



The St. Francis Bulletin

FROM THE RECTOR:

Christmas this year...

Although we are barely into Advent, it is never too early to begin thinking about our celebration of Christmas. Since starting a little early is not too out of line we will have our annual Christmas decorating party after the 11:00 am service on the Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 21. As you know, the church decorating doesn't take all that long. There will be ample time to have a bite to eat and a bit to drink before we actually celebrate the birth of our Savior.

On Wednesday, December 24, we will have our annual Lessons and Carols followed by Holy Communion. This year, however, we are going to begin the service at **8:00 p.m.** I have decided to try to entice more people to join us on Christmas Eve, and the earlier hour may be helpful. We shall see. This year our program will feature a string trio and a number of pieces will be played before the service, beginning at 7:40 pm. You are, of course, perfectly welcome and encouraged to be present for the music beforehand.

On Christmas morning we will celebrate Holy Communion at 10:00 am. For those of you who are not able to be present for our Christmas Eve service, this mass is the perfect way to start your Christmas day.

I realize that many of you will be traveling to other parts of the country to celebrate with family and friends. However, if your family is coming to Austin, invite them to come with you. Invite your friends as well. One way to slow down the complete secularization of Christmas is to honor Our Lord with the rest of the Christian community on the anniversary of His birth.

On Sunday, December 28, it will be my privilege to baptize Andrew and Jessica Brummett's twin girls, Anna and Erin. Baptisms are always wonderful occasions since we welcome new members into the Body of Christ. It is also a chance for each one of us to recommit ourselves to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ through the renewal of our baptismal promises.

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

Mark your calendars for the annual parish Volunteer Appreciation Dinner. The event is tentatively scheduled for Saturday evening, January 24. The time and place are still yet to be determined but barring any unforeseen circumstances we will honor our volunteers again this year. You are the ones who make this parish run and this is just a little way of saying thanks to all those who donate their time in any capacity to our parish or its ministries.

From the Rector (continued):

As we get closer to date there will be a sign-up sheet to which you must add your name if you wish to attend.

Pledge Drive

I realize that our Pledge Drive for 2009 should be over by now since I asked that you have your pledge cards in by November 30. But there are always those who wait until after the last minute either because they forget or because they like that personal one on one call from our Treasurer. Whatever the reason, if you have not yet sent in your pledge, please do so today. It's never too late.

Christian Education for Children and Youth



Sunday school classes continue to meet each Sunday at 9:30 a.m. in the parish house. The class of youth in grades 6-12 discuss the lessons that will be read during the upcoming service. Thanks to Tim Williams who led the class during the first couple of months. Mike Ready is currently leading the class. The younger children completed their unit on Old Testament stories. We will move onto New Testament stories beginning with Advent 1. Susan Rabin and Amy Crandell alternate teaching the class with staffing the nursery.

On November 17, we packed 26 boxes for Operation Christmas Child with donated and purchased items. Thanks to all who contributed funds or items for the boxes.

Christian Education for Children and Youth (continued):

Upcoming events include our annual Christmas Pageant on the December 21st, the 4th Sunday in Advent at 10:15 am. If you have family visiting that day with children who might be interested in non-speaking parts in the pageant, please let Amy Crandell know. You can't have too many angels or shepherds -- costumes are provided. Everyone is invited to see the children act out the Christmas story.

The schedule includes a couple weeks off from classes for the Christmas break. No classes will be held December 28 or January 4th. We will start again on January 11, 2009.

Thanks to all the parents who bring their children to Sunday school. We welcome visitors anytime with open arms. Finally, please include the St. Francis Sunday school program in your prayers.

5th Sunday Activities

November 30 is a fifth Sunday -- a day designated for a potluck luncheon after the 11:00 service. Plan to bring something good to eat and enjoy the culinary talents of others who attend. This is always an enjoyable experience. Also on the 5th Sunday: A small group of St. Francis members has maintained this small ministry to the residents of the Nursing Home and Retirement Center on Burnet Lane for a few years now. We sing, pray, read the Bible, and visit with the residents who come or are brought to the dining hall from 3:30-4:30. More voices are always welcome. See Claire Ducker for more information.

