



The Episcopal Diocese of Tennessee

Welcome Home!

Connections: *home... parish... diocese*

My Advent



Vol. 2, No. 11 November/December 2008

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The Episcopal Church

In the Anglican Communion

A global communion of
77 million Anglicans in
25 member provinces

Archbishop of Canterbury

The Most Rev. and Rt. Hon.
Rowan Williams
Anglican Consultative Council
Partnership House
157 Waterloo Road
London, England

Episcopal Seat:
Canterbury Cathedral

In the United States

A communion of 2.5 million
members in 112 diocese
in the Americas and abroad
Established 1789

Presiding Bishop

The Most Rev.
Katharine Jefferts Schori
Episcopal Church Center
815 Second Avenue
New York NY 10017
800-334-7626

Episcopal Seat:
Washington National Cathedral
Mount St. Albans
Washington DC 20016

In the Diocese of Tennessee

A communion of 16,000
Episcopalians in
50 congregations
in Middle Tennessee
Established 1828

Bishop

The Rt. Rev. John C. Bauerschmidt
Episcopal Diocese of Tennessee
50 Vantage Way, Suite 107
Nashville TN 37228
615-251-3322

Episcopal Seat:
Christ Church Cathedral

The Mission of the Episcopal Diocese of Tennessee
is to encourage and equip one another
as baptized people of God, to witness
to the transforming and reconciling power of Jesus Christ.

Welcome to the November/December issue of *Connections: home... parish... diocese*. We will accept submissions for *Connections* from throughout the diocese. **As space permits**, we will use as much content as possible, subject to editorial revision. Short announcements of 100 words or less may be sent via email to connections@episcopaldiocese-tn.org. For feature-length stories, contact us in the diocesan office at 615-251-3322.

Digital photos can be submitted as above and must include activity, date and identities of everyone in the photo.

Submissions are accepted until 12:00 Noon on the 15th of the month prior to upcoming issue and will be given consideration on a first come/first served basis.



Safeguarding God's People*

Protecting children from sexual abuse.

Preventing adult sexual misconduct.

*A diocesan workshop for vestries, nursery workers,
Sunday school teachers, volunteer youth leaders and
employees, part-time and full-time,
anywhere in the diocese.*



November 15 9AM-12N St. Michael's Church Cookeville

Please call the diocesan office at 615-251-3322 to sign-up.

Safeguarding God's People is a curriculum provided by the Church Pension Group.

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Connections: home... parish... diocese

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Advent

“Advent” is from a Latin word which means “coming,” and refers to the season which begins the Christian Year. Advent spans the period immediately before Christmas, including four Sundays which focus the faithful on Jesus’ coming into the world. Not simply his coming as a child in Bethlehem, born to human par-



ents; but also his coming as a king at the end of time. Advent is also a time in which we contemplate the many ways in which our Lord Jesus Christ draws near to us here and now: in prayer, in scripture, and in sacrament.

A gift that Advent demands from us is that of attentiveness; the ability to watch and listen for the signs that God is on the move. Most people find this a challenging demand, prone as we are to interruption, distraction, and self-deception. Many things compete for our attention and it is difficult to remain focused on ordinary things, much less the signs of God’s action. At the same

time, these signs are not always very clear, which calls for the gift of discernment, which allows us to sift through things and determine what God is really doing. This leads us to yet a third gift, that of patience; the willingness to persevere and even suffer in the meantime as we look for God to act.

Advent gives us a time and a space in which to exercise these gifts. Something new is happening, and we don’t want to miss it. We need eyes to see and ears to hear; hearts and minds which are big enough and robust enough for the job. In fact, God is doing something new by setting in motion the plan of our salvation. That plan began long ago, is going on now, and will be completed at the end of time. God’s word to us in Advent is “pay attention,” “look deeper” and “endure.”
– Bishop John

Changes to Convention Registration

The 177th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Tennessee will be held on January 23 and 24, 2009 at Christ Church Cathedral Nashville.

The first convention mailing was sent out on October 15. The forms can also be found on our website at www.episcopaldiocese-tn.org under Resources/Forms.

Subsidized in part by the diocese, Convention registration fees have been increased this year in an attempt to cover half the costs of Convention.

Clergy and lay delegates: \$30 for each delegate for registrations received before January 9, 2009; \$40 for each delegate for registrations received after January 9, 2009. Please register using the green form in the convention mailing.

Canonically resident non-parochial and retired clergy: \$30 for registrations received before January 9, 2009; \$40 for registrations received after January 9, 2009. Please register using the green form in the convention mailing.

Clergy Licensed to Officiate (LTO) in the Diocese of Tennessee, seminarians, exhibitors, and others desiring to attend Convention as guests will be asked to register in advance as well.

LTO clergy, seminarians, exhibitors, and all other guests: \$30 for registrations received before January 9, 2009; \$40 for registrations received after January 9, 2009. Please register using the pink form in the convention mailing.

All registration fees include the cost of lunch for two days, convention materials and nametag. There will be no separate registration for lunch at Convention this year.

Registration forms should be sent to Diocese of TN, 50 Vantage Way, Suite 107, Nashville TN 37228. All checks should be made payable to the Diocese of Tennessee.

My Advent...

“There’s a voice in the wilderness crying, a call from the ways untrod:
Prepare in the desert a highway for our God!”

Favorite Advent Hymn of the Rev. Rick Greenwood, St. David’s Church Nashville

Trinity Winchester Bus Available

If your parish or group is in need of transportation, Trinity Church Winchester may have just what you need.



The white and blue 1997 Ford Club Wagon Bus has been very well maintained. Passenger capacity is 21 riders. This bus started life as a commercial airline shuttle and has 225,872 miles on it.

If you are interested in this bus, please contact the Trinity’s Senior Warden, Tom Lewallen at 931-598-5680 or call the church at 931-967-0898 and leave a voice mail message.

Top Ten List: Things NOT To Do During Advent



I love Advent. I love the mounting excitement in our children, the lights and decorations adorning our homes, the smell of wreaths and Christmas trees, the familiar seasonal music, even the shopping.

Advent is perhaps the busiest, most hectic time of the year. Advent is not supposed to be a breathless romp to Christmas Day when we can finally put our feet up, relax, and exhale. In my enjoyment of the things I love about Advent, it is easy to forget that this sacred season is less about holiday cheer than about a holy child. Advent is less about preparing for the Christmas holidays than preparing for the Christ.

Several years ago, and following the example of talk show host David Letterman, I developed my own “Top Ten” list. To help myself - and perhaps you - avoid the temptations that draw us away from the central story behind the season, I offer a Top Ten List of Things *Not* To Do During Advent This Year.

10. Do NOT forget your rituals.

Don't treat Advent as just another busy time of year. Embrace rituals in your personal and family life that help you stop and ponder the gift of the Incarnation. When we enter Advent, life is supposed to be and feel different. It is no longer “ordinary time.” What do you do out of the ordinary each year to mark these special weeks leading up to Christmas? Consider placing an Advent wreath at your dining room table and taking time out each day to light the appropriate candles, say prayers, and

meditate on scripture. Listen to Christian hymns and sacred music in your home, not just popular songs about Santa Claus, Rudolph, and Frosty the Snowman. As you decorate the home, share with your children the theological symbolism of wreaths, greenery, the Christmas tree, candles, lights, the star on top of the tree, gifts, angel decorations, and the crèche.

9. Do NOT add to the frenzy.

Children will be frenzied enough about the excitement of Christmas from their friends and the culture; they need no further encouragement in the home. If you are a parent, do not be frantic yourself about last-minute shopping, entertaining and decorating. The best way to communicate that Advent is a time of prayerful and deliberate preparation for the coming of the Christ Child is to be prayerful and deliberate yourself, which need not negate the fun and excitement of the season.

8. Do NOT forget your Bible.

What biblical texts point to Advent themes of preparation, promise, hope, expectancy, God's enduring faithfulness, the time when God's kingdom will be fulfilled? What is the reason for Jesus' coming in the first place? What context and hopes led to the Incarnation for God's people? Advent is an excellent time to look at the scriptural narrative that leads up to the birth of Jesus. Consider ways to spend extra time immersed in the Bible.

