

The Sceptre

VOLUME 58, No.12

CHURCH OF THE ADVENT OF CHRIST THE KING

DECEMBER 2018

An inclusive parish of The Episcopal Church in the Anglo-Catholic tradition

FROM THE RECTOR

ALREADY TAKEN

I grew up being afraid of the Second Coming of Christ. I was told by many Christians that unless I accepted Jesus in a particular way and lived my life under certain guidelines I would be left behind when Jesus returned to gather up the good people. I never felt I could live up to those guidelines; I didn't think my family could either. We had problems. We made mistakes.

Too many religious teachers in my life used Holy Scripture as a threat instead of as a promise. I wonder how many people stay away from Christianity because they are tired of being threatened.

As we enter the Season of Advent, we are going to hear many readings and prayers that will sound threatening. This is because as we prepare to celebrate the first Advent of Christ, we are reminded also of his second Advent. It will be a day of judgement. All will be revealed, no secrets will be hid, and our hearts and minds will be cleansed once and for all.

In the 12th Century, St. Bernard, explained that the coming of the Lord is threefold. First, he was seen on earth and lived among humankind. At his second coming all flesh will see the salvation of God. The third way Jesus comes to us is happening right now.

St. Bernard writes, "The first coming was in flesh and weakness, the middle coming is in spirit and power, and the final coming will be in glory and majesty." We experience the middle coming every time we pray, meditate on the Scriptures or gather for liturgy. When we do these things, Jesus come to us. He and his Father dwell with us.

Don't worry about who is going to be taken and who



is going to be left behind. You have already been taken. Every time you whisper a prayer to God you are taken. Every time we gather for worship we are taken.

The Catechism instructs us in how to be prepared for the Coming of the Son of Man, "The duty of all Christians is to follow Christ; to come together week by week for corporate worship; and to work, pray, and give for the spread of the kingdom." (Book of Common Prayer, p.856)

Now, now is the time of salvation not in some faraway forbidding future. Now we lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Now we live honorably as if that final day has already come.

Reference: *Advent Homily: St. Bernard on the Three Comings of the Lord* www.catholic.org

Fr. Paul Allick





ADVENT
A TRADITION OF ANTICIPATION

**SUNDAY
DECEMBER 2
6 PM**

AN ADVENT LITURGY
*Procession with Lessons and Carols
for Advent Sunday*

*Music by
J. S. Bach,
Gibbons,
Ledger,
Palestrina,
and Pettman*

*With
our resident
professional choir
SCHOLA ADVENTUS
Directed by PAUL ELLISON
Organist: George Anton Embloom*



Christmas at Advent

Christmas Eve
MONDAY DECEMBER 24 10 PM
Procession, Blessing of the Crèche
and High Mass
*O magnum mysterium – Andrea Rota
Verbum caro factum est – Hans Leo Hassler
I wonder as I wander – Trad. Arr. Andrew Carter
Organ music by Bach, Brahms, Daquin,
Ireland, & Messiaen*

Christmas Day
TUESDAY DECEMBER 25 11 AM
The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ
Procession and High Mass
*Introit: Resonet in laudibus – Jacob Handl
Gradual: O magnum mysterium – Byrd
Anthem: The blessed Son of God – Vaughan Williams
Motet: Infant Holy – David Willcocks
Organ music by Bach, Brahms, & Ireland*

Music presented by our resident professional choir SCHOLA ADVENTUS, directed by Paul Ellison

Commemoration of the Month: ST. STEPHEN, First Martyr

On December 26, the Episcopal Church commemorates the life and memory of the first Christian martyr, St. Stephen.

The Acts of the Apostles records how the Greek speaking Jewish community was beginning to feel neglected by the earliest disciples of the Church. Stephen, most likely, was likely a Hellenistic Jew living in Jerusalem and chosen by the Apostles because of his personal background and familiarity with that community. Stephen was one of several deacons charged by the Apostles to help in the service and ministration of the early Church. In particular, Stephen was said to be "full of grace and power" and "did great wonders and signs among the people".

He preached and debated with those in the synagogue at Jerusalem. His dissenters proved no match for Stephen's wisdom and spirit. He blamed them for the death of the prophets which foretold the arrival of Jesus, whom they also killed.



photo: Br. Marshal

Stephen was dragged out of the city and stoned to death. At the point of death, Stephen echoed similar words to those of Christ, asking God to "not hold this sin against them." In commemoration of his courage and willingness to give his life up for the sake of the Church, Stephen is sometimes titled a protomartyr, or first martyr.

