



## The St. Francis Bulletin

### **FROM THE RECTOR:**

As most of you know by now, Father John Stults has resigned as the Associate Rector of St. Francis. This has caused some confusion and consternation among some of you and understandably so. I do not intend to go into great detail about the situation but I want you to know that I am deeply sorry that all of this has occurred and that I am praying daily for healing in the parish. I also want you to know that I am available to you should you wish to speak with me about it. As your pastor I am responsible for the spiritual well-being of the parish and I take that responsibility seriously. Please let me know if I can help.

We are about to approach the season of Advent and that means that Christmas is not far off. Advent is a time for preparation. Before running headlong into Christmas, it would be appropriate for us to take some time away from our very busy lives to recall why we celebrate Christmas. "The Word was made flesh and made his dwelling among us and we have seen his glory, the glory of the Son coming from the Father, full of grace and truth." There is ample material for meditation and reflection for the entire season of Advent in that very simple but powerful verse from St. John's Gospel. What does His coming mean? How am I different because of it? What does my life say about who He is and who I can become because of Him?

We will decorate the church for the Christmas season after the 11:00 am Holy Communion service on December 23, the last Sunday of Advent. There is usually a little party that goes along with that and I sure someone will see to those details.

On Monday, December 24, Christmas Eve, we will celebrate the traditional Lessons and Carols at 8:00pm followed by Holy Communion, the first

Eucharist of Christmas. We have done pretty much the same service of Lessons and Carols since I have been here. The music department is talking about doing a few different things for the carol portion of the service. I know that it will be appropriate and well done. Please come and join us on Christmas Eve.

At 10:00 am on Christmas morning, we will also celebrate Holy Communion for those who cannot worship with us on the evening before. There will be music at this service, but it will be a more subdued celebration of Christmas. Please try to celebrate at least once on Christmas eve or Christmas day. These celebrations of our faith are always wonderful and I especially encourage you to come if you have never celebrated Christmas with us before.

Even though December is pretty busy, our Confirmation class will continue for the first two Tuesdays in December. It is my hope that we can have Confirmation early in the new year. We have a good class comprised of both adults and youth, some of whom wish to be confirmed and some who are just auditing the class for their own personal benefit.

We have received as a gift from someone in the parish a new purple chasuble and stole to be used during the seasons of Advent and Lent. The one we have been using is made of wool and unfortunately, some moths got to it early on in our possession of it. The new vestment is made of a lighter wool and steps will be taken immediately to protect it from similar damage. I am most grateful for this beautiful gift and I'm sure it will enhance our worship during the more penitential seasons in our liturgical calendar.

## Sunday School News

For the younger class (grade 4 and below), a lesson on Advent and Isaiah's prophecies was presented and the family Advent wreaths were created on November 25th. The remainder of December will be devoted to stories from Luke surrounding the Christmas story - Elizabeth and Zechariah on the 2nd, Mary and Joseph on the 9th, the birth and the shepherds on the 16th. Thanks to Rebecca Hoard for leading this group.

The older class of students in 5th - 8th grades continue with their lessons from the **Teach Deep** curriculum on the Church. Lessons in November were from a unit titled **Take Aim** where they explored from Acts what our mission is as God's people today. The lessons had the students reflect to see if what they are doing is what Jesus set them out to do. In December, after completing the above unit, the class will move on to a unit titled **Contagious Faith**. The lessons look at how the early followers of Jesus shared their faith to learn how God still designs us to be His voice and hands today. Thanks to Doug Cooper for leading this group.

After a two week vacation on December 23rd and the 30th, classes will resume on Epiphany, January 6, 2013.

There will be no Christmas pageant this year. After the last month's appeal for someone to direct the pageant, no one stepped forward. Be thinking about if you can do this next year! We have lots of willing and budding actors and readers. The shortage seems to be in adults to direct the crew.

Please continue to include the Sunday school program at St. Francis in your prayers.

## Operation Christmas Child

After an admittedly late start in the request for donations, members of the congregation came through for Operation Christmas Child! An annual project of the Sunday school since 2002, the children and youth in the Sunday school look forward to packing the shoe boxes that are ultimately sent to children around the world. The day was quite exciting as 19 of the 20 students who could come to Sunday school were in attendance - that hardly every happens. The parish house was a busy place as older students were teamed up with

younger to fill the boxes. After the dust settled, 51 boxes were packed and delivered along with a \$357 check for handling. Thanks to everyone who donated items, the shoe boxes or cash to help with the handling charges.

For the record, this is what we have done in the past:

2006 -33 boxes

2007- 23 boxes

2008- 26 boxes

2009- 34 boxes

2010- 29 boxes

2011- 45 boxes

2012- 51 boxes

There are no records of donations from 2002-2005, but it was fewer than 30 as we wrapped each shoe box before filling it during those years. It may not be possible to pack more boxes than 51 in an hour, so it was a job well done and definitely worthwhile.

