

Ministering God's Love



Cultivating Faith

THE KING'S VOICE

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM 3

LIGHTHOUSE MINISTRIES 5

THANK YOU PAGE 5

ADVENT & ANNUAL MEETING 6

MINISTRY SCHEDULE 7

CALENDAR 8

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Annual meeting
- Lighthouse ministries
- Advent article

LOOKING FOR CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS

Christian author Frederick Buechner tells of being in Rome at Christmastime. He went to St. Peter's on Christmas Eve to see the Pope celebrate Mass.

Thousands of people began arriving hours early. Soon the great cathedral was filled, and singing swept spontaneously throughout the great crowd. They sang *Adeste Fidelis* and *Heilige Nacht*. Buechner noted that everyone seemed to know the Latin for *Adeste Fidelis* and the German for *Heilige Nacht*.

Finally, after hours of waiting, the crowd hushed. Way off in the distance, Buechner saw the Swiss Guard with the golden throne on their shoulders. The crowd pressed toward the aisle. Amid a burst of cheering, the procession worked its way slowly forward.

Buechner especially remembers the Pope himself — Pope Pius XII. While the Swiss Guard was dressed in

scarlet and gold, the pope was dressed in plain white. Buechner studied the pope's face as the throne passed by — "that lean ascetic face, gray-skinned, with the high-bridged beak of a nose, his eyeglasses glittering in the candlelight."

As the procession passed him, Buechner noticed that the pope was leaning slightly forward and peering into the crowd with extraordinary intensity. He tells us what he saw:

"Through the thick lenses of his glasses,

his eyes were larger than life, and he peered into my face and into all the faces around me and behind me

with a look so deep and so charged

that I could not escape the feeling

that he must be looking for someone in particular."

He was not a potentate nodding and smiling

to acknowledge the enthusiasm of the multitudes.

He was a man whose face

seemed gray with waiting,

whose eyes seemed huge and exhausted with searching,

for someone, someone,

whom he thought might be there that night,

but whom he had never found,

and yet he kept looking."

"Face after face he searched for the face

that he knew he would know

— was it this one?

Was it this one?

Or this one?

And then he passed out of sight."

(Frederick Buechner, *The Hungering Dark*)

Looking for Christ at Christmas! It sounds peculiar that the Pope would be looking so intently in the crowds — as if he were expecting to find the Christ among them.

Richard Donovan asks just who is looking for Christ at Christmas!

On that first Christmas, nobody was looking for Christ, except perhaps for the wise men who had seen the star....

Continued from page 1

Then, that night, the angels brought the good news to the shepherds – and to us:

Do not be afraid, for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.”

(Luke 2:10-11)

And, with that announcement, the shepherds and all of us who hear that message in scripture and song over the years of our lives have been looking for Jesus ever since.

The question for us is will we be looking for Christ this Christmas?

Or will we be looking for everything that this holiday brings with it in our world today? Will we be looking for some good things, family, friends, a chance to come together in a new way, or will be looking for some not so good things, a stress laden commercial holiday sea-

son that begins after Halloween and ends after Christmas morning with wrappings flying off of presents immediately followed by a sumptuous Christmas dinner and a celebration of football Christmas day afternoon and evening.

Perhaps our eyes will be searching the faces at the Christmas Eve service at Christ the King, or even if we go home after our own late Christmas communion and tune in the midnight mass at the Vatican on TV later that night. Will we be looking and hoping expectantly to find the one who can save us, and our nation, and our world?

Donald Macleod reminds us that it is easy to get caught up in lesser things at Christmas. We want so much to get just the right presents for everyone, to get the perfect tree, and to have our houses decorated just so.

But, we run out of money before we run out of friends, and we circle the mall looking vainly for a parking place or

search the web until our eyes cross, and we are tempted to say with old Scrooge, "Bah, Humbug!"

Or sometimes we are like the little girl who liked Santa Claus better than Jesus. She explained, "You have to be good for Santa only at Christmas, but you have to be good for Jesus all the time."