Stephen is the patron saint of deacons, headaches, horses, coffin makers, and masons. He is often represented carrying a pile of rocks or with rocks on his head. *Br. James Nathaniel, SSF*

A BOOK STUDY on the REVELATION to JOHN

There is probably no other scripture more misunderstood than the Revelation to John. Please join us for a continuing discussion group on *Conversations with Scripture: Revelation* by Frederick W. Schmidt (Morehouse Publishing 2005). We meet on Wednesdays after 6 p.m. Evening Prayer. If you need a book let Fr. Paul know ASAP.

Dec. 5: Revelation as Myth - Chapter 2

Dec. 19: A Deeper Reality, A Different

Dec. 12: Revelation as History - Chapter 3

Kind of Time - Chapters 4 - 6



Poetry Corner

Lewis Brown

Nicholas Vachel Lindsay (Nov. 10, 1879 – Dec. 5, 1931) is considered a founder of modern *singing poetry*, in which verses are meant to be sung or chanted.

He was born in Springfield, Illinois and studied medicine at Ohio's Hiram College. He left to attend the New York School of Art (now The New School) and remained interested in art for the rest of his life. While in New York Lindsay turned to poetry in earnest. From March to May, 1906, Lindsay traveled roughly 600 miles on foot trading his poetry for food and lodging. It was the first of many such journeys. He declared himself to be a product of what he termed 'Higher Vaudeville': In the final twenty years of his life, Lindsay was one of the best known poets in the U.S. Lindsay's private life was rife with disappointments. Crushed by financial worry and in failing health, on December 5, 1931, he committed suicide.



This Section is a Christmas Tree

This section is a Christmas tree:
Loaded with pretty toys for you.
Behold the blocks, the Noah's arks,
The popguns painted red and blue.
No solemn pine-cone forest-fruit,
But silver horns and candy sacks
And many little tinsel hearts
And cherubs pink, and jumping-jacks.
For every child a gift, I hope.
The doll upon the topmost bough
Is mine. But all the rest are yours.
And I will light the candles now.

Vachel Lindsay

**SOLEMN EVENSONG
&
BENEDICTION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT
SUNDAY DECEMBER 16 4 PM
ADVENT III (Rose Sunday)**

Prelude: Nun komm der Heiden Heiland - J.S. Bach

Preres & Responses: Thomas Tomkins

Canticles: The Second Service - William Byrd

Anthem: This is the Record of John - Orlando Gibbons

Hymn: O Salutaris - Thomas Tallis

Postlude: Nun komm der Heiden Heiland - J.S. Bach

**Music
by our resident professional choir
SCHOLA ADVENTUS
Directed by PAUL ELLISON**

**CELEBRANT:
Fr. Paul Allick, Rector**

My Prayer Life

As a child growing up in London, I did not regularly attend church since mine was not a particularly religious family. The schools that I was sent to, however, were Anglican in character. At my prep school there was a daily morning assembly which began invariably with the Collect for Purity from the Book of Common Prayer. Thus, when I was baptized at St. Augustine's church in Tempe, Arizona, in the nineteen-eighties I already had some idea of the sanctification of time, the regular round of prayer and devotion that consecrates the days and orients our lives towards God. The rhythm of the church year has long meant much to me and reminds me that I am carried along, even if sometimes my personal devotion seems slack.

As a newly baptized Episcopalian I read the prayer book instructions on The Calendar of the Church Year (BCP pages 15-33) with great interest, and I realized that I had to decide what to do with section 4 on Days of Special Devotion: "The following days are observed by special acts of discipline and self-denial ... Good Friday and all other Fridays of the year, in commemoration of the Lord's crucifixion, except for Fridays in the Christmas and Easter seasons" etc.

The most straightforward way of keeping this rubric, it seemed to me, was simply to observe the traditional Western custom of eating no flesh meat on Fridays. It is a very small thing. The discipline and self-denial involved are minimal. But it orients the week and makes the end of every week an echo of the great Paschal Triduum, from the recollection of the crucifixion to the great celebration of the Lord's death and resurrection in the Sunday Mass.

And because the effort is small, I am reminded week by week that I am not saved by my own efforts, but by Christ's great offering which saves us all.



photo: Br. Marshall

Fr. Rod Thompson

PARISH PROFILE: Lewis Brown

I was baptized and confirmed at Grace Episcopal Church in Providence Rhode Island in 1947. Shortly thereafter my mother was able to convince The Rev'd Horner there to support my enrolment in St. Dunstan's Boys Choir School which provided the boys choir at Grace. The four years I was there gave me the rudiments of reading scores and infected me with the love of church music—hymns, anthems and organ. I started as a soprano and later turned to alto (a physiological necessity) and for a few delicious months as page turner for Fred Cronheimer who had a coiffure that would remind you of Leonard Bernstein.

