

THE BEACON of Christ Church, 20 N. American St., Philadelphia, PA 19106

Planning ahead . . .

DECEMBER 2008

- 1** Property Committee Mtg
6:00PM
Children, Youth & Family
Committee Mtg 6:00PM
- 2** DOCC 6:30PM-8:30PM
- 6** Career Management Series
8:30AM
- 7** LGBT Fellowship Lunch
12:30PM
Advent Lessons & Carols
5:00PM
Parish Potluck 6:00PM
- 9** DOCC 6:30PM – 8:30PM
- 14** Angel Tree gifts due
Bridge Dinner & Christmas
Stocking Project 5:00PM
- 15** Shelter Dinner at Old First
Reformed 6:00PM
- 16** DOCC 6:30PM – 8:30PM
- 18** Christmas Cookies for
Coffee Cup 4:00PM
- 20** Career Management Series
8:30AM
St. Mary's 350 8:30AM
- 21** Spiritual Meditation
4:30PM
Holy Eucharist /prayers
for healing 5:00PM
- 24** Family Eucharist 5:00PM
Holy Eucharist 8:00PM
Holy Eucharist 11:00PM
- 25** Christmas Day

JANUARY 2009

- 1** New Year's Day
- 19** Martin Luther King, Jr.
Day

FEBRUARY 2009

- 1** Parish Annual Meeting
One Service at 10AM

2009

Baptism Schedule

January 11, April 12 (Easter
Sunday), May 31 (Pentecost)

GOT STRESS OR GOD BLESS?

Are you feeling stressed? I am. Never has the expression, "Too Blessed to be Stressed!" been so irritating to me.

I think it's about money mostly. The church's endowment is down, as are my retirement IRA's. As we get to year end, Lynn and I have never been so pressed financially. We aren't able to give as much money away, which makes me stressed, because I figure people will be giving Christ Church less.

But it's also about people losing jobs. Each day, we're hearing about parishioners losing jobs, or scared that they're about too. All of us on the Christ Church staff are worried about our positions, our healthcare, and the like.

And the holidays? I'm in denial that they're here. I don't even want to cook, which is my favorite hobby. When Lynn asked about the Thanksgiving menu, I said, "Chinese takeout."

Enough about me. How are you? I thought so.

Many years back, I had a spiritual director, Brother Nick, who is a Benedictine monk who often counseled, "Tim, I don't believe you'll feel stress if you just pray. Stress is destroyed by God's grace. God is abundant. God will see you through. Stress is the devil's playground."

I dismissed his advice as naïve. What does a monk, I thought, who lives apart from the real world, know about stress?

Last week, Brother Nick's monastery burned to the ground from the devastating wild fires in Santa Barbara, California. There is a story about him in today's paper, along with a picture of his destroyed home. When the fire came, the story reports, he took just one thing with him, his small, ebony cross that he has kept in his pocket for decades.

I remember clearly once standing with him in the monastery garden, looking up at a gigantic house being built further up the canyon by one the celebrities who inhabit the coast. "He thinks he owns that house, but the house owns him. One day, the fire will come into the canyon, and we'll all learn that we possess nothing." After a pause, he said, "I only want to be God's possession."

Over the last few days, I've procrastinated over calling him, because I know he'll say, "Tim, I'm fine. I have the only thing that matters to me. But how are you? You sound stressed."

How I hunger for our church community this Advent and Christmas season. Let us bring light to the darkness. Let us share each other's burdens and stresses, problems and predicaments. Let us sing and shout joy to inspire the world around us with our security in God's grace.

And on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, let us gather again to hear God's eternal whisper, placed on the lips of the angels heralding the coming of Jesus,

"Be not afraid."

Tim Safford

JOE THE PREACHER ASKS, “WHERE ARE WE FINANCIALLY AT CHRIST CHURCH FOR 2009?”

When the presidential candidates were going on about who had the better economic plan for Joe the Plumber, I wanted them to start talking about Joe the Preacher.

Sometimes it's awkward to see Christ Church as a small business, but if we don't succeed as a business, we can't succeed as a church. We've been a small business for 313 years, uninterrupted in our mission, still doing today what Christ Church set out to do in 1695. Our longevity, though, doesn't make any of our business realities any easier, especially for 2009.