We get tired at times of the annual campaign to "put Christ back into Christmas!" Christ IS IN Christmas already and has been from the beginning, and therefore our responsibility lies in getting him into ourselves, in recovering somehow that dynamic secret without which the first Christmas would have been the last.

So, let us look ahead and pray that we will be looking for Christ this Christmas. Do we expect him to come into our homes?

Do we expect to meet him that special night in the pews of Christ the King? Or is Jesus to be in many ways just two thousand year old occasion for a few too many

So, let us look ahead and pray that we will be looking for Christ this Christmas

Perhaps we can put our feet into the shoes of the innkeeper from the Christmas story that had been looking for the Messiah all of his life and almost missed the moment. He did come through in the end.

Perhaps not with a penthouse suite but with shelter from the night and the cold in his stable, he welcomed into the world the one he had been looking for all along.

We all imagine how well we would have treated Jesus if we had been there the night of his birth, if we had been the innkeeper.

We would have given Joseph and Mary the best room in the house, room service, and the best doctors. But we cannot do that. That night is gone forever.

Continued from page 2

This Christmas, I pray that we and all the faithful would hear the words of Jesus again, the words of Jesus, the man, after he was grown, when He said:

The king will say to those at his right hand, "Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me." Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?" And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."

(Matthew 25:36-40)

You see, we don't really have to look for Christ this Christmas. If we are doing his work, being his people who find the face of Christ in those around us and offer them our hand and our hospitality and our love, He will find us and bless us. I pray that this Christmas we see his face all around us, and that the blessings of Christ will be with each and every one of us this, and that we share

You are invited!

Join us for

Christ the King Episcopal Church's
Children's Christmas Program 2015

Hark the Herald Angel



Sunday Morning 10:00 a.m.

December 21, 2014

6400 North Socrum Loop Road, Lakeland



Meet our Angel Choir...they are practicing to make an important announcement to Earth. Meet Hark, an inquisitive young angel who wants to know all the whys and wherefores of the momentous event. You will enjoy Christmas music along with a humorous dialogue that communicates Christmas in a way that children and adults will enjoy and appreciate!

Welcome to our Family!!

CHARISSE CONEY

STACEY MAY

DAVID MAY

ELIZABETH HOSPEDALES

AL

MOORE

CATHY MOORE

Giving Hope That Changes Lives
LIGHTHOUSE
ministries

CHRISTMAS TOY DRIVE



ITEMS NEEDED: (must be new, unwrapped and unused)

- sporting equipment*
 - board games*
 - books (for all ages)
 - dolls & accessories
 - action figures
 - hotwheels
 - art & craft items
 - legos & building blocks
 - bicycles & riding toys
 - clothing, shoes
& accessories (for all ages)
 - coloring books
 - mp3 players & iPods*
 - portable radios
 - jewelry
 - video game systems
& games*
 - musical instruments
 - DVDs & CDs (for all ages)
 - gift cards**
- *TEEN APPROPRIATE

NOTE:

There is a great need for gift cards. They help to answer special needs and supplement an inventory that greatly varies each season. Thank you!

LIGHTHOUSE MINISTRIES, INC.
215 E. MAGNOLIA ST., LAKELAND, FL 33801
WWW.LIGHTHOUSEMIN.ORG
Contact Linda Robinette: 863.687.4076 x244

December Outreach



And Christ the King join to give children and families a joyous Christmas Season

This Christmas season we will have a holiday ministry opportunity through a joint project with an established local ministry to children and families, Lighthouse Ministries. The mission and vision statement of Lighthouse Ministries blends well with our own mission at Christ the King and reads:

Lighthouse Ministries, Inc. is set apart by the Spirit of God to communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ to meet the physical, emotional, and other needs of the poor and at-risk population. Lighthouse Ministries, Inc. was started in 1977 to serve the last, the least, and the lost. Our biggest desire is to see those individuals we serve to reach an overall outcome of God's peace, life purpose, and fulfillment of potential. We go to where the need is, whether it's on the streets, in our stores, or in the community.

