

Contents

This Week's Readings

Rector's Ramblings

It is our prayer that you enjoy a blessed Feast of the Nativity this week. May your travels be blessed with safety. May your worship be filled with joy and mystery. May your homes be filled with love, laughter, and the light of Christ whose advent we celebrate.

As we spend the next several days preparing for the Feast of the Nativity celebrations, we offer you these words upon which to meditate.

Theodore Abu Qurrah (9th Century)

"The eternal Son, who was begotten of the Father before the ages, who shares the Father's essence and is his equal, in his mercy came down from heaven to Adam's seed and took up residence in the womb of the Virgin Mary, who had been purified through the Holy Spirit. He took from her a body, that he fashioned for himself, along with a mind and a soul, and became a human being from the Holy Spirit and the pure Virgin. He went forth into the world and allowed himself to experience the punishment that each of us merited because of our sins, namely, being beaten, being humiliated, being crucified, and experiencing death. If he had not become incarnate, there would have been no way for him to experience such pains, for in his divine essence he is neither seen nor touched, nor is he affected by suffering, pain, or harm. By becoming incarnate, however, he made it possible for himself to experience such suffering by exposing his body to it. His back

The Good News

December 21, 2018



End of Year Contributions

Any donations, gifts, pledges you wish to have recorded on your 2018 giving statements should be turned into the office by Sunday, December 30.

Christmas Schedule

In the interest of maximizing opportunities for folks across our membership spectrum to attend Christmas Services our calendar is as follows.

December 24th

12:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Day Eucharist (with hymns)

9:00 p.m. Candlelight Eucharist

December 25th

9:00 a.m. Christmas Day Rite I Eucharist.

Holy Days after Christmas

Services will be held on the following days:

St. Stephen (12/26) at noon.

St. John the Apostle (12/27) at 7:30 AM.

The Holy Innocents (12/28) at noon.

Holy Name (1/1) at noon.

First Sunday After Christmas

We are seeking input for Hymns on 12/30. Instead of doing a call out we are asking that you communicate your favorite Christmas Hymns to Fr. Dave before 12/28. You can do so through email.

he allowed to be beaten by w hips, his head to be struck, his face to be spat upon, his hands and his feet to be nailed, his side to be pierced by a lance. He truly underwent these sufferings in his body, although none of them reached through to his divine nature. It is thus that he accomplished our salvation." (On Our Salvation B86, originally written in Arabic).

Isaac of Ninevah (7th Century)
"The Word Who became man clothed Himself in it, and therewith He spoke to us in our body. Every man who has been clothed with it (humility) has truly been made like unto Him Who came down from His own exaltedness, and hid the splendor of His majesty, and concealed His glory with humility, lest creation should be utterly consumed by the contemplation of Him. Creation could not look upon Him unless He took a part of it to Himself, and conversed with it thus; nor could it hear the words of His mouth face to face....But now, when He has poured out His grace upon the world, through His own Coming, He has descended not in an earthquake, not in a fire, not in a terrible and might sound, but 'like rain upon a fleece, and like rain-drops that fall upon the earth' softly, and He was seen conversing with us after another fashion. This came to pass when, as though in a treasury, He concealed His majesty with the veil of His flesh, and among us spoke with us in that [body] which His own bidding wrought from Him out of the womb of the Virgin, even Mary the Theotokos. (Homily 77, originally written in Syriac).

May the Son of Righteousness bless you always,

Fr. Dave, Amy, Sarah, and Liam
309-660-8515

Epiphany Celebration

We will hold an Epiphany Celebration Evensong at 5:30PM on January 6 at the Funk's Grove Chapel. All are invited to attend.

After the Evensong we will travel the short distance to the Nature Center to burn the Christmas greenery (the large wreaths) used in the Sanctuary. This is an old tradition and is appropriate for disposing of what has been blessed by holy use for the beauty of our worship. You are also invited to bring small greens to add to the fire. We will have hot beverages and treats.

Devotionals

If you are not using a devotional, Advent is a good time to begin. Here are a couple that are easy to receive and well worth the read.