The dark side of my choral experience is a low tolerance for sacred music not performed by experts, although I am humble about my own capabilities. The bright side is the admiration for the music at Advent.

Bonnie and I attended mass at Advent for the first time twenty years ago when Fr Rhodes was rector. At the time we were looking for an alternative to our local suburban Episcopal church which had just lost a rector and another priest -- both of whom we admired. That church also shifted its focus in ways that made us uncomfortable. We were more than favorably impressed by what was happening at this jewel-box parish. in the heart of our City. (I came to San Francisco in 1959 and Bonnie is a native, so we think of it as ours.)

Here aided by Schola Adventus and its director Paul Ellison I came to appreciate catholic-based sacred music from medieval chant and through the 16th to 20th centuries, from Hildegard von Bingen to Monteverdi, Bach, Byrd, Handel, and eventually leading to Avro Part. All became sacramental to us -- by that I mean what Augustine called an outward and visible (in this case, *audible*) sign of an inward and spiritual grace.

When I first started attending services at Advent I noticed that the behavior of the congregants was different from what I had experienced in other Episcopal churches. We began the mass by being quiet and respecting the reflective concentration of others. What a relief! During the mass I noticed people using the sign of the cross more frequently than I was used to. In time I saw that genuflection and other gestures were involved and used more specifically. I had heard for years that some Episcopalians were "high church". It became obvious that this must be where I have landed. I realized early on that if I could sneak glances at what William Bonnell was doing I would be safe. I could find out later what purposes were served. Actually, I have found I can ask William almost anything about a multitude of concerns and be satisfied and smarter for it.

A big concern I had after joining Advent was that I was now by default an Anglo-Catholic. I had only the vaguest idea of what I was to be. Fortunately I found a rich resource for beginning to understand my then new religious affiliation among the poet-people with whom I had affiliated in the 60s. Kenneth Rexroth was an elder apologist for many of the poets lazily identified as "beats" and also for Anglo Catholics. He wrote a wonderful essay: "The Evolution of Anglo-Catholicism" which is available online.

A not minor cause for us to be at Advent is the purposeful involvement with this urban community exemplified by the holiday picnics. I wish we had the financial and human resources to bring back the Tuesday "Lunch Bunch" meals for the disadvantaged we had to abandon years ago. To my mind they were a pillar of Anglo-Catholic ideals. We are so glad to have the Latin Mass restored.

Since we came to Advent we have had opportunities to contribute to the needs of the parish and we treasure the hours and days we have shared. I most fondly remember editing printing and distributing this monthly newsletter for five years. But I cannot say I miss doing that. Thank you, Sister Jude and Brother Marshal and all your selves. Our congregation and those who serve is in many ways just as much like a family as is our own



photo: Br. Marshal



December 2018

Dear members and friends of Advent,

I want to thank you again for your generosity during our 2018 pledge campaign. Thanks to you, our parish has become more financially stable, and our membership has grown as well. There is a new, optimistic spirit at Advent and your generosity in your time, talent and treasure has been very uplifting.

As grateful as we all are for your support, there still is much to do in solidifying our gains to move forward to do the work that God has given us to do in our parish. I believe that with your continued help, 2019 can be a year of growth in developing maintenance and outreach projects, including the restoration of our beautiful garden.

On Sunday, October 29, the vestry hosted the annual Stewardship Luncheon. 22 parishioners attended, and we had an informative meeting to go along with the food. We handed out new pledge cards at the luncheon, and I am gratified by the very quick and generous response of those who attended the luncheon.

By now, those of you who weren't able to attend the luncheon will have received your new pledge cards. If you haven't received your pledge card and would like one, please let a member of the Stewardship Committee (Ler Nelson, Aaron Conner and myself) or our Treasurer, Jack Jensen know.

I thank you in advance for your continued devotion to our parish, and I'm convinced that with your help, 2019 will be a year filled with continued renewal for Church of the Advent of Christ the King.