This Christmas, we will be joining with Lighthouse in order to meet the needs of many of the most vulnerable of God's children on our community. We will be collecting offerings in two areas, toys for children of all ages and basic needs for adult male residents of Lighthouse's residential program. For adults, we are looking for gifts of men's toiletries, packaged socks, packaged underwear and gift cards. For children of all ages from toddlers through teens, the need is for new, unwrapped and unused toys and gifts, such as sporting equipment, board games and video games for teens, and sporting equipment, books, dolls, action figures, hot wheels, craft kits, Legos and building blocks, riding toys, clothing and shoes, coloring books and markers and crayons, and gift cards for all ages. Gift cards are especially welcome so that teens, children and families can make purchases to meet their specific needs. During the holiday season, we will have Lighthouse Ministries collection boxes in the hallway and sanctuary to collect gifts. It is especially important for gifts for teens and toys and gifts for children be made no later than Sunday, December 14, so that these can be distributed to families before the Christmas holiday. Items for adults can be donated through Sunday, December 21. If you have any questions about the partnership with Lighthouse Ministries or questions on appropriate donations, please speak with Chris in the church office or with Fr. Wally.

Thank You

To Kate, June and Rose
For the special coffee hour
during the Bishops Visit.
For Dorene's wonderful music
while the Bishop was here

To Diane Holdrum, June
Raymond and Isabel
Detringo for their help
in updating our Stew-
ardship books. And the

To all who helped with the Work
Day but especially the
Springthorpe's for organizing it.
To all who came out to help with
phase one of "The Hanging of the

ADVENT BEGINS SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30 WITH LIGHTING OF OUR ADVENT WREATH

Actually, we will really be celebrating a “Happy New Year,” according to our church calendar. The season of Advent is the first of the seasons of the church year. Advent begins with the Sunday nearest to St. Andrew’s Day, which falls on November 30.

The dictionary defines advent as being the coming or arrival, especially of something long awaited or momentous and is from the Latin ad + venire, to come.

The first clear references to Advent are found in the sixth century. The season was observed as a time of preparation not only for Christmas but also for the Second Coming of Christ as the Judge at the Last Day. It is also known as “little Lent” or “winter Lent” because it is a period of preparation and reflection. Advent contains four Sundays and ends on Christmas Eve.

The Advent wreath comes to us from Germany, about 500 CE, when early Christian missionaries “baptized” the pagan “fire wheel” symbol and used it to teach Christian theology. The circle represents eternity and the greenery is a symbol of new life in the midst of the death of winter. The candles on the wreath represent aspects of the Christian experience: hope, faith, joy and peace, with the Christmas Eve candle representing love. The candles for the first, second and fourth Sundays are purple or violet and represent the reflective and penitential theme of the season. The candle for the third Sunday is a rose color and marks “Gaudate” Sunday, which marks a brief relief from the regimen of discipline during this season. The fifth candle in the center of the wreath is white and is lit on Christmas Eve and represents Christ. The candles are lit one each Sunday until all five are lit at the Christmas Eve service.

If any individuals and families are interested in participating in the lighting of the Advent wreath at the beginning of our Advent services, please see Chris in the office or Fr. Wally so that a schedule can be arranged.

