

December 2011



St. Paul's Epistle



St. Paul's Episcopal Church 1307 West 5th Street Freeport, Texas 77541
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Sunday Worship , Holy Eucharist 10 am
Healing Service First Sunday

Adult Sunday School 9am ; Children's Sunday School 9:30 am

Mission Statement

St. Paul's Episcopal Church, anchored in the love of Christ, Scripture, worship and outreach, offers shared leadership and casts a beacon of light to all.

Rector

The Rev. Robert Dohle

Vestry Officers

Sr. Warden
Jr Martinez

Junior Warden
Al Mayo

Clerk
Nola Copus

Treasurer
Donna Hayes

At Large Members

Bill Demain
Patrick Kersey
Linda Ardoin
Steve Massoletti
Lynda Nelson
M.J. Ardoin

Church Organist
Cindy Watson

Sunday School Director
Lauren Kersey

Church Secretary
Marietta Birdwell

"The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned". Isaiah: 9:2

As we enter Advent and the Christmas seasons it is a good time to reflect on what God has done for us. Before we can even begin to ask what we should be doing to help bring about the Kingdom of God, we have to begin to understand what has been done for us. We can recognize the Incarnation the Crucifixion and the Resurrection, as we should, but just to say that those things happened will not in themselves convince anyone that they should embrace Christianity.

The word Advent means "coming" or "arrival." The focus of the entire season is the celebration of the birth of Jesus the Christ in his First Advent, and the anticipation of the return of Christ the King in his Second Advent. Thus, Advent is far more than simply marking a 2,000 year old event in history. It is celebrating a truth about God, the revelation of God in Christ whereby all of creation might be reconciled to God.

The coming of God in the form of a man into a fallen world and the willingness to sacrifice Himself for us, to give us the Way to bridge the Gap between God and humanity is an act of love that we will never really understand in this life. If we are to convince our brothers and sisters that Christianity has something to offer it is going to have to begin with love, a love that we can only begin to understand and articulate by relying on God through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit to show us the way.

The promises and expectations of Advent and the fulfillment in the coming of the Lord at Christmas is a wonderful time to reflect, pray and ask God to show us how we can better be a part of His purpose for creating us.

I wish everyone a hope filled and fulfilling Advent and a blessed and holy Christmas and pray that each of us will grow in the Love of the God who sent his only Son to live and die so that we may grow in that love that surpasses all understanding.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life". John 3:16



Richard Young	12-1
Tripp Aron Neal	12-5
Jerri Collins	12-6
Mercie Deerman	12-6
Darla Copus	12-7
Lynda Nelson	12-11
David Collins	12-15
Donna Martinez	12-15
Debbie Collins	12-17
Carter Copus	12-18
Bob McKinnon	12-18
Dale Greer	12-20
Eileen Koenig	12-28
Joe Greer	12-29
Mike Ochoa	12-31



Daughters of The King will have their annual Christmas dinner on Saturday December 10th at On The River.

An excerpt of a Daughters of the King Pamphlet, material from the Anglican Fellowship of prayer

The Gift of Prayer

The desire to pray is God’s gift to us. In longing to communicate with the Creator, the soul seeks the source of its being and worships the presence that knows each of His creations as intimately as a mother knows her child. As we ponder the mystery of God, who talks to and listens to us, the believer realized an inborn agility to take the leap of faith required to be in communion with God....

....Prayer forms have been given names and underlying each name is an action that will initiate communication with God.

*Talking: in our own words or by praying specific written or remembered prayers

*Reading: Lectio Divina, formal word for prayerful reading of the Word of God

*Worshipping: Liturgy of the Hours, ...participation in the prayers of the Church

*Thinking: focused thinking about God becomes a prayer of meditation

*Listening: Contemplation, act of emptying the mind to reach the level of listening where we are in the presence of God

*Interceding: We must bring the needs of others before Him

*Expressing: Song, dance, painting, poetry, in His service or in His praise

*Integrating: As prayer becomes integrated into our lives, we experience the reality of the gift
For the full version of this pamphlet please see a Daughter.

The Daughters of the King meet the second Saturday of each month at 4 pm. There will be no meeting in December.

SPECS

We met on November 8, 2011 for our monthly get-to-gether. There were twenty of us attending. Faia Demain and M.J. Ardoin took the door prizes. We will miss Marcene and Gwen. Marcene is waiting for us in heaven and Gwen moved to Conroe to be closer to her daughter. Our next meeting is December 13. Nola and Spud Copus are doing the main dish. We are planning to have a glass of wine prior to the meal. Please join us for fellowship and fantastic food.



Hanging The Greens

Garlands of mixed Douglas Fir [new world] and Cedar [old world], have been purchased for delivery Tuesday Dec. 22nd to decorate the church nave. We will hang them at 4 pm that afternoon. Feel free to come help.

Lay Reader/Chalice Bearer Schedule			
	<u>Reader "A"</u>	<u>Reader "B"</u>	<u>Chalice</u>
Dec 4	Tippen	Collins, J	Tippen
Dec 11	Ardoin	Ardoin	Ardoin
Dec 18	Zabana	Zabana	Zabana
Dec 24	Demain	Tippen	Demain/Tippen
Dec 25	Dohle	Copus	Ardoin



December Anniversaries

Patrick and Lauren Kersey
12—20

MAYBE, WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT CAROLING!

Christmas carols today carry cozy connotations of ancient traditions as old as King Wenceslas, but Christmas caroling as we know it dates back to the 19th Century and not much further. In fact, caroling itself didn't always involve Christmas, and the ancient tradition of traveling from house to house to wish neighbors good cheer didn't always involve singing.