Christ Church and the Preservation Trust have 10 full-time employees, and our health insurance costs are climbing by 12%. Our parking lot, which generated \$90,000 a year for our coffers in 2005, will generate just half of that in 2009 because of doubled property and business taxes as well as the recession. We used \$300,000 of endowment earnings to support our programs and buildings in 2008; the collapse of the markets and financial prudence demands we just draw \$200,000 for 2009

We've had to double the heating oil budget over the last three years. Just this week, we struggled over whether to pay \$7000 either to reset paving stones on 2nd Street or keep the Curtis Organ from losing a division of pipes because of deferred maintenance.

We are responsible for several acres of downtown city property and our buildings, on average, are more than 200 years old. More than 250,000 people visit us each year, and 150 community groups will use our facilities.

As a church, we have been faithful to our mission to give praise to God, inspire the weary, nurture the doubtful, comfort the afflicted, challenge the comfortable, and on and on. Our membership has grown every year of late, especially among those who have had no church home, and that is our highest calling. In 2000, 140 people worshipped each Sunday, and in 2008, 210.

Even though significant financial challenges loom for 2009, we must celebrate that we are a generous congregation. Parishioners will contribute \$480,000 in pledges and offerings for our operating budget in 2008, which will comprise more than 50% of our income. And, parishioners have committed or given more than \$2 million to our capital efforts these past many years.

Writing on November 20th, I am quite thrilled with our Stewardship Campaign results for the 2009 operating budget. We have 150 pledges, which is far more than we had at this time last year. As well, we welcome 27 new pledgers into the Stewardship family for 2009; we had a total of 17 new pledges in 2008. Many of our pledgers have made significant and heroic increases to help us offset the other losses in revenue and higher costs. Naturally, in this economic environment, many parishioners are reducing their pledges. We pray that with the pledges we've yet to receive from parishioners, and with more new pledges, we will receive the same income for 2009.

But, very serious reductions will need to be made in our 2009 budget. No part of our program—be it music, children and youth, DOCC, pastoral care, Bridge, hospitality, visitation, and the rest—will be unaffected by budget cuts.

The question the Vestry and I are grappling with: How deep will those cuts be?

To answer that question, this is what we need from our congregation:

- Please complete your 2008 pledge by Christmas.
- Please consider a special Christmas gift to Christ Church.

We need to have a strong close to 2008. If we have a deficit, it will hurt us further in 2009. And:

- If you have not made your pledge for 2009, the time is now. The Stewardship Committee will be calling you, and please respond generously.
- If you have pledged, please consider increasing your pledge.

Because budget cuts are inevitable, I want the considered and thoughtful input of the congregation. The Vestry and I will convene a finance and budget summit on Saturday, **January 24**, 8:30 to 12 PM, to discuss our options and understand our challenges before the Vestry finalizes the budget on January 26th. If you would like to participate in this critical meeting, please let me know, through Cecilia Wagner, by email or phone.

Tim Safford



SUNDAY DECEMBER 7

5:00 P.M.

ADVENT LESSONS AND CAROLS

Please join us for this beautiful candlelight service with the Christ Church Choir and Organist/Choirmaster, John Binsfeld. We will retell the miraculous message of The Incarnation through Carols, the prophecies of the Old Testament and the Gospels.

Immediately following Lessons and Carols, all are invited to Neighborhood House for a potluck supper. Bring a dish to share and a friend.

Christmas Eve at Christ Church



- 5:00pm Family Eucharist and Sermon
- 8:00pm Christmas Eve Eucharist and Sermon
- 10:30pm Christmas Carols with brass ensemble, timpani, organ and Christ Church Choir
- 11:00pm Holy Eucharist and Sermon with brass ensemble, timpani, organ and Christ Church Choir

THE HOLIDAYS AND THE SPIRIT OF GIVING

As we come into the season of Christmas, the spirit of giving is often more and bigger than any other time of the year for most of us. Generous hearts abound here at Christ Church as we seek to meet the many needs that arise in our community during the winter months. Our call and response to be Christ in the world finds its way in and through our faith community in a variety of ways both near and far. Look for opportunities to get involved if you are able. Here are a few ways to do so this holiday season.