Coming Sunday, December 14, 2014.... Our Annual Parish Meeting

Our annual Parish meeting is scheduled to be held immediately after the 10:00 AM service on Sunday, December 14, 2014 and will include coffee and treats to sustain us during the meeting, which should last about 45 minutes. The vestry and our treasurer will offer updates on the state of the parish for this year and will lay out plans for 2015. We will be electing two new vestry members. Also, the vestry will be considering delegates to the diocesan convention to be held on January 23th and 24^h at the Cathedral of St. Luke in Orlando. **If you are interested in serving on the vestry or attending convention as a delegate, please speak with our outgoing vestry members who are our nominating committee for this year, Isabel Detringo and Bob Springthorpe.**

Notes From the Office

I want to take a moment to thank you for your tythes and donations to this church. Though we still come up short every month, the gap between our income and expenses is narrowing. If you are ever curious about anything to do with the church office... I want you to know I welcome your questions and comments anytime. You can call and make an appointment to come and see me or we can talk over the phone. Those of you who still need to fill out a pledge card, I will leave some on the table in the hall. For those who have requested envelopes for next year I will have them ready and on the table by December 21st. It is a pleasure being your church Administrator!! ~ Chris Benton

We are on the web
WWW.christthekinglakeland.com

**MINISTERING GOD'S LOVE,
 CULTIVATING FAITH**

**CHRIST THE KING
 EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

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 Lakeland, FL 33809-4141
 Phone: 863-858-1948
 Fax: 863-858-7710
 E-mail: chris@ctklakeland.com



MINISTRY SCHEDULE

Ministry area	December 7, 2014	December 14, 2014	December 21, 2014	December 24, 2014	December 28, 2014
Celebrant	Dr. Wally Reynolds	Dr. Wally Reynolds	Dr. Wally Reynolds	Dr. Wally Reynolds	Dr. Wally Reynolds
Deacon	Kate Yotter	Kate Yotter	Kate Yotter	Kate Yotter	Kate Yotter
LEM2	Bob Springthorpe	Wade Griggs	Martha Griggs	Marilyn Springthorpe	Sharon Rogers
Acolyte	Elizabeth	Elvon Hospedales	Sydney Sharrow	ALL ACOLYTES	Neila Heist
Acolyte	Alexander Parrish	Nathaniel Heist	Mitchell Parrish		Alexander Parrish
Acolyte	Liam Borden	Joey Beck	Jacob Heist		Clive Borden
Old Testament	Martha Griggs	Sharon Rogers	Mike Green	Shelia Reynolds	Isabel Detringo
New Testa- ment	Mike Burchfield	Jan Dinnerville	Susan O'Brien	Jim Royal	Andrea Borden
Prayers of the people	Jim Royal	Al Moore	Paige Sharrow	Martha Griggs	Jan Dinnerville
Greeters./ ushers	Betty & Claire	Mike & Jack	Susan & Ed		Mike & Jack
Pre k SS (paid)	Debbie	Colleen	Debbie		Colleen
Elementary SS	Pam Sharrow	Andrea Borden	Pam Sharrow		Andrea Borden
Prayer Team	Isabel & Jim	Wade & Kay	Cathy & Charisse	TBD	Meghan & Lisa
Altar Guild	Kate	Kate	Lisa	Lisa	Lisa
Vestry Coun- ters	Mark & Mike	Mark & Mike	Mark & Mike	Mark & Mike	Mark & Mike

Please sign up for coffee hour and altar flowers

December 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
			Holy Communion & Bible Study 7:00pm B – Jean Curtis B – Diane Diehl			
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Christian Ed & Adult class 9am Holy Communion 10am <u>Missions Sunday</u> B – Abbey Pafford			Evening Prayer & Bible Study 7:00pm A – Shelia & Fr. Wally 50 th !!!	B – Leisa Hospedales		B – Rose Green
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Christian Ed & Adult class 9am Holy Communion 10am <u>Annual Parish Meeting</u>			Holy Communion & Bible Study 7:00pm			Phase 2 of the Hanging of the Greens 9:00am B – Betty Con- stantino
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Christian Ed & Adult class 9am Holy Communion 10am <u>OUR WONDER- FUL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM</u> Bring a Friend			Christmas Eve Services 5:30pm & 10:00pm	Have a Very Merry Christmas.		
28	29	30	31			
Christian Ed & Adult class 9am Holy Communion 10am	B – Elvon Hospedales III		 No Services			