



St. Bartholomew's
Anglican Church
Parish Newsletter

Advent Edition - November 27, 2005

*Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks,
so longeth my soul after thee, O God.*

Girl's Choir During the Bishop's recent visit to consecrate our building and institute the new rector, we experienced a wonderful new phenomenon at St. Bart's: a Girl's Choir. Six girls participated in the 'debut performance', and they sang a special Anthem with organ accompaniment, as well as assisting with the Hymns and Service Music. Since then, they have been pictured in the journal of the American Prayerbook Society, *The Mandate*, and are also featured on our new parish website, st-bartholomews.org. It is our hope that they will sing on a regular basis, beginning with one Sunday a month. Fr. Daniel and Josephine, being university trained musicians, are eager to share their expertise, and new girls who would like to join are most welcome. The next performance of the Girl's Choir will be on the 1st Sunday in Advent, November 27th.



**Parish Calendar for
Advent & Christmastide**

Sunday, November 27, Advent I

8:30 Matins
9:00 Bible Study
10:00 Holy Communion
5:30 Evensong

Wednesday, November 30th, St. Andrew, Apostle

10:00 Matins & Holy Communion
5:30 Evensong
6:00 Supper & Rector's Class

Sunday, December 4, Advent II

8:30 Matins
9:00 Bible Study
10:00 Holy Communion
5:30 Evensong

Sunday, December 11, Advent III

8:30 Matins
9:00 Bible Study
10:00 Holy Communion
5:30 Evensong

Sunday, Dec. 18, Advent IV

8:30 Matins
9:00 Bible Study
10:00 Holy Communion, Greening of the Church
5:30 Evensong

Saturday, Dec. 24, Christmas Eve

8:30 Matins
5:30 Family Evensong & Carol Service, Christingle
11:00 pm Midnight Mass

Sunday, Dec. 25, The Nativity of our Lord

10:00 Matins & Holy Communion
5:30 Evensong

Monday, Dec. 26, St. Stephen, Deacon & Martyr

10:00 Matins & Holy Communion
5:30 Evensong

Tuesday, Dec. 27, St. John, Apostle & Evangelist

10:00 Matins & Holy Communion
5:30 Evensong

Wednesday, Dec. 28, The Holy Innocents

10:00 Matins & Holy Communion
5:30 Evensong

Sunday, Jan. 1, The Circumcision of Christ

8:30 Matins
10:00 Holy Communion
5:30 Evensong

Friday, Jan. 6, The Epiphany

10:00 Matins & Holy Communion
5:30 Evensong

*A Prayer of
St. Richard of Chichester*



Thanks be to thee,
my Lord Jesus Christ,
For all the benefits
that thou hast given me;
For all the pains and insults
thou hast borne for me.

O, most merciful redeemer,
friend and brother,
May I know thee more clearly;
Love thee more dearly;
And follow thee more nearly.

St. Richard (c1197-1253) was Bishop of the ancient Diocese of Chichester in the South of England. He was a scholar and a man of deep spirituality who administered his diocese well and did much to raise the standards of his clergy. His shrine can be visited today at Chichester Cathedral.



Parish Notes

• **The Parish Bible Study Class** will meet each Sunday at 9:00 a.m. in the Parish Hall. Led by Fr. McGrath, we will study St. Paul's *Epistle to the Ephesians*. Discussion will incorporate the *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture*, edited by Mark J. Edwards, Ph.D., in which we examine what the early Fathers of the Church had to say about scripture. Participants are welcome to arrive early for Matins at 8:30. • **Advent Rector's Class** Wednesday evenings in Advent, Fr. McGrath will offer a class on the Holy Communion Service, in order to

increase our appreciation and understanding of the central rite of the Church. Join in for a light supper and class at 6:00pm on Wednesdays, beginning with the Feast of St. Andrew, November 20th. The text used for discussion will be *The Service of Holy Communion Annotated*, by the Rev'd Dr. Peter Toon, which is available from Fr. McGrath. • **Church School Program** This Advent the intermediate Sunday School class will focus on the history and meaning of Advent. We will look at our own Anglican traditions and Christian traditions from around the world. We'll include crafts and cooking from Sweden, India, Poland and Japan, along with studies of the prophets, John the Baptist, and the Incarnation of our Lord. We will seek to give our students an alternative to the holiday buying frenzy that our modern Christmas has become. We will again be sponsoring a Hopelink giving tree, to help needy families at Christmas time. • **Parish Crèche Display** Does your family have a special Nativity Scene or other crèche that you would be interested in sharing with others during the Holidays? We would like to present our treasured displays in and around the Church buildings this year. If you have a crèche that you would like others to enjoy, please let Barbara Leen or Nancy Johnson know about it. • **"Really Bizarre Bazaar"** also known as our "No Bazaar", will take place on Saturday, December 3rd; at 11:00am, the women will set up their family crèches and at 12:00 enjoy a Pot Luck Luncheon. The Crèche displays will be for everyone's enjoyment • **The Greening of the Church** We will decorate the Church for Christmas after Mass on Sunday, December 18th. Join in the fun and festivities surrounding this annual event!