- Participate in the *Advent Angel Tree*. Take a tag off the tree in Neighborhood House, purchase the requested gift, and return it to the church on **December 14** to be delivered to the recipients for Christmas.
- Join in the *Holiday Winter Shelter Project* by providing small gifts for our neighbors who stay at the shelter for the homeless at Old First Reformed Church. We are collecting men's socks, small shampoos, bars of soap, wash towels, toothpaste, tooth brushes, and holiday stockings to put them in. Drop off gifts at Neighborhood House by **December 14**.
- *Volunteer* to help out in the winter shelter for the homeless at Old First Reformed Church at 4th and Arch Streets. Contact by phone at 215-922-4566 or email at volunteer@oldfirstucc.org.
- Bake cookies for the *Coffee Cup* senior's program. Members of our community make cookies and package them up at Neighborhood House on December 18th for delivery to elderly citizens in our neighborhood.
- *Make a donation* to the Outreach discretionary fund to assist clergy in meeting personal emergency needs of others during the winter months. Contact the Rev. Carol Anthony.
- Purchase a *Gift of Life* through Episcopal Relief and Development, a compassionate response of the Episcopal Church to human suffering in the world. Give a special gift in honor of a loved one, friend, or business associate and help children and families survive disasters and climb out of poverty at www.er-d.org.

CHRISTMAS COOKIES FOR THE COFFEE CUP

Attention all bakers! Adorn your aprons,
turn on your ovens, mix your dough and get started.

You can help in this annual project as we provide homemade cookie gift boxes for "Coffee Cup" seniors. Our unique gift is the homemade cookies, which are not available to "Coffee Cup" patrons through any other means. We would love to receive your favorites and invite you to join us for packing the boxes. Baking the cookies and packing the boxes is a project in which children love to participate.

Date: Thursday, December 18, 2008

Time: 4:00pm

Place: Neighborhood House 1st Floor

We Need Your Cookies

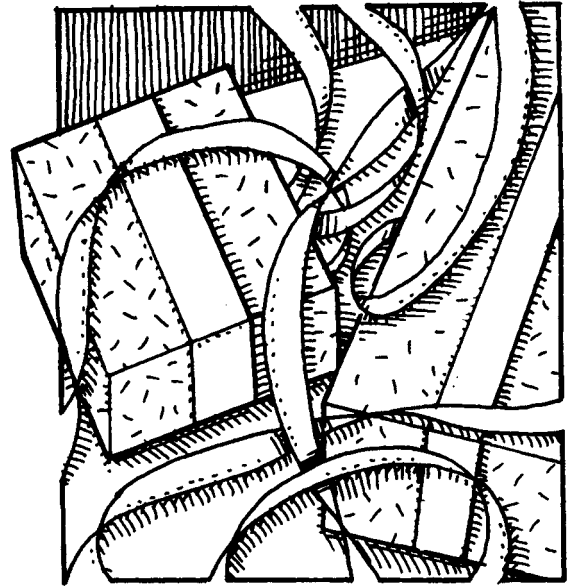
If you are unable to attend the packing, please leave your cookies at Neighborhood House before the 18th. Thank you for your help. For more information or questions, please call **Helen Niedermayer** at 215-592-8238.

FLOWER & MUSIC MEMORIALS

At Christmas time you have the opportunity to remember loved ones and to offer special thanks by making a donation to the **Christmas Flower Fund** or to the **Special Music Program**. Donations to the Flower Fund help cover church decorating expenses for our Christmas celebrations. Donations to the Special Music Program will be added to the Special Music Fund which augments our special services, such as Christmas Eve, with additional instruments. Please use the enclosed envelope to make your gift by **December 15** or pick up an envelope in the church.

ADVENT ANGEL TREE COMMUNITY PROJECT

The annual Angel Tree Project provides a direct link from the Christ Church family to people who are caught in the poverty cycle in Philadelphia. This ministry offers individuals and families the opportunity to be a secret angel and participate in meeting the wish or need of a child, family, or adult during the holiday season. **You are invited to select a tag from the Angel Tree in Neighborhood House on Sunday, November 30.** As you make plans to fulfill someone's wish, please remember to pray for both the person to whom your gift will be given and for the work of the programs that are providing the care and support. **Gifts will be gathered in Neighborhood House on Sunday, December 14.** This year the Christ Church community is supporting the following organizations: AchieveAbility, Episcopal Community Services Home Care Program, Bainbridge House Mentoring Program, People's Emergency Center, and the Episcopal Church of St. John the Evangelist Camp Get Along Program.