7. Do NOT try to be perfect for the holidays.

God will still love you if the Christmas tree has a bare spot on one side, if a bulb in one of the window candles is burned out, if you cannot find just that perfect gift for your Uncle Bob, or if you lost the gravy recipe your grandmother left you. The holiday season can be stressful enough without allowing the drive for perfection to overwhelm us. Christmas comes every December 25, however the home looks, however

much shopping we did not get done, however unfinished our “to-do list” may be. Thanks be to God.

6. Do NOT overdo your schedule.

Learn to say “no” to some of the demands that beg for your presence, however worthy they may seem. Know your limits. If you receive a lot of invitations around the holiday season, be thankful. But ask yourself if your presence at each one is critical. How might your staying home one night actually enhance your preparations for the coming of Jesus? As the saying goes, “Too much of a good thing is still too much.”

5. Do NOT overdo gifts.

Children on average receive 60 percent more for Christmas than they expect. This should be good news to parents! It also indicates that while parents need to be clear with their children about expectations, even more important is that they be consistent with these expectations in their own gift-giving. What message is communicated to children about Christmas if parents overly indulge in this department? Keep the focus on Jesus, God's supreme gift to us, rather than on our gifts to each other.

4. Do NOT go into additional debt.

This is easier said than done. But remember that the gift-giving of Christmas is supposed to be a sign of our gratitude to God for his gift-giving of Jesus. A true gift has no strings attached. When we pay interest on our purchase of a gift, we end up paying more (perhaps over time much more) for the gift than it was worth. Thus, it is easy for the gift to become less an expression of gratitude and love than a financial burden. And those burdens then infect and bring stress to other aspects of our lives.

3. Do NOT expect the culture to follow your lead.

A truly Christian approach to the month of December will be counter-cultural. If you embrace much of this list, believe in what you are doing. Resist the message that Christmas is about the latest fashions or electronic gadget or video game. The health of the economy is affected by retail sales

in December. Thus, we are virtually bombarded with messages from the culture that we need to “shop till we drop.” Jesus came into the world to die for a very different reason.

2. Do NOT forget the less fortunate.

The real Christmas story is not set in a warm and cozy house, tastefully decorated and filled with more gifts than can fit under the tree. The real Christmas story is set amidst those who know enduring poverty and danger. Do not forget the desperate plight of Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem. “How does God’s love abide in anyone who has the world’s goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses to help?” (1 John 3:17). Advent is an excellent time to remember that most people do not enjoy a prosperous life. What more loving witness could you offer than to seek out some holiday opportunity to identify with the poor as God does?

1. And the number one thing NOT to do during Advent any year: Do NOT wait until Christmas Eve to come to church!

Worship in the church is beautiful this time of year. Everyone loves his or her favorite Christmas hymns. I love Advent hymns! And while you are wise not to confuse Advent with Lent, an often-overlooked theme for Advent is repentance. We confess that the distractions and busyness of life have turned us away from the ways that God desires to bless us. Show up and allow Advent worship to instill in you a sense of expectancy and alertness for the coming of God into our world, into your very life. The scripture readings for Advent not only give shape and context for Jesus’ birth, but bathe us in a certain spiritual watchfulness as well. And it is that heightened spiritual disposition that will best serve us as God seeks to come to us as Jesus.

May we be prepared to receive him when he comes. — *The Rev. R. Leigh Spruill*

The Rev. R. Leigh Spruill is rector of St. George’s Church Nashville. This article was originally printed as a tract and is used by permission. Copies of this tract are available through Forward Movement for \$.25 each. Contact 1-800-543-1813 or visit their website www.forwardmovement.org.

Waiting and Watching in Advent: Directed Silent Retreat

The season of Advent comes in a time of the year that is so busy, often burdensome - getting ready for Christmas, decorating, shopping, wrapping gifts along with all that life holds for each of us. We are so caught up in the added things that go along with preparations for Christmas, that we miss the meaning and the privilege of setting aside time to wait and watch for Christ.



As a spiritual director, in reflecting on the busyness of our lives and meeting with those who long to know God more and who struggle with finding time and space for Him, I decided to offer directed silent retreats at St. Joseph’s Monastery in Whitesville KY. Advent seems to be a perfect time to come away to be with God. The retreats are made up of times of quiet and prayer, spiritual direction, rest, and a setting in which a person can listen for God. Silence is simply creating a space for God.

St. Joseph’s is the home of the Passionist Nuns. They are nuns who are cloistered and have a vocation of solitude and prayer for the world. Their charism

or focus is the Passion, or death and resurrection of Christ. The sisters pray and chant the Psalms seven times a day. Retreatants are welcome to join them in the chapel, and their voices are angelic. I have yet to have a retreat where retreatants didn’t comment on the beauty of the singing and the ways that this added to their time away with God.

The monastery is located on 170 acres with many beautiful places to walk and pray and be still, listening for God. This year the retreat begins Friday afternoon, December 5th at 3:00 PM and ends on Sunday, December 7th at 1:30 PM. The Rev. Patrick Smith will celebrate the Eucharist on Saturday and Sunday and I will offer spiritual direction for those who desire it.

Advent is a time of hope and birth, of waiting on God and watching for Christ. The setting of the retreat house, the beauty of the candle-lit chapel, the quietness of time with God and the Scriptures, the singing of the nuns, and the great beauty of creation all set the stage for a deepening love and relationship with God, for generous hearts to receive all that He longs to give to each person.

In the darkening days of winter, Christ will shine in our hearts as we draw near to Him. We will find in Him the light and joy of life. — *Gail Pitt*

Gail Pitt, a member of St. Bartholomew’s Church Nashville, leads retreats throughout the year. For more information, contact Gail at gaibee4@aol.com.

St. Mary’s Sewanee Advent Retreat



“New Creation - Renewed Creation: Living into the Promise of Advent” is the retreat offered December 5-7 at St. Mary’s Sewanee. Presented by Wendy M. Wright, the retreat offers participants space and time to honor the sacred season of waiting.

Dr. Wright is a Professor of Theology at Creighton University and is co-host of the Creighton University podcast “Catholic Comments” with Dr. J. O’Keefe. Her books include “Sacred Heart: Gateway to God,” “Sacred Dwelling: A Spirituality of Family Life,” “Seasons of a Family’s Life: Cultivating the Contemplative Spirit at Home,” and many others.

For information on attending the retreat, call 800-728-1659 or email StMarysSewanee@bellsouth.net.

Clergy News -

The Rev. Canon Matthew Corkern has accepted a call as Rector of Trinity Episcopal Church in Mobile AL. His final Sunday at Christ Church Cathedral will be November 16 and he begins

Parish News -

Recent confirmations: Will Carpenter, Nick Amoss, Olivia Jones, Will Kelly, Abbie King, Austin Stafford, Mary Catherine Robinson, Thomas Robinson, **St. Michael's Church Cookeville**; Jung Gual Kook, Bok Soon Song, Duk Soon Shin, Jung Sook Kim, Ji Dae Ja Son, James Shin, One Taek Shin, Kwang Hee Park, **Church of the Holy Spirit Nashville**; Kathy Ann Barney and Christina Corrier Harr, **St. Mark's Church Nashville**. Recent receptions: Brian Horne, **St. Michael's Church Cookeville**. Recent baptisms: Manaen Hall, Wilder Allen, **St. Bartholomew's Church Nashville**.

Youth News -

Jill Hunger is the new volunteer youth leader at **Grace Church Spring Hill**. The youth groups of **St. George's Church Nashville**, **St. Paul's Church Franklin**, **St. Bartholomew's Church Nashville** and **Church of the Good Shepherd Brentwood** joined together for the Jesus Dojo - an in-town retreat centered around learning the way of Jesus. Held October 24 - 26, the participants stayed in host homes in Nashville. The pre-

his new position on November 30. Good luck to Matthew and his family. After 22 years in the Diocese of Tennessee, the Rev. Dennis Lloyd's last Sunday at **Holy Trinity Church Nashville** was Oct. 26. His new position is rector at Church of the Holy Apostles, Wynnewood PA. Best wishes to him.