St. Francis Choir

We are blessed with the wonderful voices in our St. Francis choir. We have a core group of singers who faithfully attend church and stay after for a short choir practice. Our choir members are Victoria Stults, Claire Ducker, Katie and Ed Sandlin, Tim Williams and Amy and Jim Crandell. Being able to consistently rehearse, even for a half hour a week, is paying off. We have moved from singing unison or two part music to three parts. We prepare the music and sing when the music is a worthy and acceptable offering to God's glory during the 11:00 service. Thanks to our organist, Paula Blaha for her leadership. More voices are always welcome!

Church Christmas Celebration

The church will be decorated for the Christmas service after the 11:00 service on Sunday, December 21st. Help is needed to make the church festive. After this, stay around for our Christmas Party in the parish house. Pizza will be provided, but the Christmas goodies and drinks are potluck. Bring something festive to eat or drink and stay around to sing all the Christmas carols you can.

Christmas Poinsettia Donations

For the 12 days of Christmas, the church will be beautifully decorated with poinsettias. If you wish to make a donation for the poinsettias as a remembrance or a memorial please give your donation to Angie McCown or Nancy Critchfield-Jones, or you may put your donation in an envelope marked as a donation for the poinsettias in the collection plate. Envelopes for this purpose are located on the table in the back of the church.

Rector: The Reverend Len Giacolone

Senior Warden: Mark Rambin

Junior Warden: Keith Harrell



Birthdays

- 4 Michael Faught
Elizabeth Douglas
- 5 Wanda Stults
James Rambin
- 9 Cassandra Jensen
- 10 Cindy Phillips
- 11 Rebecca Hoard
- 14 Mildred Farris
- 18 Karl David Stephan
Angie McCown
Elaine Williams
- 21 Tricia Denslow
- 28 Rev. John Stults
- 30 Suzanne Faught

Anniversaries

- 21 Kyle and Leanne Read
- 22 Byron and Melissa Elliott
- 25 Victor and Jeni Carsrud
- 30 Arthur and Audrey Woodgate
- 31 Gary and Gayle Horn



Associate Rector: The Reverend John Stults

Organist: Paula Blaha

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 Tricia 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

2008

-
- | | | | |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2 | <i>Anglican Rosary, 6:00 pm</i> | 16 | <i>Anglican Rosary, 6:00 pm</i> |
| 3 | <u>Experiencing God, 7:00 pm</u> | 19 | Evening Prayer, 6:00 pm Church |
| 5 | Evening Prayer, 6:00 pm Church <i>Games night, 6:30pm</i> | 21 | <u>Holy Communion,</u> 9:30 am and 11:00 am 2 Samuel 7:4, 8-16, Psalm 132 Romans 16:25-27, Luke 1:26-38 <i>Children's Sunday School, 9:30 am Parish Hall</i> |
| 7 | <u>Holy Communion, 9:30 am, Morning Prayer and Holy Communion,</u> <i>11:00 am,</i> Isaiah 40:1-11, Psalm 85 (2 Peter 3:8-15a, 18), Mark 1:1-8 <i>Children's Sunday School, 9:30 am Parish Hall</i> | 21 | <i>Christmas Decorating Party after 11:00 am service</i> |
| 8 | <i>Vestry Meeting, 5:30 pm</i> | 23 | <i>Anglican Rosary, 6:00 pm</i> |
| 9 | <i>Anglican Rosary, 6:00 pm</i> | 24 | Christmas Eve. Lessons and Carols with Holy Communion, 8:00 pm. |
| 10 | <u>Experiencing God, 7:00 pm</u> | 25 | <u>CHRISTMAS DAY</u> <u>Holy Communion,</u> 9:30 am and 11:00 am Isaiah 9:2-7, Psalm 96 Titus 2:11-14, Luke 2:1-20 |
| 12 | Evening Prayer, 6:00 pm Church | 28 | <u>Holy Communion,</u> 9:30 am and 11:00 am Isaiah 61:10-62:3, Psalm 147:13-21 Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7, John 1:1-18 |
| 14 | <u>Holy Communion,</u> 9:30 am and 11:00 am Isaiah 65:17-25, Psalm 126 1 Thess. 5:12-28, John 1:6-8, 19-28 <i>Children's Sunday School, 9:30 am Parish Hall</i> | 30 | <i>Anglican Rosary, 6:00 pm</i> |
| 15 | <i>Mother's and Grandmother's Prayer Group, 11:00am</i> | | |