An introduction to Advent Season

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Advent is the first season of the Church Year and is a time of preparation that leads up to one of the greatest celebrations of the Christian faith: the Nativity of our Lord, or Christmas. Well-informed parishioners will take note that there is *another* preparatory season (Lent) leading up *another* great celebration (Easter)! Advent is sometimes called “Little Lent” or “Winter Lent”. In earlier days marriages were not solemnized in the Church during this time, and the faithful abstained from public amusements because it was a penitential season, and their thoughts were centered on the joyful event that was to follow.

The simplest meaning of “Advent” can be found in the meaning of the word itself. *Adventus* is a Latin word that means “coming”. The *coming of our Lord*, of course, is what is being referred to here, in two senses. First, there was his coming as a babe, born of the Virgin Mary long ago. But he promised that he would come again! So in Advent we are reminded that we await the 2nd Coming of our Lord, when he will come with great power and glory, accompanied by his holy angels. Then sin, time, sickness and death will be no more.

The Collect for Advent (Prayer book, p. 90) uses vivid imagery of light and darkness, saying, “Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast off the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light...” When our Lord was born in Bethlehem 2,000 years ago, he was born

into a world of darkness, moral chaos, and uncertainty. The prophets from ancient times, moved by the Holy Spirit, had foretold his coming but did not experience it for themselves. The advent of our Lord, born a babe of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem, was like a gentle glow of light dawning in the darkness of humanity, because he was born to defeat the power of sin and death by his resurrection.

The 2nd Coming of our Lord will be his final advent, in which he comes in great power and glory. In a discourse on his 2nd Coming (see Mt. 24:23ff), our Lord also uses the analogy of light piercing the darkness to describe how that will be. This time, the imagery used is that of lightening coming out of the east and shining to the west in a brilliant flash. Lightening often signals a turning point in a storm: after the clouds, turbulence and darkness have been building for a while, the lightening signals that a

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refreshing rain is on its way, and that calm will be restored.

How do we begin to think about using the Season of Advent as a season of preparation? We can see it in two ways primarily: first, as a season of preparation for the very solemn, holy and joyous celebration of our Lord’s birth, which we celebrate on December 25th; second, as a reminder that our Lord will come again to be our judge at the end of time. We want to be ready for his 2nd Coming, and therefore we can use this season to re-orient our hearts and homes toward our Lord.

Those who have drifted away from regular Church attendance over the Summer months, or for one reason or another have begun to feel a distance between themselves and God, should use the time of Advent to remedy this. Join with fellow parishioners in coming to Church regularly, confessing our sins, hearing God’s word, receiving the strengthening grace of the sacraments, and worshipping the Most Holy Trinity, One God.

All individuals and families of our parish are encouraged to take advantage of classes, worship services, and opportunities for outreach that we offer this Advent.

I also would like to remind everyone of the disciplines of the Church: observance of the Lord’s Day, keeping of the Feasts and the Fasts of the Church, leading a holy life that is free of scandal & supporting the Church financially. It is also quite valuable to spend a little time each day in private worship and the reading of scripture. Those who are able, are encouraged to come to Church a little early on Sundays for Morning Prayer at 8:30 and Bible Study at 9:00 in the Parish Hall, or to our weekly Rector’s Class. You might also make a point of being at Church for any daily service of Matins or Evensong during the week. This is a very special time of quiet worship at the Church that Fr. McGrath normally shares only with the Fir Trees, the Birds, and the Squirrels! You are welcome to mark the passage of time each Morning and Evening in this way, too.

May God Bless you all during this wonderful and joyous time of the year!

- Fr. Daniel McGrath +

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Anglican Church**

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The Rev'd Dr. Edward H. Miller, *Deacon*

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Worship Schedule

The Daily Office

Matins 8:30, Evensong 5:30

The Litany

Wednesday & Friday after Matins

Holy Communion

Sunday, and other Feast Days, 10:00

Parish Prayer Book Club

Help St. Bart's replace our Service Books.

Name _____

I would like to provide our parish with
_____ copies of The Book of Common Prayer @ \$20 each
_____ copies of The Hymnal @ \$25 each.

*Each book will be inscribed on the inside of the front cover
with your name and a message of dedication.*