A number of parishioners from **St. Bartholomew's Church Nashville** were part of the Billy Graham biopic that was filmed in the Nashville area. Associate Director Tom Howard was the film score's orchestrator, Kathryn Bomboy was the still photographer and the Rev. David Wilson appears on-screen as a preacher. Wayne Jackson of **Church of the Resurrection Franklin** was recently inducted into the Musicians Hall of Fame as part of The Memphis Horns. **Church of the Messiah Pulaski** held their annual Trunk or Treat on the Square. Decorations, costumes and candy made for a frighteningly great Friday night. **Grace Church Spring Hill** has started a Saturday evening service with contemporary music to allow those football fans attending games on Sunday to get their worship in on Saturday.

schoolers of the Sewanee Children's Center, which meets at **Otey Memorial Parish Sewanee**, held a Strong Start Penny Drive to support postnatal medical care in other countries. They have, so far, raised over \$117.00 - that's a lot of pennies. The funds will be administered by Episcopal Relief and Development. **St. Mary Magdalene Church Fayetteville** will participate in the town's "Host of Christmas Past" celebration November 7-9. They will be holding a bake sale and silent auction and, as one of the event's trolley stops, should see a lot of visitors.

Habits

Canon P D Quirk called to tell me he had just returned from his annual Advent eccentric prayer retreat. It was part of a growing fellowship in the church, he said, to counteract all the papist fuss over centering prayer, and to put it to the end it deserved. That the movement chose Advent for this purpose was but a part of their usual in-your-face attitude about whatever, even so delicate a matter as the way one prays.

The sisters over at the Community of Constant Concern for whom Quirk is the chaplain-visitor, had been worried silly for some time over his annoying

pendant for speaking in ellipses and leaving conversations at sea. They felt almost to a nun that this had driven him now to a similar practice in his prayer life that would only inevitably begin to affect theirs.

The Abbess was especially disquieted. She had long wanted to find some way to retire the Canon and to replace him with a more dependable priest, preferably a woman, and particularly a younger one whom she thought she could control by the sheer commanding dignity of her presence if nothing else. She'd never much favored the ordination of women, but having years of experience in successfully managing them, thought she'd probably like to spend her waning years in the convent at least without having to fret over the incomprehensible vicissitudes of another male.

Quirk seemed oblivious to all this and certainly had no idea that the Abbess trusted me with her confidences about it. I felt a duty to her and to our friendship somehow to help get his attention to consider some changes, at the least to

begin by finishing his sentences. After all, the sisters reminded me, they should be able to help him, for they, of all people, should know something about how difficult it is to change habits. — *The Rev. Lane Denson*

The Rev. Lane Denson is a retired priest in the Diocese of Tennessee. He writes a daily essay called Out Of Nowhere, published by The Covenant Journal, <http://covpubs.org/oon/>.

St. Paul's Franklin Presents Concert

On Sunday, November 2, St. Paul's Church Franklin will present a special concert for All Saints Sunday. "Death and Life In Christ" will be performed by the Adult Choir and Consort, narrators Julie and Richard Adams, drums and brass, honoring the lives of saints who have passed before and the glories of life in Christ. The concert will feature music of Don Dicie and David Childs, spirituals and anthems of remembrance. To sponsor this concert in memorial to a loved one, contact Claire Gaddis by calling 615-730-0527.

My Advent...

"O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear."

Favorite Advent Hymn of the Rev.
Canon Fred Dettwiler and the
Rev. Jill Zook-Jones, St. Joseph
of Arimathea Hendersonville

Learning to Wait: Practicing Advent with Children & Teenagers

Reclaiming the season



If there's one season that the church desperately needs to reclaim, it's Advent. Every year, it seems like stores display the Christmas decorations earlier and earlier, starting at the end of September this year. They used to at least wait until after Halloween, but not anymore.

Christmas has always been my favorite season of the year, and when I first heard about some of the concepts of Advent, especially some ideas of waiting to display decorations, doing things in stages and so forth, I was skeptical, and worried that my favorite holiday would be diminished. Instead, I discovered quite the opposite. Practicing Advent as a time of waiting and reflection adds to the season in many ways.

A typical Christmas season is filled with parties, events, special services at church, parties at school, parties at the office and did I mention, parties? Oh, and the seemingly never ending Christmas shopping with all of its intricate balances of what did I get him/her last year, did he/she give me anything, should I get so-and-so something this year because they gave me something last year and I feel bad about not giving them anything and on and on.

Something in me recoils at this sort of activity as much as I love to give people gifts. But somehow gift giving at Christmas all too often becomes an exercise in obligation and debt instead of joyfully reaching out to people in celebration of our Savior's birth and expectation of his return.

And I have to ask, with this sort of activity as the norm in our culture, what exactly are we modeling for our kids?

If Advent is supposed to be in some ways like Lent, a time of expectation and reflection, then what of that ethos are we teaching those younger than us who are looking up to us for clues on how life is to be lived?

Slow down and make space

What if, instead of shopping for trinkets just to have something to give to so-and-so, we sat down and wrote them a letter instead? Takes too much time? How much time do we spend fighting crowds in shopping malls during the average Christmas season?

What if, instead of dragging our kids with us on one of these mass shopping experiences, we made a point to volunteer for a few hours at an organization that gives Christmas things to families that can't afford them?

What if we made a point of bringing an advent wreath and the devotional times that can go along with that into the home and used it as a starting point for some sort of regular family devotionals? What would it look like if this season could be one of less stress instead of more stress? One of more time with God, instead of less?

What if, instead of gorging our own kids on gifts on Christmas morning, we taught them something about moderation and helped them donate some money to an organization to help needy children instead of spending it all on things for them that they probably don't really need?

Am I just saying get rid of the gifts, or stick with socks and underwear for presents? Not at all! We serve a God that loves to give good gifts to his children and to do that in abundance beyond even what we need. But he also loves to see his children following in his example, and during this season of Advent, that's something we can help our children and teens to start living into.

Learning to wait

Other ways we can heighten the expectation is by not putting out all of our decorations at once. We can space it out

so that the amount grows as each week of Advent passes. Many families already do this with their nativity scenes, even keeping the wise men out of the picture until Epiphany, and thus prolonging the season after December 25 all the way to it's proper ending on January 6 (Epiphany). We can put the tree up later, decorate it in stages, space out opening presents from Christmas Eve all the way to Epiphany and making sure that each present is enjoyed completely instead of being immediately set aside while the next one is ripped into.

Note, all of these are just ideas; each of us can figure out what works best with our family, developing our own Advent traditions as we go along. It's simply important, I believe, to figure out some ways of practicing Advent with our kids that make it stand out as a season of waiting, of reflection, and of expectation, all things that require us to slow down and purposefully step out of the overwhelming rush of the way our country dives headlong into the Christmas season.

If the whole purpose of the Advent season is to celebrate the birth and second coming of Jesus, then shouldn't all we do in the Advent season be centered around him? What would that look like? — *Anna Howard, Diocesan Coordinator of Youth Ministry*

In addition to youth ministry consulting, Anna has also preached at St. Paul's Murfreesboro and St. Ann's Nashville, led the parish retreat for Church of the Advent talking about 3 Directions of Reconciliation, and presented liturgy as a tool for mentoring youth and young adults, all things she would be happy to bring to your parish.

My Advent...

"Lo! he comes, with clouds descending,
once for our salvation slain;
thousand thousand saints attending
swell the triumph of his train;
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Christ the Lord returns to reign."
Favorite Advent Hymn of the Rt.
Rev. Bertram Herlong, Retired
Bishop of Tennessee

Kurios-er and Kurios-er Adventures in Wonder, Land

The strangers were waiting for him in the office of the church. He was surprised by their questions. The delegation wanted to know what he and the members of parish believed about Jesus.

The men represented the Karen, an ethnic group of refugees from Myanmar. They were led to believe by local former Episcopalians that the parish did not believe in Jesus Christ.

