

Contents

This Week's Readings

Rector's Ramblings

Advent is a season of preparation and hope. It is a time where we prepare for the yearly celebration of the birth of Christ and a time of preparation for His return. In this column, then, will appear short texts from writers far more adept than I, and who have delved into the great mystery of the Incarnation.

"Once again, a merely human king does not let the lands he has colonized pass to others to serve them, nor go over to other men; but he warns them by letters, and often sends to them by friends, or if need be, he comes in person to rebuke in the last resort by his presence, only that they may not serve others and his own work be spent for nought. Shall not God much more spare His own creatures, that they be not led astray from Him and serve things of nought? Especially since such going astray proves the cause of their ruin and undoing, and since it was unfitting that they should perish which had once been partakers of God's image. What then was God to do? or what was to be done save the renewing of that which was in God's image, so that by it men might once more be able to know Him? But how could this have come to pass save by the presence of the very Image of God, our Lord Jesus Christ? For by men's means it was impossible, since they are but made after an image; nor by angels either, for not even they are (God's) images. Whence the Word of God came in His own person, that, as He was the Image of the Father, he might be able to create afresh the man after the image. But again, it could not else have taken place had not

The Good News

December 15, 2017



Advent Study (No formation meeting this week)

Instead of a Formation Evening the Wednesday, we will be heading to Midwest Food Bank for a night of service starting at 6PM. All ages are invited.

We will resume formation on 12/27.

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.

Decorating for Christmas

The Altar Guild invites anyone interested in helping, to gather immediately after 2nd worship on Sunday (17th) There are trees to set up and all materials are provided and ready. It won't take long if several friends work together. Thanks!

Quilters News

A major part of the fellowship and activity of our quilters group is to gather on Tuesdays and cut, construct, sew, and tie baby blankets. We always seem to find a need for the blankets that we make without having a real plan when we start.

We have just had the opportunity to participate in the annual "Stuff the Bus" campaign. This is at least the 10th year that we have been part of this wonderful program. This year we were able to contribute twelve (12) receiving blankets and thirteen (13) baby quilts. The bus Elves are always very

death and corruption been done away. Whence He took, in natural fitness, a mortal body, that while death might in it be once for all done away, men made after His Image might once more be renewed. None other then was sufficient for this need, save the Image of the Father."--St. Athanasius of Alexandria, "On the Incarnation", 13.5-9.

In Christ's love,

Dave Halt, Rector
309-660-8515

Ministry Links

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

excited to get these hand made items.

It is amazing how the flannel for the receiving blankets shows up just when we need it. It is like magic, as we run out of flannel, new piles just appear in the Quilter's storage room. And it is always perfectly timed.... THANK YOU Flannel Fairies..

If you would like to join the Quilters group or just see them in action come Tuesday mornings at 10 AM in Parish hall. They are taking a holiday break for two weeks and will begin again on Tuesday, January 9th.

Fourth Sunday of Advent - Christmas Worship Schedule

12/24

7:30AM Celebration of IV Advent. (Rite I - no music)

NOTE: THERE IS NO 10AM SERVICE SCHEDULED ON 12/24.

4:30PM Evensong and Holy Eucharist for the Feast of Christmas.(hymns and carols are in the service)

10:30PM Candlelight Christ Mass. There will be no pre-service carol sing this year. The sung Mass will include hymns and will begin promptly at 10:30.

Christmas Day

9AM Rite I Mass (no music)

Theology Uncorked

THIS SUNDAY! 6PM.

A new ministry of theological discussion for young adults will meet again on 17 December immediately following Evensong. Invite your friends and anyone who might be interested.

Time to Update the Directory

In early 2018, we need to publish a new Congregational Directory, and so it is time to gather updates and new information. We will leave 1 copy of the old directory out for you to examine - if your information is incomplete, inaccurate, or missing we ask that you fill out the reporting sheets provided. If you have a photo (.img format) to include, send it to the Office (office@stmattsblm.org) and if you want to have a photo taken at no charge, see Gary Ploense.

The Daily Devotional Reading

is available by clicking of the link below:

[Good News Daily](#)

Serving Schedule

17-December

7:30

Greeter: Doug & Dede Dyson

Lector: Mark Gibson

E.M.: Bill Johns

10:00

Acolyte: Alley Roberson

Crucifer: Brad Bauman

Lector: John Stoffer

E.M.: Emily Lavikoff & Shelley Brenneman Carter

Monday Counter: Susan Clark

Coffee Hour: Martha Lakin & Linda Stawick

24-December

7:30 AM

Greeter: Ray Durham

Lector: Liz Gordon

E.M.: Chris Bennett

NO 10:00 AM and No Coffee Hour

4:30 PM Evensong with Holy Eucharist

Acolyte: Christian Pitts

Crucifer: Brad Bauman

Lector: Volunteer Needed

E.M.: Volunteer Needed

10:30 PM Christmas

Acolyte: Alley Roberson & Brad Bauman

Crucifer: Brad Bauman

Lector: Volunteer Needed

E.M: Volunteer Needed

Tuesday Counter: SB Carter

Annual Meeting

In accordance with the canons Sunday, January 21st, 2018 the Eucharistic Community of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church will hold it's Annual Meeting. That day we will have only one morning worship service at 9:30 a.m. Following worship, all are invited to meet for a simple Coffee Hour - hosted by the current MLT and the meeting.

Annual meeting includes presentation of the 2018 Budget, Election of 3 MLT (Mission Leadership Team) members and one lay

delegate to Synod, along with distribution for the annual Book of Reports.

Jim Cooper and Gary Ploense have announced their intention to run for MLT, and that means there is still one open position. Anyone interested in running, contact Wardens Shelley Brenneman Carter or Roy Laws for more information AND please provide a short biography to the office by January 7th, to be printed for congregational preparation. All annual reports must be printed in the official book of reports, so please provide your reports to the office (office@stmattsblm.org) by no later than January 7.

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

MITTEN TREES

It is an annual tradition at St. Matthew's that Christmas trees be trimmed with hats, scarves, gloves and mittens for children in need in the community. "Mitten Trees" have been placed in the Narthex and hallway outside the Parish Hall. Please help decorate them with store bought or handmade items during Advent and through the season of Christmas.

St. Matthew's Schedule for the week of December 17th

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

Sunday-after worship - decorate sanctuary

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

Sunday-5:30 p.m.-Evensong

Sunday-6:00 p.m. -Theology Uncorked

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

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

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

Wednesday-6:00 p.m.-Volunteering at Mid-west Food Bank

Thursday-7:30 a.m.-Morning Prayer and breakfast

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

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 for December 17, 201

Old Testament

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
to provide for those who mourn in Zion-
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.
They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.
For I the Lord love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge
that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed.
I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

Canticle 15

The Song of Mary Magnificat Luke 1:46-55
My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; *
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed: *
the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his
Name.
He has mercy on those who fear him *
in every generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm, *
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, *
and has lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things, *
and the rich he has sent away empty.
He has come to the help of his servant Israel, *
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
The promise he made to our fathers, *
to Abraham and his children for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

The Epistle

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

The Gospel

John 1:6-8,19-28

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

Birthdays & Anniversaries December 17 - 23

Anniversaries

Birthdays

Jack White

Holly Dyson

Collect for the third Sunday of Advent, December 17th

Stir up thy power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let thy bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

Contact Information

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