Sincerely,

Tom Veitch
Senior Warden
Dawyk62@yahoo.com

HIGH MASS SUNDAYS 11:00 AM**1st Sunday of Advent, Sunday December 2nd**

Celebrant: Fr. Paul Allick

Preacher: Fr. John Porter

An Advent Liturgy, Sunday December 2nd 6:00 pm

Officiant: Fr. Paul Allick

2nd Sunday of Advent, Sunday December 9th

Celebrant: : Fr. Alex Martin

Preacher: Fr. Paul Allick

3rd Sunday of Advent (Rose Sunday) December 16th

Celebrant: Fr. Paul Allick

Preacher: Fr. Alex Martin

Solemn Evensong and Benediction**Sunday December 16th 4:00 pm**

Celebrant: Fr. Paul Allick

4th Sunday of Advent, Sunday December 23rd

Celebrant: Fr. John Porter

Preacher: Fr. Paul Allick

Vigil of the Nativity, Monday December 24, 10:00 pm

Celebrant: Fr. Paul Allick

Preacher: Fr. Rod Thompson

Feast of the Nativity, Tuesday December 25th 11 am

Celebrant: Fr. John Porter

Preacher: Fr. Paul Allick

1st Sunday After the Nativity, Sunday December 30th

Celebrant: Fr. Paul Allick

Preacher: : Fr. Rod Thompson

CONFESSIONS

Sundays 10:30 am

At other times by arrangement

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

2 Dec Jude Hill SSF + (priesthood)

2 Dec Rod Thompson + (birthday)

4 Dec Vincent Jang (diaconate)

4 Dec Ricardo Avila + (priesthood)

6 Dec John Porter + (baptism)

6 Dec Lenda Taylor (birthday)

7 Dec Paul Allick + (priesthood)

10 Dec Paul Allick + (birthday)

21 Dec Thomas Veitch (baptism)

28 Dec William Ray Branson Jr. (birthday)

**LATIN CHANT MASS Saturdays 5 pm****Saturday December 1st**

Celebrant & Preacher

Fr. Mark Stanger

Sat Dec. 8th, Conception of the BVM

Celebrant & Preacher

Fr. Rod Thompson

Saturday December 15th

Celebrant & Preacher

Fr. Alex Martin

Saturday December 22nd

Celebrant & Preacher

Fr. Mark Stanger

Saturday December 29th

Celebrant & Preacher

Fr. Rod Thompson

WEEKDAY LITURGY SCHEDULESunday Low Mass 9 am, Mass at the Episcopal Sanctuary (8th & Howard) 8:30 am

Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri Low Mass 6:30 pm, preceded by Evening Prayer at 6 pm

Wed Low Mass 8 am and 12 pm, Evening Prayer 6 pm

BOOK REVIEW: The Perfect Gift

Marking the Hours: English People & their Prayers 1240-1570
by Eamon Duffy, Yale University Press, 2006

Every Adventer will want this handsome volume on the coffee table and nigh the prayer desk for inspiration. Before the Book of Common Prayer dominated English devotion, the product of the Reformation, the faithful held in their hands, both at home and in church during Mass, prayer books called primers or books of hours, an "hour" being a prayer office. This volume, amply illustrated from illuminations of special-order books of hours as well as from mass-produced ones, explores the intimate relationship English Christians, of various social classes, had with their devotional manuals through what prayers they appended to these books and what they wrote in the margins thereof. Far from being mere keepsakes or showpieces, these books of hours, contain in their margins the *cris du coeur* of their owners and users, cries from the heart so poignant that Duffy entitles one chapter "Sanctified Whingeing?".

Moreover, once the Reformation hits England, from the 1530s on, these books of hours chronicle the shifting religious positions imposed by royal edict: e.g., in several, references to any pope or St Thomas Becket are dutifully scratched out. Though inclusive in his sweep, Duffy does devote attention to a few exemplary books of hours, including the book of hours faithfully used by St Thomas More the year he was in the Tower prior to his decapitation by that execrable tyrant, Henry VIII, complete with More's marginalia, in his own hand, wherein he interacts with the psalms and composes his own orisons. Duffy concludes with editions of the Book of Common Prayer printed with illuminations to resemble books of hours and the devotional manuals issued in Reformation England. The gift of this volume perfectly illustrates how a prayer book, how the Prayer Book serves to channel and amplify our engagement and that living relationship, in common with others yet distinct, with our compassionate God. Amen.

William Bonnell



We all need family to ease the burdens of the physical world. This coupled with our faith helps to see us through challenges. When I speak of family, I am speaking of intimate connections of blood and beyond.

The past year has been a difficult one for me. Losing two siblings suddenly in a seven-month span, and therefore four in a four-and-a-half-year span, has worn on me more than I am willing to admit. A bout of pneumonia helped to keep the stress level up. "Getting on with life" is a mantra that I have tried to live as one should. But sometimes it is hard, and you need the love and support of others to see you through.

It is my great blessing to be a part of the family here at the Church of the Advent of Christ the King. The love, support, encouragement, and joy that I feel in this place has kept me going through some dark times. Some of that joy is found in the grace and enthusiasm of our worship, and in the personal, unjudged devotion of every soul in our community. I thank you all for those gifts. I hope that I return them in some measure.

Stephen Rucker

Thank
you



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AND NOW FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE ABIDE, THESE
THREE; AND THE GREATEST OF THESE IS LOVE.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:13