The answer from the Rev. Michael Spurlock of All Saints' Church Smyrna came: "In this church, we believe in Jesus Christ and we seek to submit our whole lives to him." And with that, the Karen found a home. One of those visitors, the Rev. Thomas Bu Christ is now Licensed to Officiate in the Diocese of Tennessee.



In 2007, Fr. Spurlock, then a recent graduate of Nashotah House, was called to All Saints' - a parish in pain. The previous rector had walked away from the Episcopal Church, taking the majority of parishioners, leaving the remaining congregants hurt and confused. The bank accounts were empty and the bills were unpaid. The church was in debt.

While Fr. Spurlock sought to preach and heal, he also realized he needed to ease the financial worries of the faithful flock who remained. He approached Bishop Bauerschmidt about selling the 22 acres of property to eradicate the church's debt and replant the mission. He saw a future in outreach ministry.

The sale should have been a simple transaction but after months of snags and snafus, Fr. Spurlock wondered if he was being tested in a way he had yet to discover. While his congregation had doubled with the addition of the Karen, the needs of the new parishioners were difficult to meet. Fr. Spurlock says, "We wanted to do more than just give them handouts. One of our parishioners began to teach them English and we started a life-skills class." But the group needed help with food.

In Burma, many of the Karen had been farmers and they asked for permission to plant a small garden. Fr. Spurlock explained that while the property could be sold at any time, until it was, the group was welcomed to plant. Knowing they might not see a harvest, the group put the garden plan on hold.

In May of this year, as a time of decision about the property drew near, Fr. Spurlock went for a walk on the land that he had grown so fond of. And there he saw it: a farm. The Karen could plant and grow the food they needed and All Saints' would have the outreach ministry they had long dreamed of.

Fr. Spurlock met with Bishop Bauerschmidt and the Bishop and Council and by mid-June, the decision was made to cancel the sale of the property and pursue the idea of a community farm.

Upon consulting with the Rutherford County Soil Conservation Board, it was discovered that before All Saints' purchased the land, it had been farmed. The previous owner offered to plow the land for free. Within two weeks of getting the go-ahead from the Bishop and Council, four acres were planted. On July 5, forty-five parishioners, both Tennessean and Burmese, showed up to sow the fields. The Conservation Board gave them an estimated yield: 22,000 pounds of produce to harvest.

The main purpose of the farm is to provide food for the Karen community. Six-



teen families, a total of 65 individuals, have received over 50 bushels of food since August. The surplus was sold at the local farmers market to support the farm and the church. Fr. Spurlock says, "The last of our summer crop was sent to the Smyrna Food Bank who informed us of a complete lack of fresh food donations."

In September, they planted turnips, turnip greens, collards, mustard, beets, lettuce, kale, spinach and a small pumpkin patch as the last of this year's crops. They were able to purchase a tractor after receiving a grant from the Dandridge Trust - a true blessing but also one of the causes of an immediate need. The 1950s tractor does not have the Rollover Protection System that became standard by the 1980s. "There is a retrofit kit that can be added," Fr. Spurlock explains, "and we would welcome sponsorship for the purchase of this important safety feature."

The Kurios Ministry has gotten some media attention with stories appearing in *The Tennessean* and *The Missioner* (the newsletter of Nashotah House). As the word spreads, the miracles occur. Fr. Spurlock writes in the Kurios blog about a random encounter with a man on a hiking trail:

"I asked what he did in Missouri. He said he was a farmer. OK, that's funny. I tell him our church has just started a farm with the intent of feeding a portion of our congregation... I tell him we've planted four of seventeen acres. I ask him how many acres he farms. He tells me 8,000 and I laugh. The man tells me he sells seed and would be happy to work with the church in this area. He says he'll e-mail me. I mention that we're doing a lot of the work by hand. He says... he has a lot of equipment that's obsolete on an operation his size and we would be welcome to it. We chat and then say our goodbyes. Aimee and I resume our hike in silence. I feel God's finger on my neck bowing my head before him. I say to God, "How do you do this!?"

For the whole story and frequent updates on the Kurios Ministry, read the blog at www.kuriosfarm.blogspot.com.

Earlier this fall, the members of All Saints' were visited by Bishop Bauerschmidt. He was presented with traditional Karen garments and enjoyed a meal of chicken and rice. Bishop Bauer-

schmidt says, "We are glad to help our brothers and sisters in Christ from Myanmar. I'm proud of the people of All Saints' who have reached out to others. This is a unique opportunity for the Diocese of Tennessee to discover a new ministry that brings together our care for the needy and our care for the

earth, along with cross-cultural and international ministry."

As with any working farm, there is always the next crop, the next row to weed, the next project to work on. Before the fall crop matures, the parishioners will convert the picnic pavilion on the property into a farm stand in hopes of being open at least three days a week.

Visitors are welcome to come and see (or lend a hand). All Saints' recently hosted a retreat for the Canterbury Club of Tennessee Tech. The group spent the entire day praying, working, eating and learning. The members of All Saints' would love to host your group for a retreat, work day or field trip. Contact the church at 615-223-7157.

The American parishioners continue to help the Karen navigate the sometimes confusing issues of transportation and healthcare but at least the problem of good nutrition has been solved. And at the same time, the spirits of the people of All Saints' Church has been fed.



God's Green Earth... for the holidays

Christmas Trees - real or artificial? Once simply a matter of personal taste, now there is more to consider. Half the trees put up in 2007 were artificial and the quality is higher than ever. With no time constraint, your tree can go up as early as you like and stay up until you are ready to take it down. There is less maintenance, no watering and virtually no clean up. They are treated with flame retardant and are considered to be very safe. Artificial trees are less expensive than real ones and are cost effective since you will use it for many years. Materials used in today's trees make the product lighter, cutting down on transportation expenses. However there is the transportation issue and when the trees wear out, they are not easily recycled, leaving a larger carbon footprint than some people prefer.

Real freshcut trees give you that smell of Christmas and the hunt for just the right tree is a tradition in many families. But remember, these trees are transported, sometimes great distances, to your local tree lot or you have to visit a tree farm to get a freshcut Christmas tree. Sap and dropped needles could be a threat to pets and small children. And while many end up as mulch after the season is over, many more are simply discarded and sent to landfills.

An alternative to either one of those is the live, uncut tree. These can be used in the home during the holiday season and then planted in the yard or donated to a watershed management group or conservation organization. Live trees help remove carbon from the environment and, when planted, provide shelter and food for wildlife. While not the cheapest choice, it is the best choice ecologically. Some nurseries may offer trees for rent which can be returned after Christmas.

Once you've made a decision about what type of tree to use, think about lighting. Great strides have been made in the last few years with LED technology which now generates light longer at cooler temperatures and less expensively per lumen. LED lights require, on average, only 15% of the power needed for incandescent lights. Initially a bit more expensive, prices have been coming down and these lights are long lasting. They are also easy to recycle, just as you would other electronics. Should you replace older lights in favor of LED, you'll want to research the best recycling method for your type of lights - some bulbs contain gasses that are potentially dangerous and glass will need to be properly disposed of.

Which ever you choose, putting up the tree and adding the decorations with family and friends is one of the great traditions of the Christmas season.

Investiture of New Head of SAS School

St. Andrew's-Sewanee School welcomed parents, alumni, clergy, and friends from near and far for the investiture of new Head of School, the Rev. John Taliaferro Thomas, on September 26. Bishop Bauerschmidt presided over the service. The Rev. Dr. James M. McDonald, former rector of St. Columba's Episcopal Church in Washington DC, delivered the sermon.

The service was followed by a Bluegrass & Barbecue party featuring the music of Two Dads and Two Grads, comprised of Adam Carlos, Patton Watkins, and Kevin Willis, and a surprise appearance by Jim and Inge Wood. Jim is the five-time Tennessee Fiddle Champion and music instructor to several members of the SAS community.



Fr. Thomas received a rod and reel and a varsity leather jacket from SAS students as part of their welcoming gifts during his investiture as Head of School.