1. "The Good News Daily" which is included in this newsletter and is produced by the Bible Fellowship. Our publication also includes the weekly prayer list.*
2. "The Living Church" offers a daily devotional delivered to your inbox each morning. These are written by lay and ordained members of The Episcopal Church (several members of our Diocese, including our Rector, write for this ministry). If interested you may sign up [here](#).

*If you would like to place someone on the prayer list, or have not updated your request recently, please email Pat at [office\(at\)stmattsblm.org](mailto:office(at)stmattsblm.org).

Outreach Opportunities

Warm Clothing

As the weather cools, The Outreach Committee is again urging you to think about the need for warm coats, hats, gloves, and scarves in our community. Please bring your gently used coats, etc., to church and place them in the big white box in the hallway across from the office. The Committee will take them to The Salvation Army, which will distribute them to the needy through January 16, 2019. Thank you for helping us keep people warm.

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 int the community. "Mitten Trees" have been placed in the Narthex and hallway out side the Parish Hall. Please help decorate them with store bought or handmade items during

Advent and through the season of Christmas.

Ministry Links

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

Thanks

Many thanks to everyone who helped make the fall Book/DVD/Bake Sale another success. More than \$1100 was raised for outreach needs in the community and beyond. The Outreach Committee thinks this was the best bake sale ever.

Advent Evensong

Evensong is offered each Sunday at 5:30PM. This is a service of scripture readings and reflective music. All are invited to this restful service in the midst of a busy Advent.

The Daily Devotional Reading

is available by clicking of the link below:

[Good News Daily](#)

Worship Serving Schedule

23-December

7:30

Greeter: Ray Durham

Lector: Liz Gordon

E.M.: Chris Bennett

10:00

Acolyte: Christian Pitts

Crucifer: Brad Bauman

Lector: John Stoffer

E.M.: Jack Pitts

Monday Counter: Gary McGinnis

Coffee Hour: Linda Thomas & Ann Sokan

30-December

7:30

Greeter: Doug & Dede Dyson

Lector: Kathryn Morris

E.M.: Bill Johns

9:30

Acolyte: Liam Halt

Crucifer: Brad Bauman

Lector: Jim Cooper

E.M.: Sarah Halt & Bob Kohlhasse

Monday Counter: Susan Clark

Coffee Hour: Valerie & Rex Schaeffer

St. Matthew's Weekly Activities as of December 23rd

Coffee Hour follows 10:00 worship in the Parish Hall

Sunday-7:30 a.m.-Rite I

10:00 a.m.-Rite II

10:45 a.m.-Sunday School

11:00 a.m.-Rosary

1:00 p.m.-Green Scouts

5:30 p.m.-Evensong

Monday-12:30 p.m.-Christmas Eve Day Eucharist (with hymns)

9:00 p.m.-Candlelight Eucharist

Tuesday-9:00 a.m.-Christmas Day Rite I Eucharist

Wednesday-noon-Feast of St. Stephen

Thursday-7:30 a.m.-Feast of St. John the Apostle

Office Hours: **Wednesday through Friday** 9:00 a.m. to 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 23, 2018

Hymns: #54, #437, #56, #265

Old Testament

Micah 5:2-5a

You, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
who are one of the little clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to rule in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,
from ancient days.

Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labor has brought forth;
then the rest of his kindred shall return
to the people of Israel.

And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of
the Lord,

in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.

And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth;

and he shall be the one of peace.

The ResponseCanticle 15 Page 91, BCP

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.

Psalm 80:1-7

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.

The New Testament Hebrews 10:5-10

When Christ came into the world, he said,
"Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,
but a body you have prepared for me;
in burnt offerings and sin offerings
you have taken no pleasure.

Then I said, 'See, God, I have come to do your will, O God'
(in the scroll of the book it is written of me)."

When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken
pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin
offerings" (these are offered according to the law), then he
added, "See, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the
first in order to establish the second. And it is by God's will
that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of
Jesus Christ once for all.

The Gospel

Luke 1:39-45(46-55)

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.

When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

Birthdays & Anniversaries December 23 -29

Anniversaries

Karyn Smith & Robin Levine

Birthdays

Holly Dyson

Hally Brenneman

Woody Shadid

Chrissy Stoffer

Dedications for this week:

see the bulletins of December 24th

Collect for the Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 23rd

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

