



The St. Francis Bulle-

FROM THE RECTOR:

The season of Advent is upon us. Preparation time for the celebration of the birth of Christ. Each year I encourage you to spend some time to reflect on the nature of this great feast of the church and most important event in our own Christian lives. Our Advent season is a bit truncated this year due to the fact that the fourth Sunday of Advent is also Christmas Eve. That leaves us only three full weeks of Advent and preparation time.

What should you do to prepare? I suggest reading the Bible more during this time, especially Isaiah 9 and 11 and from 40 to the end. These readings are rich in messianic prophecy. They stir the spirit and help us reflect on the true meaning of the Incarnation. Spend a little extra time in quiet with the Lord. Ask Him to help you make this feast a reality in your own life so that you can live as a child of God even as Jesus is the Son of God.

Because the fourth Sunday of Advent falls on Christmas Eve, we will not have our traditional decorating party. For any of you who wish to help decorate the church for Christmas this year, please plan on staying after coffee on the 24. That's when we will decorate.

celebrate this great mystery of our faith.

SOMETHING NEW

At a recent meeting the Vestry decided that it would be a nice thing to have an appreciation dinner for all the volunteers at St. Francis. More details will be forthcoming as time goes on but we are looking toward the end of January. The party will be open to anyone who volunteers in any ministry at St. Francis. In next month's newsletter you will have the opportunity to RSVP so that we will know who's coming. We appreciate all that everyone does here at the parish and we'd like to say thanks. Watch for more details.

Also coming, hopefully in January, we will take another stab at a parish photo directory. Many of you were not even with us the last time we did this, so it is time to do it again. I will be contacting some people who do this sort of opportunity to get your picture taken. If you've been wondering who all these people are that you see every Sunday but were afraid to ask, the photo directory will give you the opportunity to look in private and then impress those whom you have never met when you address them by name.



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

Thank you to all you supported our Operation Christmas Child project for 2006! The children in the Sunday school classes, along with a few adults, were able to fill 33 boxes with the items donated by St. Francis parishioners. Our goal was 20 boxes and we were close to not having enough shoe boxes! The check donations were more than enough to cover the \$7 per box that was requested for processing and delivery. The volunteers at the collection station very much appreciated the cash donations as many people give the boxes, but not the monetary donation.

Over the course of the next year, we would welcome the donation of shoe boxes. It works best if the lid is separate from the box and if the box is the standard size. We can store these in the attic until next year.

During Advent, the Sunday school classes will make a class Advent wreath and have a short service each Sunday to light the candles in addition to the normal class activities. The younger two classes will be preparing for the Christmas Pageant. Thanks to Julie Rambin and Claire Ducker who continue to teach the younger two classes and to Jim Crandell for leading the older students.

Christmas Pageant 2006: On the morning of the 24th, the younger two Sunday school classes will present a Christmas Pageant in the Parish House at 10:00 am. If you enjoy watching children aged 12 and under dress up in period costumes and act out the Christmas story, please come and be a part of the audience.

MAIN STREET BETHLEHEM

On Sunday, Dec. 3rd, a group of adults and children from St. Francis will converge at Main Street Bethlehem in Burnet. Each year, the First Baptist Church presents a live portrayal of Bethlehem the night that Jesus was born. The area is packed with townspeople, soldiers, crafters, sellers, blacksmiths, etc. all in costumes. Each will interact with you as though they were in Bethlehem.

The opening time is 6 pm in Burnet. If you are interested in carpooling or caravanning to Burnet, plan to meet at the church at 4 pm. If you would like to drive up yourself, grab a set of directions from the bulletin board in the Parish House. When you arrive in Burnet, give Wanda Stults a call on her cell to find out where she is in the line. This is a very popular event and much of the time will be spent waiting in line to get in. It is a great time to visit with your friends from St. Francis.

-Amy Crandell

GOOD NEWS FOR SMALL GROUPS!

It's encouraging to see the number of people whom have made a commitment to participate in the small group gatherings. It is our intent to begin the actual meetings by the middle of January, which means all who are interested in participating should sign up by December 17th. The sign-up sheet is near the dessert table.

The foundation of our small groups will be a commitment to confidentiality. We will look for how the Holy Spirit is at work in and around us, and then join in personal prayer requests. A discussion of the week's Propers (OT, NT, psalm and gospel readings) will follow, and finally a brief introduction to one of the many spiritual disciplines. Some of these are: worship, Bible reading, contemplation, and the experience of *koinonia*.

There will be ample time to develop a unique identity, including the best meeting time for each

group. The time commitment for each gathering should be less than two hours a week. Here is a chance for us to experience more of the blessings of God.