Clergy gathered on the steps of the SAS Chapel prior to the Celebration of a New Ministry. Pictured are: (front row) the Rev. Dr. Linda A. Hutton, Priest, St. James Church Church Sewanee and Christ Church Tracy City; the Rt. Rev. John C. Bauerschmidt, Bishop of the Diocese of Tennessee; the Rev. John Taliaferro Thomas, Head of St. Andrew's-Sewanee School; (middle row)

My Advent...

"Comfort, comfort ye my people, speak ye peace, thus saith our God; comfort those who sit in darkness mourning 'neath their sorrows' load."

Favorite Advent Hymn of the Rev. Mickey Richaud, Trinity Church Clarksville

the Rev. Ellis Mayfield, Director of Athletics, SAS; the Rev. Annwn H. Myers, Associate Chaplain, The University of the South; the Rev. William S. Wade, Former Head of SAS; the Rev. Thomas E. Macfie, Jr., University Chaplain, The University of the South; the Rev. John Bender, Deacon, Holy Trinity Church Nashville; the Rev. Joseph H. Ballard, Rector, Otey Memorial Parish Sewanee; (top row) the Rev. Luther Zeigler, Chaplain, St. Andrew's Episcopal School, Potomac MD.; the Rev. Dr. James C. McDonald, Former Rector, St. Columba's Episcopal Church, Washington DC; the Rev. Moon Lee, Rector, Church of the Holy Spirit Nashville; the Rev. Thomas S. Hotchkiss, Rector, Church of the Advent Nashville; the Rev. Dr. Walter B.A. Brownridge, Associate Dean, School of Theology, The University of the South; the Very Rev. William S. Stafford, Dean, School of Theology, The University of the South; (top) the Rev. Peter Whalen, Rector, Church of the Redeemer Shelbyville. Not pictured: The Rev. Bude VanDyke, Chaplain of St. Andrew's-Sewanee School.



Youth Sundays at Holy Trinity Nashville

While every day of the month is a blessing from God, the months of March, June, August and November this year are particularly dear to Holy Trinity Church Nashville's parish family... especially the youth.

Those months each have five Sundays and the fifth Sunday is dedicated to the youth of the parish who assume all the lay functions of the 11:00 AM principal worship service. Ranging from 5 to 15, these young people take on the roles of ushers, greeters, psalmists, readers, acolytes, oblationers, servers and homilists.

In appreciation, adults provide hospitality for the kids following the service.

The Rev. John Bender says, "We older 'children at heart' are excited seeing our parish youth grow in knowledge and understanding of the liturgy and function of Episcopal worship. What a blessing to all of us at Holy Trinity."



Pictured with Deacon John: Robert Pennington Hubbard, Raven Pennington Hubbard, Aaliyah Batey, Kenny Ball, Ashton Batey, Anthony Batey, Kyle Wickline, Breah Forrester and Adrian Scott.

The final Youth Sunday of this year will be November 30.

Diocese Environmental Ministry Team In Action

The Tennessee Diocese Environmental Ministry Team had its second meeting with representation from ten parishes. Momentum is building with every meeting. One of the goals of this team is to get out the news of local eco-events in our community and parishes. Recent events were Christ Church Cathedral's October First Friday service in honor of the life of St. Francis and his love of nature and the Cumberland River Compact's rain barrel workshop at Shelby Bottoms Nature Center.

On November 22, join the team for Weeds to Wreaths: a program removing invasive plants from Percy Warner Park and using these plants to create Advent wreaths. Contact Emily Jones at 615-228-8613 or emilyjones79@mac.com with questions about this events or to be notified about future events.

Advent Memories



During a recent shopping trip, I had the misfortune to hear Christmas music, B-A-D Christmas music, coming from a tacky Christ-

mas display in a leading suburban department store. To say that this was disheartening is an understatement. All this happened on a Monday... October 6 to be exact. Why, in the name of all that is sacred and holy, is a Christmas display on exhibit before Halloween and Thanksgiving seasons? Now, you may well ask, "Why are you in such a snit about it?" This is what you're asking, right? Of course, you are.

Return with me, dear reader, back to the 1940s in the small Piedmont town of Salisbury, North Carolina... to the Nicholson home on West Monroe Street, 624, to be exact. In this home where a future deacon lived with her parents, the onset of Advent was duly noted and the season strictly observed to the extent that the annual Christmas tree was purchased, brought home, and installed in the living room on December 24. When I had placed the last of my home-made decorations on said tree along with my mother's heirloom trinkets, I was sent to bed with strict orders to go to sleep and to not get out of bed to come downstairs before sunrise.

As faithful Episcopalians, my family observed the Advent season. My father made it crystal clear that he did not care one whit what the neighbors did as far as decorating their houses and yards with all manner of Christmas trees and lights and tinsel with their gaudy, cheap Santas and (gasp!) their versions of the Holy Family in the Snow figurines. His consistent answer to any of our requests as to maybe starting on December 23 or even before noon on December 24 was always the same: "I don't give two you-know-whats in you-know-where what these holy roller heathens do! It's not

Christmas yet! It's Advent as any intelligent Christian should know!"

So, what was the big deal about Advent? Of course, my classmates, none of whom were Episcopalians, thought I was stranger than usual. "Your ole daddy is so cheap he has to wait 'til Christmas Eve to get y'all's tree!" I will not repeat his comment about that remark. Needless to say, there were allusions to my classmates' parentage and other stuff about their intelligence (or lack of same). Of more importance is this question: What is the current big deal about Advent? Inquiring minds still want to know!

From *Whistling in the Dark: An ABC Theologized*, Frederick Buechner writes: "The extraordinary thing that is about to happen is matched only by the extraordinary moment just before it happens. Advent is the name of that moment."

In *Sermons: Biblical Wisdom for Daily Living*, The Rev. Peter Gomes informs us thusly: "...clear away all of the 'let's get ready for Christmas' stuff, all of this manufactured cheer and happy expectation of something that once happened, clear the decks, rather and get ready for something that has not yet happened, for that is the agenda of the entire season of Advent... this is the language of Advent... one cannot make a growth industry out of Advent expectations."

And finally, from the Rt. Rev. J. Neil Alexander in his 1993 publication *The Liturgical Meaning of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany: Waiting for the Coming*, we learn that, as Christians, we are in a constant state of holy waiting. He explains: "From before the first Sunday of Advent to the cycle's completion in the Feast of the Presentation, forty days after the Nativity, we are in a period of waiting." As twenty-first century Christians, we are more "antsy" than ever as we drum our fingers on the table-top, tap our toes faster and faster, sigh longer and louder in frustration... "I want it all and I want it now!!" Why must we wait? Why couldn't we get that tree before sunset on Christmas Eve?

Well, Advent is not only about the coming of a Savior. Last thoughts from the good bishop: "How shall we receive the birth of (the Christ Child)? What meaning does this birth have for your life and mine? For that, we continue to wait and see. It's not a matter of waiting for things to happen, but a matter of what happens to us – to you and to me." As we await the Second Coming, Bishop Alexander reminds us that "... one simply cannot be today what God will form tomorrow."

Just in case you're wondering, our Salisbury tree was dismantled and the carcass hauled to the curb in the early morning on the Day of Epiphany.

Never too soon, never too late. Watch and hope, pray and wait. — *The Rev. Dolores Nicholson*

Deacon Dolores Nicholson serves at Christ Church Cathedral Nashville.

St. George's Nashville To Hold Advent Fair

The annual Advent Fair of St. George's Church Nashville will be held on Sunday November 23 from 4:00-5:30 PM in Johnson Hall. There will be an array of crafts for the children and snacks will be provided. The cost of the event is \$5.00 per child and the optional donation of a new toy for St. Luke's Community House Toy Drive.

They will also be putting together live Advent Wreaths and attendees are encouraged to bring live greenery.

For more information on this event, you may contact Alice Essary at 615-356-7053 or amessary@comcast.net, or Suann Davis at 615-292-6847 or Suann.davis@comcast.net.

My Advent...