CHRIST CHURCH TOWER ROOM SHOP

Visit the Christ Church Tower Room Shop this holiday season for unique gifts to give your family and friends. Fair trade Nativity sets, seasonal children's books, house blessings, and note cards are just some of the items available for sale. New this year is the **Christ Church Steeple Tie** designed exclusively for Christ Church by Josh Bach. We also sell the Christ Church Staffordshire plate and the Christ Church cookbook. The gift shop is open Monday-Saturday from 9:00AM-5:00PM and Sunday from 1:00 PM-5:00PM. All proceeds from the shop support the preservation of Christ Church. If you would like to purchase an item and have it shipped, please contact **Anne McLaughlin** at 215-922-1695, x 32 or amclaughlin@christchurchphila.org.

THE BRIDGE

DINNER AND CHRISTMAS STOCKING PROJECT

The Bridge's Christmas Stocking Project for the homeless shelter was so successful last year, it's back by popular demand: At the December 15 shelter meal, we'll give the men Christmas stockings filled with donations from members of the Christ Church community. But we need your help to fill the stockings! Please bring donations of men's socks, small shampoos, bars of soap, washcloths, toothpaste, tooth brushes, and holiday stockings to put them in. Drop off gifts at Neighborhood House or bring them to the **December 14 Bridge dinner at 5PM.** We'll order Mexican food, turn on music, pour some wine or seltzer, and enjoy each other's company while we stuff stockings. For more info or to rsvp for dinner, email the **Rev. Susan Richardson**, srichardson@christchurchphila.org.

JUSTICE WORK WITH THOSE STRUGGLING WITH HOMELESSNESS – ALL WELCOME

We gather once a month to create unique, excellent meals, and eat and enjoy fellowship with the men at Old First Reform Men's Shelter. And there are always a few folks who get together the day before to head to the Italian market to buy the freshest, best ingredients – go local, go green! It's great to help those in need, and great just to enjoy each other. **Next shelter date: Monday, December 15** at Old First Reformed, corner of 4th and Race Streets, 6 to 8 p.m. For more info on how to help shop, cook or serve the food, contact **Anne McAteer** at ackoerner@yahoo.com or **Nick DiPatri** at ndipatri@gmail.com.

UPCOMING SUNDAY SERVICES & PROGRAMS

Dec 7 The Second Sunday of Advent

- 9:00am Holy Eucharist and Sermon
9:30am Children's Music Class – 4 to 6 year olds
10:10am Rector's Forum
Journey to Adulthood – 11 to 17 year olds
Children's Music Class – 7 to 10 year olds
Atrium 2 Class – 7 to 10 year olds
11:00am Holy Eucharist and Sermon
12:30pm LGBT Fellowship Lunch at Thomas Bond House (129 S 2nd St)
5:00pm Service of Lessons and Carols
6:00pm Parish Potluck in the Great Hall

Dec 14 The Third Sunday of Advent

- 9:00am Holy Eucharist and Sermon
10:10am Rector's Forum
Journey to Adulthood – 11 to 17 year olds
Special Combined Atrium Class – 4 to 10 year olds
11:00am Holy Eucharist and Sermon
2:00pm Service for First City Troop
5:00pm Bridge Dinner & Christmas Stocking Project

Dec 21 The Fourth Sunday of Advent

- 9:00am Holy Eucharist and Sermon
9:30am Children's Music Class – 4 to 6 year olds
10:10am Rector's Forum
Journey to Adulthood – 11 to 17 year olds
Children's Music Class – 7 to 10 year olds
Atrium 2 Class – 7 to 10 year olds
11:00am Holy Eucharist and Sermon
5:00pm Creative Evening Worship

Dec 28 The First Sunday after Christmas Day

- 9:00am Holy Eucharist, Sermon & Service of Healing
10:10am Rector's Forum
Journey to Adulthood – 11 to 17 year olds
Atrium 2 Class – 7 to 10 year olds
11:00am Holy Eucharist, Sermon & Service of Healing