## Prayer Opportunities at St Francis

Prayer is the most powerful tool we have to draw closer to God and to determine what His will is for us. Consider joining one of the following prayer groups that meet regularly:

- *Tuesdays at 12 pm noon*, the Anglican Rosary is said. This can be a meaningful way to pray. Come check it out -- beads, the order and instructions will be provided.
- *Wednesdays at 7 pm, Prayers for Transformation are said*. Each week, the hour begins with reading the Litany and Penitential Office from the Prayer book. The next part is reading a powerful prayer called **Daniel's Prayer for Our Times** based on Daniel 9:3-19 and another prayer title **Prayer in These Days of Terrorism**. The next 30 minutes are for extemporaneous prayer, to share passages from the Bible or to read other prayers that seem to fit. We may also sing either from the hymnal or simple songs from memory. The service almost always ends with the singing of the Lord's Prayer. Our country is still in need of transformation. Please join us.
- *Thursdays at 6 pm, Evening Prayer is said*. There is no homily, but the lessons read are from the prayer book. From page 90 to 263 are collects, epistles and gospels to be used throughout the year. Since the lessons are not used on the appointed Sunday, we read the lesson on during this service. We are usually done in about 20 minutes.

- *The first Saturday of each month, the Prayer Walkers meet:* This small group meets at 9:00 am (Saturday, Dec. 1st this month) at the parish house for a quick prayer and then carpool to get to the starting point. We never know exactly what we will be praying for. An appeal is made to the Holy Spirit to direct our prayers, to give us the inspiration and the words to lift up many situations and people in prayer. We usually walk a little slowly for a block or less and then stop and pray. This continues at a rather slow pace until around 10:30 when we walk back to the cars and return for closing prayers at the parish house.
- *The third Thursday of each month at 1:30 pm, a small group of mothers meets to pray extemporaneously for their own children and grandchildren, plus all the children in the parish. The model of ACTS is used -- prayers of adoration, confession, thanksgiving and supplication. All prayers are short -- breath prayers. You only say what you can in one breath. The women who meet have grown children, so this is not the young, but for any woman desiring to pray for her children.*



### **Birthday**

|    |                                     |
|----|-------------------------------------|
| 4  | Michael Faught<br>Elizabeth Douglas |
| 5  | Wanda Stults<br>James Rambin        |
| 7  | David Malish                        |
| 9  | Cassandra Jensen                    |
| 10 | Cindy Phillips                      |
| 11 | Rebecca Hoard                       |
| 14 | Mildred Farris                      |
| 16 | Catherine Coley                     |
| 17 | Camille Kalash                      |
| 18 | Karl David Stephan<br>Angie McCown  |
| 21 | Tricia Denslow                      |
| 28 | Rev. John Stults                    |
| 30 | Suzanne Faught                      |

### **Christmas Poinsettias**

For the duration of Advent from December 2nd through the 23rd, there will be no flowers on the altar. This bareness will be in strong contrast with the 12 days of Christmas and on into Epiphany when the altar and the entire church will be beautifully decorated with flowers and poinsettias. If you wish to make a donation for the poinsettias as a remembrance, memorial, and/or thank offering, please use an envelope from the table next to the church door to enclose your donation. Fill the envelope front out as appropriate and place in the wooden box on the same table.

### **Anniversary**

|    |                            |
|----|----------------------------|
| 21 | Kyle and Leanne Read       |
| 22 | Jerry and Lisa Bordelon    |
| 30 | Arthur and Audrey Woodgate |
| 31 | Gary and Gayle Horn        |



**Rector: The Rev. Canon Len Giacalone**

**Senior Warden: Mark Rambin**

**Junior Warden: Keith Harrell**

**Organist: Paula Blaha**

**Servers: Ray Merrill, Ed Sandlin,**

### **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 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 Anglican Church

1408 West 9th Street  
Austin, Texas 78703

## December 2012

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|----|--|----|--|
| 1  | Austin City Prayer Walk, 9am   | 16 | <u>Holy Communion</u> , 9:30 am and 11:00 am<br>Zephaniah 3:14-20                      Psalm 85<br>Philippians 4:4-9                      Luke 3:7-18<br>Sunday School                   |
| 2  | <u>Morning Prayer and Holy Communion</u> ,<br>9:30 am and 11:00 am<br>Zechariah 14:4-9                      Psalm 50:1-6<br>1 Thessalonians 3:9-13                      Luke 21:25-31<br>Sunday School | 18 | Anglican Rosary, 12 noon   |
| 4  | Anglican Rosary, 12 noon;<br>Confirmation Class, 7:00 pm   | 19 | Transformation Prayer Group, 7pm   |
| 5  | Transformation Prayer Group, 7pm   | 20 | Mothers' Prayer Group, 1:30pm<br>Evening Prayer, 6pm   |
| 6  | Evening Prayer, 6pm  | 23 | <u>Holy Communion</u> , 9:30 am and 11:00 am<br>Micah 5:2-4                      Psalm 80<br>Hebrews 10:5-10                      Luke 1:39-56<br>Decorate Church for Christmas, 12:30pm |
| 9  | <u>Holy Communion</u> , 9:30 am and 11:00 am<br>Baruch 5:1-9                      Psalm 126<br>Philippians 1:1-11                      Luke 3:1-6<br>Sunday School                                     | 24 | Lessons and Carols, Holy Communion, 8:00 pm  |
| 10 | Vestry Meeting, 5:30pm   | 25 | CHRISTMAS Holy Communion, 10:00 am<br>Isaiah 9:2-7                      Psalm 96<br>Titus 2:11-14                      Luke 2:1-20   |
| 11 | Anglican Rosary, 12 noon;<br>Confirmation Class, 7:00 pm   | 30 | Holy Communion, 9:30 am and 11 am<br>Isaiah 61:10-62:3                      Psalm 147<br>Galatians 3:23-25, 4:4-7                      John 1:1-18<br>POT LUCK LUNCH, 12:30 PM           |
| 12 | Transformation Prayer Group, 7pm   |    |  |
| 13 | Evening Prayer, 6pm  |    |  |