More stories and reflections of the Advent season can be found in the on-line version of this issue of *Connections* on our website: www.episcopaldiocese-tn.org

Advent In The Choir



I don't think that any group of people in the world give more thought to Advent than choral singers and their choir directors. I don't believe this out of any malaise towards anyone else. It's just been my observation over the last 40 or so Advents that while most of the world is just starting to put away their Halloween decorations and make their Thanksgiving plans, the choirs are being handed their folders stuffed with hymns and anthems suitable for the season. Some pieces are friendly and familiar; others appear to be challenging and unknown. All of the work now lying in our hands needs our attention in order to be prepared for that most important event.

Church musicians are notorious for having one foot planted in the secular world, one foot planted in their families

and homes, and one foot planted in the choir. How many feet is that? I can't remember the number of folks who've left their families, office Christmas parties, cut back on Christmas shopping, or put their holiday cooking and baking on the back burner in order to make it to the extra rehearsals, to prepare not just the music but ourselves for the coming of Christ.

As we struggle through an unfamiliar arrangement of *Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord*, we rejoice in the familiar stanzas of *O Come, O Come Emmanuel* and *Sleepers Wake, a Voice is Calling...* The battling moods of anxiety, anticipation and joy that Mary and Joseph must have experienced during their pregnancy and time of preparation are all about us now. The performer's deadlines coming increasingly faster through the season of Advent - *Come Thou Long Expected Jesus...* PLEASE!

And again, as it has been acted out for well over the millennia we arrive at the eve of our Savior's birth in that glorious celebration of Lessons and Carols.

We enter our churches, recently greened, to the smells of pine and incense, familiar spaces bathed in the soft glow of candle light. Our liturgy has been in the texts and lyrics of those hymns and anthems both familiar and new. Our worship is in the glorious melodies and harmonies and the soaring sounds of well tuned voices and instruments. We are bound to each other by our faith and shared labor. Our community is bonded to Christ by belief in the true meaning of our service and sacrifice. And, as an expected returning ship, we have arrived at our pier.

At midnight, or shortly thereafter, we'll partake in the first Eucharist of Christmas; following that communion we'll return to the choir loft or designated pews. Many of us will softly join the organ in the words of *Lo' how a Rose e're blooming...* and there will be nary a dry eye anywhere in the choir. Thanks be to God! — *The Rev. John Bender*

Deacon John Bender serves as assisting pastor at Holy Trinity Church Nashville.

Diocesan Chorister Fest Dates Announced

The Diocese of Tennessee will welcome Dr. Jeffrey Smith, Canon Director of Music, Grace Cathedral San Francisco, as the guest director of the Diocesan Chorister Festival to be held at Christ Church Cathedral Nashville on Saturday and Sunday, February 8 and 9, 2009.

The Festival is open to all Diocesan Treble Choristers age 4th grade and above who have a Director to help them prepare, and is hosted by the Cathedral Choristers with Michael Velting, Organist and Choirmaster and Jon Johnson, Assistant Organist and Choirmaster.

During the Festival, Choristers have rehearsals, take meals and snacks together, have a social outing on Saturday afternoon, and conclude the Festival with a Choral Evensong in the Cathedral on Sunday afternoon, presided over by Bishop John Bauerschmidt.

Dr. Smith has chosen anthems that will be very useful for Choristers when they return to their home parishes.

The musical repertoire for the Festival is as follows:

Magnificat and Nunc dimittis
Geoffrey Burgon
Responses
Malcolm Archer
Psalm 100 chant
Richard Woodward
Never weather beaten sail
Thomas Campian

My Advent...

"Come thou long expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee."

Favorite Advent Hymn of the Rev. Tom Hotchkiss, Church of the Advent Nashville, and the Rev. Gene Manning (and the #1 favorite hymn of Episcopalians in a survey taken by the National Church).

A grateful heart

Mary Plumstead

Bless the Lord (3 songs for trebles)

Andrew Carter

1. Badgers and Hedgehogs

2. Butterflies and Moths

3. Grannies and Granddads

Behold, now praise the Lord

William Harris

Music can be ordered from Lois Fyfe Music in Nashville; call 615-386-3542 or email sales@loisfyfemusic.com.

Michael Velting says, "We hope many Diocesan Choristers will join us. This is a really fun time. It's a great opportunity for all Diocesan Choristers to come together, to share great music and to participate in worship under the guidance of a very fine director. We look forward to seeing you in February!"

If you are a Music Director and have a Chorister or several who may be interested, please contact Michael Velting at the Cathedral, 615-255-7729.

An Evangelism Theme in Advent: Preparing The Way of The Lord



What do you get when you cross John the baptizer and a member of the Vestry? I don't know, but that person would certainly make for lively Vestry meetings. There you might find the new Vestry person over Evangelism and Membership.

With the many newcomers, family guests, and Christmas/Easter people that attend services at this time of year, it's a perfect time to think about the hospitality of the church. Parish leaders may ask themselves, "What is our parish's process for welcoming and involving prospective members? Are we preparing their way into the church community, making it flat and easy terrain?"

John the baptizer was "the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'" He was wild and woolly, and a little weird, and yet was God's appointed servant to get the people ready for the coming of the Lord.

John spread the news, good news, that God's kingdom is near and you can be part of it, just turn to God. He taught that true repentance opened the door to God moving more powerfully in our lives.

I think John would be pleased if our parishes might take some time in Advent to consider how we might help those who are on the outside, who are perishing without the light of Christ, to find hope in Christ and to find a place amongst His people in the Church.

Evangelism is well described as "One beggar telling another beggar where to find bread." If people are hungry, they will look for bread and follow the di-

rection of even a wild, woolly and weird representative. John offered his listeners spiritual bread, as do we when we help people enter God's kingdom and the Church.

Helpful Tip - the Three Pew Rule:

The Rev. Canon Kevin Martin suggested the "Three Pew Rule" at last April's Evangelism Episcopal Style conference. Know that you are appointed by God, commissioned by Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit to do the hospitality ministry at church on Sunday morning. At the Peace, introduce yourself to everyone near you on your pew, the pew in front and in back. If you discover someone who is not a member of the church, take them to coffee and introduce them to others and especially the clergy.

It may seem like a small thing to talk to newcomers around the coffee pot at church, but it can make all the difference in a person's life.

Let us all do our part to prepare people to receive the good news of God and begin a life of service to Christ and the Church. — *The Rev. Cynthia Seeliger*

The Rev. Cynthia Seeliger is Assistant Rector at Church of the Good Shepherd Brentwood and is the Chair of the Diocesan Evangelism Committee.

St. Ann's Youth Retreat

The youth of St. Ann's Church Nashville (which also includes youth from St. Augustine's Chapel) went on retreat to Standing Stone State Park. The theme was "SoulMates, Friends for the Journey." Eleven youth and three adults discussed what makes a good friend and what it means to forgive. The group also spent time playing games such as Capture the Flag and Flashlight Tag.

They are looking to perform service projects in the East Nashville area and are open to suggestions. If you have any ideas for the youth of St. Ann's, contact Vicki Brown or Kristin Wells at 615-254-3534.

2nd "All Women Are Daughters" Retreat

All Women are Daughters, a retreat for women young and old, will present *You are the Vine, We are the Branches*, Friday-Sunday, November 7-9, at DuBose Conference Center Monteagle. The weekend provides women of all ages opportunities to develop and nurture intergenerational ties within our diocese.

Enjoy this precious space and time to rest, recreate and deepen your role as a child of God – whatever your stage in life. The Rev. Canon Pamela Snare and Denise Bentley are this year's featured speakers for the event.

The registration form can be found at www.episcopaldiocese-tn.org under the tab for Resources/Forms.

Faith Meets the Arts at St. George's

In September, St. George's Church Nashville launched a new program. Faith Meets the Arts - a First Wednesday Series on Christians at the Intersection of Christ and Culture is a series featuring prominent Christians demonstrating how they express their talent and faith through the creative arts.

Beth Nielson Chapman will perform November 5. A respected recording artist, she has had songs covered by Willie Nelson, Faith Hill and others. In 2004, she released an album of hymns sung in Latin and continues to sing about faith and spirituality.