RECTOR'S FORUM IN DECEMBER – 10:10A.M. Sunday

- December 7 Keeping a Holy Advent
December 14 Keeping a Holy Advent
December 21 Keeping a Holy Advent
December 28 Bible Study

Opening Up The Christmas Story

Special Combined Atrium, 10:10am, **December 14.** The story of Jesus' birth is rich, complex, and full of imaginative possibility. We invite the whole family to the Atrium on this special Sunday so the children can take turns reading the verses and opening up the questions, as we renew this age-old story together.

EUCHARIST AT 5 – ALL ARE WELCOME

Please join us in the Great Hall of Neighborhood House **December 21** with Holy Eucharist at **5P.M.** The worship space is candlelit and quiet beginning at 4:30 for individual prayer or meditation.

CALLING ALL ANGELS, ETC.

At the Family Eucharist at **5P.M. on Christmas Eve**, all kids of all ages are welcome to participate in the telling of the Gospel by dressing up as a character or an animal in the Christmas story; visiting family and friends are also most welcome to join in. Please bring your child to the Great Hall at 4P.M. to choose a costume and prepare for the service. We'll have snacks and caregivers on hand. Use one of the church costumes, or bring one of your own – there's always room for more Wise Men (or Women), angels, shepherds... and giraffes! Questions? Contact the **Rev. Susan Richardson.**

INSIGHTS FROM THE ATRIUM

During prayer time, the children were asked to imagine God and Heaven. Here are a couple of their images.

“A windy storm made me fly all the way to God.”

“God looks like a beard and he's so nice to me and all the people were small.”

FELLOWSHIP and FAMILY

GAY & LESBIAN FELLOWSHIP

As a welcoming church, Christ Church is blessed to have gay and lesbian parishioners involved in every aspect of our life together. The Gay & Lesbian Fellowship provides a way for new folks to meet others who share a similar journey. Make plans to join the LGBT community and friends for brunch at Thomas Bond House (129 S. 2nd Street) on Sunday,

December 7 at 12:30pm. \$10 donation per person welcomed. RSVP to the **Rev. Carol Anthony** at canthony@christchurchphila.org by 12/4.

NOMINATIONS FOR NEW VESTRY

In preparation for our Parish Annual Meeting in 2009, nominations for new Vestry members are now being accepted. If you have a parishioner to nominate, please call the office for a Nomination Form or pick one up in Neighborhood House. Completed forms are due into the church office by **December 8**.

SANDWICHES FOR THE HOMELESS

Come join the crew of sandwich makers who once a month cheerfully make 350 bologna sandwiches for St. Mary's. We gather next on Saturday, **December 20**, 8:30-9:30A.M. Kids love to help, too! Questions? Please contact **Wayne Christman** at waynechristman@comcast.net.

WELCOME THE NEWLY BAPTIZED

Kate Alexander O'Connell, daughter of **Lexie Adorno & David O'Connell**

CELEBRATE WITH BRIDE & GROOM

Paul White & Kathryn Murken, married **November 15**

COMFORT THE BEREAVED

Give rest, O Christ, to your servants with your saints, where sorrow and pain are no more, neither sighing, but life everlasting. We now commend to God those who have died in recent days:

Virginia Coslett
Willem Dikland
Isadore Scott
Robert I. Smith

TOURISM NEWS-WINTER HOURS

The Christ Church Burial Ground hours change as of **December 1**. During the month of December, the hours are Sunday-Friday from 12:00-4:00PM and Saturday from 10:00AM-4:00PM, weather permitting. In January and February, the burial ground is closed.

Christ Church is open for tourism Monday-Saturday from 9:00AM-5:00PM and Sunday from 1:00-5:00PM. In January and February, the church will be closed every Monday and

Tuesday.