The act of traveling to different homes comes from a different tradition altogether, albeit a similarly ancient one. In England, the word wassail— derived from the Old Norse ves heill meaning "be well, and in good health" — came to mean the wishing of good fortune on your neighbors. No one is quite sure when the custom began, but it did give us the song, "Here We Come-A-Wassailing" — sung as carolers wished good cheer to their neighbors in hopes of getting a gift in return. ("A Wassailing" also evolved into the popular "We Wish You a Merry Christmas")The two traditions of singing and visiting first merged in the 19th Century in Victorian England, as church carols began to merge with Christian folk music.

Many of our today's most popular carols date to this period. Christmas Carols Ancient and Modern published in London by British lawyer William B. Sandys in 1833, was the first to print "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen," "The First Noel" and "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing." "Joy to the World" first appeared in the Anglican Church hymnal Hymns Ancient and Modern in 1861. Composed by Isaac Watts, known as the




"father of English hymnody", the song actually wasn't written exclusively for singing at Christmastime. Charles Wesley's "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" was originally "Hark! How All The Welkin Rings!" (Welkin means sky or heaven, and came to mean making a loud sound.)

Ubiquitous holiday TV ads to the contrary, American caroling is far less common than it used to be, says Bob Thompson, professor of popular culture at Syracuse University. It's not unusual to see carolers standing

still in a shopping mall or churchyard, but as for the random groups of friends traipsing to your doorstep for singing, don't count on it.

But here at St. Paul's we have a tradition stretching over 40 years of singing carols outside friend's and stranger's houses some night before Christmas . 'Dashing around town' as Father Mike once put it. This year we'll assemble in the **Parish Hall Sunday evening , December 19th. , sallying forth at 6 p.m.** in warm clothing, if the weather requires, flashlights and song sheets in hand, to send a Christian message not a holiday one since it is after all CHRISTMAS . Afterwards we'll return to the Parish Hall for hot chocolate, and the carolers would appreciate donations of refreshments or a few old cookies and perhaps moldy cake you have lying around for the carolers to munch on after caroling. Won't you skip the interminable movies and shows on T.V. this year and join us?



Greeters

Dec 4 JoAnn Mayo
 Dec 11 Mescal Steele
 Dec 18 JoAnn Mayo
 Dec 24
 Dec 25

Newcomer Ministry Congregational Assessment

At the recent Little Church Club Meeting assessment check lists were distributed covering 'Welcome', 'Invitation' and 'Connection'. Salim Zabana, Mescal Steele, Donna Martinez and Bill Demain individually rated our parish on the basis of:

- 1/ What we already accomplish
- 2/ What we need to do
- 3/ What we should probably study
- 4/ What we do not need to do

Consideration was given to our parish size; limitations of available people and funding were built into our choices.

We met as a group, reviewed our findings, and generally agreed on items we do a satisfactory job on and ones we felt were outside our needs or capabilities. We found several items that warrant study and listed the fol-



lowing, recommendations for review by the upcoming 2012 Vestry for action or not.

Welcome

- 1/ Designated guest parking. Located near front doors and clearly identifiable.
- 2/ A system to identify guests, visitors and newcomers.
- 3/ Follow up call or contact by priest within 24 hours
- 4/ Handwritten note by laity or email within first week
- 5/ Follow up by priest and laity after first and second visit., e.g. letter, invitation to newcomer meeting.

Connection

- 1/ Intentional system for in-place tracking and follow up.
- 2/ Designated persons to connect and keep track of newcomers and to engage in conversation to 'Hear their story'.
- 3/ Place them in contact with whomever in the parish can match their life phase talents etc.
- 4/ Set up laity exit interview for persons leaving the church.

Invitation [Evangelism]

- 1/ Advise and encourage parishioners to use the parish worship/business cards.
- 2/ Set up education and training sessions to help parishioners effectively evangelize.
- 3/ Review our activities and ask the question 'Why are we doing this and how does it align with our mission?'



The New Years Eve Event Is On!

The Committee met and decided we had enough people signed up to go ahead and plan the event. If you haven't signed up yet, please feel free to do so, that way we will have a better idea of how many are coming.

Patrick Kersey is working on music, for sure we will have a cd player tied into the loud-speaker system. Maybe a 33 1/3 record player, plenty of variety, 40's, 50's etc; good for dancing. Bill Demain has sing along music tied to existing song sheets also. If we get a piano player we have book music and song sheets tied to them. We will also have a sing along.

Nola Copus and Patricia Dohle will recruit sandwich makers, Patrick and Lauren Kersey will bake cookies or cake.

Linda Barnes is in charge of a little decorating, balloons, favors, streamers, noise makers, plastic cutlery.

The Committee will provide some board and other games to be set up in the side rooms.




Father Robert will set up the pick up of the ball dropping in Times Square in New York on the big screen.

Come see the New Year in...In Style!



December 2011



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4 Advent 2 <i>Worship Service / Eucharist and Healing Service 10 am</i> <u>Sunday School</u> Children 9:30am Adult 9:00am	5	6	7	8	9	10 Daughters of The King annual Christmas dinner
11 Advent 3 <i>Worship Service and Holy Eucharist 10 am</i> <u>Sunday School</u> Children 9:30am Adult 9:00am	12	13 SPECS 11 am Evangelism Meeting	14	15	16	17
18 Advent 4 <i>Worship Service and Holy Eucharist 10 am</i> <u>Sunday School</u> Children 9:30am Adult 9:00am Caroling 6 pm	19 Vestry Meeting 6 pm	20	21	 Hanging of the Greens 4 pm	23	24  Christmas Eve Service 8 pm
25 <i>Christmas</i> <i>Holy Eucharist 10 am</i>	26	27	28	29	30	31  Happy New Year New Years Eve Celebration Parish Hall