Billy Cerveny will be presented on December 3. A touring singer/songwriter, Billy writes music for tv commercials. He has a degree in Philosophy from Trinity College in Hartford CT. This year, two of his songs were in films featured at the Tribeca Film Festival.

Programs begin at 6:30 PM and the events are free. Before each presentation, there is a dinner by reservation only. For more information or to make reservations, call 615-385-2150 x262 or email reserve@stgeorgesnashville.org.

All We See In the Seasons

As we move through Advent the sun commits to its final, quick plunge from the sky. The nights come quicker and colder. Leaves have already turned to fire and gold and are gone. The temperatures begin their work on us as we huddle and hurry from car to store to home. It is a rising excitement that builds within us as the sun outside leaves us. Rain begins to arrive as ice and even snow. Wreathes and mistletoe, candles and lights begin to appear and somewhere between Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve an evergreen tree blooms with decorations in our homes.

Innately, I have always felt that the year began around Christmas. The sun begins to slowly come back from its long descent as the Twelve Days roll along. It was many years before I realized the connection between the Seasons of the Church and the rhythms of the earth itself. In seeing this it dawned on me that perhaps my love of Christ-

mas as the beginning of the year had more to it than a childhood love of a long school vacation. There is something delightful for instance about a Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve. The air is so often crisp and dry, sometimes even specked with drifting snow. And it is so dark. Incense often wafts while carols are sung and the candles light up the night as we gather to wait on the rising light of the Christ Child.

Then think of those delightful foods. All the nuts, the apples and pears, oranges and pineapples from further south; turkeys, geese, and hams decked with spices and salts. Then there are the drinks, spiced wines or teas, hot chocolate and cider. There are pumpkin, mince, and pecan pies for desserts. At home shining package paper is torn wildly by children and adults alike.

Now think, not one of these things we've spent time with each year have not come as a blessing from the earth. Paper, food, and drinks; candles and incense; mistletoe, trees and wreathes; even the gifts themselves are all fash-

ioned in one way or another from the ground beneath our feet. The darkening of the year, the ice, snow, and cold that drive us to huddle close to each other in warmth and love. As the earth slowly spins its way through Advent and Christmas I cannot help but remember where all these good things arose from.

The reason for the season is certainly Jesus, but this same Word is that through which all things consist and have their being. This same God gifted us with a world and a world with us and called it good. The message of the Incarnation, and even the resurrection, is that we with the Christ Child are wed to matter and to this world. And it is perhaps 'meet and right' to give thanks for the goodness of this ball of mud and water, placed on a spinning and rotating journey around a sun and warmed from within by a heart of fire.
— Carl Badgley

Carl Badgley is a member of the Diocesan Environmental Team.

Score_Underscore!

On Friday, November 14, at 7:30 PM, Christ Church Cathedral Nashville presents Score_Underscore!

Experience the impact of music on what you see and feel in a film at Score_Underscore!. The performance will feature new, original musical scores written by Nashville composers for four short films, and live performances from some of Nashville's best musicians in a variety of instrumental combinations, according to the mood the composer is trying to convey.

Features composers are: Gary Nash - Professor of Composition at Fisk University; Jamie Liana - recording artist; Jerry Kimbrough - recording artist and adjunct professor of guitar at Blair School of Music, Vanderbilt University.

A film by Nashville filmmaker, Rob McDonald, will also be featured.

This concert is a collaboration of the Nashville Composers Association, the Nashville Film Festival and FilmNashville. It is sponsored by Friends of the



Cathedral as part of the Sacred Space for the City Arts Series.

Tickets are \$10 general, \$5 students, available at www.christcathedral.org/SacredSpace/ticketsales, or by calling 615-255-7729.

New Piano for Holy Cross Murfreesboro

Judy Homan, Senior Warden for Church of the Holy Cross Murfreesboro reports that they have a new baby grand piano at the church. Earlier this year, they were awarded a \$20,000 art grant from the Scheide Fund.



St. Mark's Nashville Admits 6 Daughters

The St. Mark's Chapter of the Daughters of the King in Antioch admitted six women in a service conducted by the Rev. Battle Beasley on September 28.

Two of the women are from Africa. Violet Mashingaidze is from Zimbabwe, and Clavenda Watson is from Liberia, where Fr. Beasley was born.

The chapter now numbers sixteen members, and is planning several service projects for women and the parish's mission to Ecuador.



Pictured is the St. Mark's Chapter, after the Service of Admission. New members are noted with an asterisk. Front row, from left, Susanne Symons and Betty McKee. Middle row, Ginger Maxwell*, Marcia Williams, Caprice Campbell*, Sherry Walker, Marty O'Reilly, Carey Hardison, Kathy Barney*, Lynn Poehl* and Clavenda Watson*. Back row, Violet Mashingaidze*, Donna Floyd, Pauline Hall, Kathy Larson, and Fr. Battle Beasley.

New Vestry Members at St. Philip's Nashville

St. Philip's Church Nashville held elections for new vestry members who will begin serving after the first of the year.

Annette Crankshaw transferred to St. Philip's from Bluffton SC where she was very active at The Church of the Cross there. She has worked on the In-reach Committee and is assistant chair of the Altar Guild.

Susan Skinner has been a member of St. Philip's since 1998. She holds a J.D. and M.B.A. from Tulane University and works as a book indexer and adjunct college instructor while homeschooling two daughters. She is a choir member, lay reader and co-leader of the Pastoral Care Committee among other positions of service.

John Jones is a father of three who has been very active in the renovation of the playground. He's volunteered in the nursery and serves on the Long Term Planning Committee. He attended recent Evangelism workshops and the Cursillo weekend.

Congratulations to those elected.

Choir Director Position Filled at St. Ann's

Rollie Mains has accepted the call to serve as Interim Director of Music at St. Ann's Nashville. Many know Rollie as the Music Director of the worship series First Fridays at Christ Church Cathedral Nashville.

Rollie is a graduate of Taylor University-Fort Wayne, Indiana. He is an accomplished producer, composer, arranger and musician. His credits include winning a Dove award.



St. Matthews Held Homecoming

St. Matthew's Church McMinnville 56th Homecoming Celebration was commemorated on September 21.

With 110 people in attendance (the largest number in years), Bishop Herlong, prior priests, long time friends, families, relocated members, and guests shared memories and fellowship, enjoyed by all.



Pet Blessings

Cadette Girl Scout Troop 1853 sponsored by St. Philip's Church Nashville

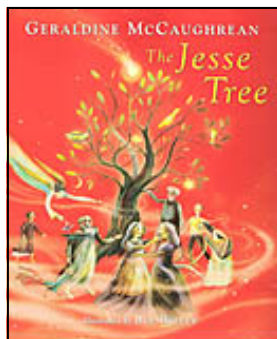


organized a Blessing of the Animals as their Silver Award project, held Sunday

October 5. The girls assisted the Rev. Vicki Burgess and the Rev. Patrick Soule by reading Bible verses and prayers during the ceremony. One girl accompanied each priest during the individual blessings and passed out medallions and certificates to the pet owners. Gail Bunyan, DVM and Howard Deck, DVM performed free pet checks on the animals. Pet food was collected and distributed by the troop to the Nashville Humane Society and to the Metro Animal Control. St. Philip's appreciated all the many hours of long work the girls and their leaders, Anne Bush and Ruth Sprouse, put into this well attended community parish event.

The Jesse Tree

There is a book by Geraldine McCaughrean, available online at www.episcopalbookstore.com, recommended for ages 5 and up, that tells the story of the Jesse Tree. The book's synopsis reads:



“As Mr. Butterfield carves a Jesse Tree in an old dusty church, a curious young boy distracts him, asking about the various symbols on the tree. Against his better judgment, the old man finds himself retelling the familiar Biblical tales that trace the lineage of Christ, from the Garden of Eden to Jesus' birth. Under the carpenter's skilled hands, the Jesse tree grows, and an unlikely friendship begins to take root as well.

