Lord; *

let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.

2 Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving *
and raise a loud shout to him with psalms.

3 For the Lord is a great God, *
and a great King above all gods.

4 In his hand are the caverns of the earth, *
and the heights of the hills are his also.

5 The sea is his, for he made it, *
and his hands have molded the dry land.

6 Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee, *
and kneel before the Lord our Maker.

7 For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.

The Epistle

Ephesians 1:15-23

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

The Gospel

Matthew 25:31-46

Jesus said, "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?' Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Birthdays & Anniversaries November 26 - December 1
Anniversaries

Birthdays
Jack Pitts

Collect for Sunday, November 26th

Almighty and everlasting God, whose will it is to restore all things in thy well-beloved Son, the King of kings and Lord of lords: Mercifully grant that the peoples of the earth, divided and enslaved by sin, may be freed and brought together under his most gracious rule; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Contact Information

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