PARISH BIRTHDAYS

Congratulations to our parish family members celebrating birthdays this month:

December 1, **Peter Allen**
December 2, **Richard Lawless**
December 3, **Anthony Paschall, Jr.**
December 4, **Elwood McHugh**
December 5, **Morgan Frohlich, Sheldon Hackney**
December 6, **Carla Castillo**
December 7, **Jessica Beers**
December 8, **Alley Moorhead**
December 9, **Tim Margulies, Matthew Sullivan, Doug Wilkerson**
December 10, **Elizabeth Celata, Brendan Huffman, Anne McAteer**
December 12, **Tom Falone**
December 14, **Kelly McCabe, Joshua Silver**
December 15, **Sherman Poland, Eve Stirman**
December 16, **Juan Jose Hardy**
December 17, **Anthony Candelori, Kristi Fox, Brian Zittlau**
December 19, **Ted Warren**
December 20, **Sally Hardy**
December 21, **Noah Gansallo**
December 23, **Paul White**
December 26, **Alexander Weldon**
December 27, **Beth Cote, Bridget McHugh**
December 28, **Bromley Lowe, Bill McCardell, Rowan Ziegler**
December 30, **George Mark, Michelle Salerno-Ziegler**
December 31, **Julia Lawless, Stephen Walker, Jr.**

Did we miss your birthday? Please contact **Cecilia** in the church office.

SILENT RETREAT IN JANUARY

The Spiritual Growth Resources Committee of the Diocese of Pennsylvania invites you to participate in a two-day Silent Retreat, from 10AM Friday, **January 16** to 3PM Saturday, **January 17**, 2009. This will be an opportunity for rest, simple presence to God, worship and community silent prayer.

Held at Daylesford Abbey, 220 S. Valley Road, in Paoli, the retreat will be open to clergy and lay women and men in the diocese who desire to spend some time together in silent prayer and shared worship. To register, or for more information, please contact **J.D. Lafrance** at 215-627-6434, ext 151 or jdlafrance@diopa.org.

Christ Church: A user's guide

9:00 AM Eucharist and Sermon

Rite II, celebrated with vocal quartet, organ and hymns.

10:10 AM Christian Education

Adult education each Sunday in Neighborhood House. Education for Children and Youth on the second and third floors of Neighborhood House from September to June.

11:00 AM Eucharist and Sermon (*see schedule inside*)

Rite I or II celebrated, with organ and hymns, and vocal leadership from Christ Church Choir

11:00 AM Morning Prayer and Sermon (*returns in January*)

Nursery care for infants and toddlers is available from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM each Sunday.

Wednesdays

12:00 Noon Eucharist

Rite II, briefly and informally celebrated with a short homily. About 20 minutes, this liturgy is a perfect addition to relieve "hectic downtown life syndrome."

Visiting/Getting in touch

The Church, located on 2nd Street just north of Market Street in Old City Philadelphia, is open for visiting, prayer and meditation from 9am to 5pm daily.

Mailing address and church office entrance:

20 N. American Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Email: mail@christchurchphila.org

Website: www.christchurchphila.org

Main Phone Number: 215.922.1695

FAX Number: 215.922.3578

Cecilia Wagner - ext. 21 or cwagner@christchurchphila.org

The Rev. Timothy Safford - ext. 22

tsafford@christchurchphila.org

The Rev. Carol Anthony – ext. 23

canthony@christchurchphila.org

The Rev. Susan Richardson – ext. 25

srichardson@christchurchphila.org

The Rev. K. Palmer Hartl – kpheartl@aol.com

Jessica Schane - ext. 26 or jschane@christchurchphila.org

John Binsfeld - ext. 27 or jbinsfeld@christchurchphila.org

Chris Alvarez – ext. 28 or calvarez100@hotmail.com

Leza Kramarenko – ext.28 or elezavetak@gmail.com

Don Smith - ext. 29 or dsmith@christchurchphila.org

Neil Ronk - ext. 30 or nronk@christchurchphila.org

Anne McLaughlin-ext. 32 or amclaughlin@christchurchphila.org

John Hopkins - ext. 33 or jbopkins@christchurchphila.org

Jeanne Stuardi - ext. 36 or jstuardi@christchurchphila.org

The Beacon is published monthly for members, friends and supporters of Christ Church, the Rev. Timothy B. Safford, Rector. Deadline for the **January** issue is **December 10**. Please e-mail articles to cwagner@christchurchphila.org

The Beacon

20. N. American Street

Philadelphia, PA 19106