“Geraldine McCaughrean's fresh retellings of familiar Bible events and Bee Willey's whimsical and striking illustrations create a rich and contemporary tale, perfect for reading during Advent or anytime.”

After sharing this book with your children, you may want to help them make a Jesse Tree for your family. For the tree, you might use a tabletop feather tree, wooden dowels glued into the shape of a tree or, if you're lucky enough to find it, a limb with branches which can be placed into a stand.

For the ornaments, you'll need construction paper, felt if you like, scissors, glue, markers, glitter and yarn, string or twine - there is no “right” way to do it.

The internet is a great source of templates for the ornaments - you can trace or copy the ones that are in the public domain. You'll need: a lion, a baby, a cow and a bear, from the prophecy of Isaiah to represent all nature living in peace; an apple from the story of the Garden of Eden; a rainbow from the

story of Noah; tablets representing the Ten Commandments; a star, a crown and a harp, all symbols of King David; a scroll to stand for the prophets; honey and locusts representing John the Baptist; tools for Joseph the carpenter and a lily for the Virgin Mary; the Greek letters Alpha and Omega to represent Christ, the beginning and the end.



For design suggestions, week by week in Advent, with corresponding scripture, visit www.domestic-church.com. Click on Fridge

Art, then scroll down to Advent and Christmas. Under that heading, you will see instruction for a Jesse Tree and templates you may use.

Your ornaments can be wooden discs with the image drawn on or can be cut out of the image itself. Your imagination can guide you. Be sure to leave room for a hole at the top of each ornament. When you're finished decorating, glue or tie a loop of thread or ribbon to make a hanger. When the glue is dry, the ornaments are ready to be hung. Each person can tell what the ornaments they made represents.

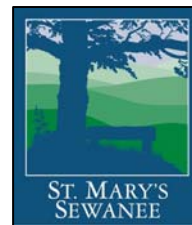
Journey to Bethlehem

With the beginning of Advent, several resources are available to encourage our preparation for the celebration of the birth of our Lord. Advent Calendars, wreath-lighting prayers, daily devotions - all are “tried and true.” A favorite idea given by Ed and Andrea Wills (now serving in Little Rock AR) is to put your crèche to use during the Advent season.

How many of us have crèche sets that we set up a few days before Christmas and then take down with the decorations? This year, set up your “Bethlehem” location at the beginning of Advent and start Mary and Joseph (and their donkey, if you have one) on their journey.

Share the task/joy of moving the figures

from window-sill to curio-cabinet to china hutch each day among the family members. The encouragement to all is to have fun and learn about the “journey” to Christmas as we do the steps ourselves. And, past experience tells that all ages enjoy participating as we prepare for Bethlehem and the birth of our Lord. *Gloria in excelsis Deo!*—
The Rev. Tom Hotchkiss



St. Mary's Sewanee Winter 2008 Programs and Retreats

November 14-16

The Journey of the Beloved:
Healing Our Identity in God
Michael Hryniuk, Ph. D.

November 16-18

Centering Prayer Retreat as an
11th Step Practice
Roberta Oster & Becky Hannah

December 5-7

New Creation-Renewed Creation
Living into the Promise of Advent
Wendy Wright, Ph. D.

December 12-14

Advent Centering Prayer Retreat
The Rev. Tom Ward

For more information
please check our website:
www.StMarysSewanee.org
or telephone us at (931) 598-5342

PLEASE JOIN US...
Thursday, December 18
2:00-4:00 PM
for our second annual
Diocesan
Holiday Open House
50 Vantage Way, Suite 107,
Nashville
To RSVP by December 12,
call 615-25-3322

Around the diocese

November 2008

- 2 All Saints Evensong, Christ Church Cathedral Nashville
- 2 25th Anniversary, Church of the Resurrection Franklin
- 2 *Bishop's Visitation, All Saints' Church Smyrna*
- 2 Ministry Fair, St. Joseph of Arimathea Hendersonville
- 2 Baptisms, St. Ann's Church Nashville
- 2 Choral Concert, St. Paul's Church Franklin
- 5 Faith Meets the Arts, St. George's Church Nashville
- 6 Magdalene Fall Fundraiser, Vanderbilt Nashville
- 7-9 All Women Are Daughters, DuBose Conf. Ctr. Monteagle
- 9 *Bishop's Visitation, St. Barnabas' Church Tullahoma*
- 9 Art Show, St. Paul's Church Franklin
- 11 Youth Choir Evensong, St. George's Church Nashville
- 16 *Bishop's Visitation, St. David's Church Nashville*
- 16 Installation of Rick Britton, St. Ann's Church Nashville
- 23 Advent Fair, St. George's Church Nashville
- 27 Boulevard Bolt, St. George's Church Nashville
- 30 *Bishop's Visitation, Church of the Advent Nashville*

December 2008

- 3 Faith Meets the Arts, St. George's Church Nashville
- 7 *Bishop's Visitation, Christ Church Cathedral Nashville*
- 7 Outreach Fair, St. George's Church Nashville
- 7 Lessons and Carols, St. George's Church Nashville
- 8 Messiah Sing-In, Christ Church Cathedral Nashville
- 10 Nashville Unlimited Benefit, Christ Church Cathedral Nashville
- 13 Bishop and Council Meeting, St. Augustine's Chapel Nashville
- 13 Annual English Tea, St. Paul's Church Franklin
- 14 Lessons and Carols, Christ Church Cathedral Nashville
- 14 *Bishop's Visitation, Church of the Epiphany Sherwood*
- 14 *Bishop's Visitation, St. Agnes' Church Cowan*
- 14 Christmas Pageant, St. George's Church Nashville
- 17 New Building Dedication, St. Augustine's Chapel Nashville
- 21 *Bishop's Visitation, St. Bernard's Church Gruetli-Laager*
- 24 *Bishop's Visitation, Christ Church Cathedral Nashville*
- 28 *Bishop's Visitation, St. Bede's Church Manchester*

Italics denote Bishop Bauerschmidt's visitations
For a full listing of events throughout the diocese,
see the Calendar of Events at www.episcopal-diocese-tn.org

Attend this Conference. Gain Insight. Develop Stewardship Strategies. GROW!



The Rt. Rev. Dr. Greg Rickel

living OUR FAITH

STEWARDSHIP IN THE 21ST CENTURY

February 11 - 12, 2009 Gatlinburg, Tennessee

Pre-conference event for Diocesan Stewardship Staff

February 10 - 11



Fran McKendree

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KEYNOTERS INCLUDE

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Western Washington

MUSICIAN Fran McKendree

HOST DIOCESE East Tennessee

SPONSORING DIOCESES Atlanta, Kentucky,
North Carolina, Tennessee, West Tennessee

▶ CALL 800.699.2669 (US & CAN)

316.686.0470

▶ E-MAIL tens@tens.org

▶ WEBSITE <http://tens.org>



POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Nursery Worker

St. Mark's Church Nashville is searching for a nursery worker to provide loving care for ages infant through 2 ½ years. Additional support will be coordinated through church member volunteers. Hours are 10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon every Sunday. This is a paid position. The successful applicant will be required to attend the Diocese's Safeguarding God's Children Workshop. Please contact Becky Meyer at 615-366-1935 for further details.

Childcare Providers

St. Ann's Church in East Nashville is seeking child care providers for Sunday mornings for 4 hours and other wor-

ship services and events of the parish as negotiated. If interested, please submit resume with references to rick@stannsnashville.org.

Childcare Providers

St. Philip's Church Nashville is searching for a constant caring presence in the nursery to provide loving childcare for ages infant through 4 years. Additional support will be coordinated through church member volunteers. Hours are every Sunday from 7:45 AM - 12:00 Noon. This is a paid position. Some training will be required (CPR, First Aid, Child Abuse Prevention) and may be provided if needed. Please call the church at 615-883-4595 and ask for the Rev. Patrick Soule.

The January issue of *Connections*
will be a print edition with bonus features online
at www.episcopaldiocese-tn.org.
It will feature the upcoming
Diocesan Annual Convention



The Episcopal Diocese of Tennessee

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