In His Love,
John and Wanda



ALTAR FLOWERS

If you would like to make a memorial or Thanksgiving contribution of poinsettias or church decorations during our upcoming Advent season (which starts December 3rd), please write your check to St. Francis Altar Guild, and give it to either Shirley Ellis, Susan Rambin, or Angie McCown. Please include a note as to how you wish the acknowledgment to appear in our Order of Worship.

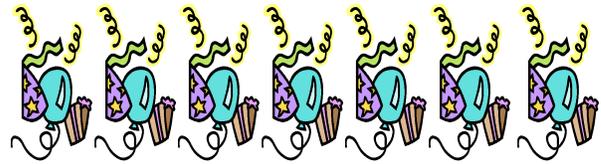
-Shirley Ellis



MOTHERS' PRAYER GROUP

All mothers and grandmothers of the church are invited to attend the mothers' prayer group, held in the Parish Hall. The group spends an hour on the second Monday of every month at 11 a.m. praying for their families. For more information, call Kay Francis at (512) 868-1092.

Rector: The Reverend Len Giacalone
Senior Warden: Mark Rambin
Junior Warden: Keith Harrell

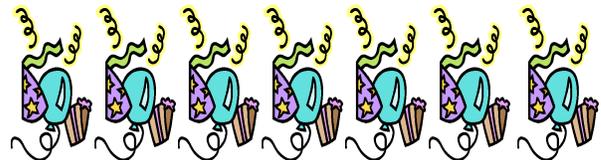


Birthdays

- 4 Michael Faught
Elizabeth Douglas
- 5 Wanda Stults
James Rambin
Joy Smith
- 9 Cassandra Jensen
- 10 Cindy Phillips
- 11 Rebecca Hoard
- 14 Mildred Farris
- 18 Karl David Stephan
Angie McCown
Elaine Williams
- 21 Tricia Denslow
- 25 Dayna Moss
- 26 Donald Kitchell
- 28 Rev. John Stults
- 29 Bill Burrow
- 30 Suzanne Faught BD

Anniversaries

- 7 Craig and Jill Brasuell
- 21 Kyle and Leanne Read
- 22 Byron and Melissa Elliott
- 30 Arthur and Audrey Woodgate



Associate Rector: The Reverend John Stults
Organist: Sylvia Kelley
Server: Ray Merrill

Newsletter Submissions

Any parishioner that has news of any kind they would like to share with everyone is welcome to send it in writing to Erika Denslow at 640 B Lakeside Dr., Wimberley, TX 78676 or to her e-mail address (triciadenslow@yahoo.com). If received by the 20th, it will appear in next month's newsletter.

St. Francis Episcopal Church

1408 West 9th Street

Austin, Texas 78703

DECEMBER

2006

1	Evening Prayer, 5:30 p.m. Games Night, 6:00-8:30 p.m.	17	<u>Holy Communion</u> , 9:30 a.m., and 11:00 a.m., Zephaniah 3:14-20, Psalm 85, Phil. 4:4-9, Luke 3:7-18
3	<u>Holy Communion</u> , 9:30 a.m., <u>Morn- ing Prayer and Holy Communion</u> , 11:00 a.m., Zechariah 14:4-9, Psalm 50, (1 Thess. 3:9-13), Luke 21:25-31		<i>Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.</i>
6	Adult Christian Education, 7:00 p.m. in parish hall.	22	Evening Prayer, 5:30 p.m.
8	Evening Prayer, 5:30 p.m.	24	<u>Holy Communion</u> , 9:30 a.m., and 11:00 a.m., Micah 5:2-4, Psalm 80, Hebrews 10:5-10, Luke 1:39-56 Christmas Pageant 10:00 a.m., and Church Decorating after 11am ser- vice.
10	<u>Holy Communion</u> , 9:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m., Baruch 5:1-9, Psalm 126, Phil. 1:1-11, Luke 3:1-6		<i>No Sunday School</i>
	<i>Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.</i>		Lessons and Carols, <u>Holy Commun- ion</u> , 10:30 p.m.
11	Mother's Prayer Group, 11 a.m. Vestry Meeting, 5:30 p.m.	25	<u>Holy Communion</u> , 10:00 a.m., Isaiah 9:2-7, Psalm 96, Titus 2:11- 14, Luke 2:1-20
13	Adult Christian Education, 7:00 p.m. in parish hall.	26	Caritas, 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
15	Evening Prayer, 5:30 p.m.	29	Evening Prayer, 5:30 p.m.
		31	<u>Holy Communion</u> , 9:30 a.m., and 11:00 a.m., Isaiah 61:10-62:3, Psalm 147, Galatians 3:23-25,4:4-7, John 1:1-18