

The Courier

Christ Episcopal Church • 20 Carroll Street • Poughkeepsie, New York • 845-452-8220
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The Liturgy of Advent

The season of Advent is not to be confused with Lent. This short period is not primarily a time of penitence but rather a time to prepare joyfully for Christ's return and his reign.

The Lord's return does indeed have a relationship to penitence, but primarily as it leads to repentance, which is an action rather than a feeling—an action of turning around and being turned around by the work of God in us. By reflecting on our lives in the light of God's Word, we recognize the direction in which our present values and habits are leading us. Then we see that those values and ways of living must be changed. We further recognize that only the action of God can make that change in us. In the words of the Collect for the First Sunday of Advent, it is God who enables us "to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light" (*The Book of Common Prayer, page 211*).

In Advent the liturgy deals with contrasts: light and dark; joy and sorrow; beginning and end; and, especially, chronological time and God's time. We discover in Advent that God's time is of the kind described not by clocks and calendars but in terms like "the time is ripe," or "in the fullness of time."

From The Rite Light: Reflections on the Sunday Readings and Seasons of the Church Year. Copyright © 1998 by Michael W. Merriman. Church Publishing Incorporated, New York .

Friends –

This reflection by Michael Merriman is informing a new understanding of Advent for me, and I commend it to you.

Our Annual Meeting on Christ the King Sunday was a fitting way to close out one church year, and to look forward to the next. We acknowledged the ministry and gifts of People's Warden Michael Warden and Treasurer Carlie Graves, whose terms expire at the end of December. We also said thank you to outgoing Vestry members Harvey Flad, Peggy Kraft, Bill Moran, and Carlie.

New Vestry members elected for three-year terms were Lorenzo Colombo, Herman A. Harmenlink, and Michael DeCordova. We are blessed by their willingness to offer their gifts, skills, and talents, in ministry to the parish. Mike George was elected Rector's Warden and Paul Conrad was elected People's Warden. I look forward to being in ministry with them, and the entire vestry and parish leadership, in 2008.

When you next come to church, you'll be able to enjoy the arrival of over 100 new pew cushions. The generosity of parish members and longtime friends in making this wonderful enhancement to our worship space possible was remarkable. As usual, I can sign off with the observation that our parish is truly blessed, and that we have much for which to give thanks.

Blake +



Worship Schedule

Sundays

8 AM Eucharist and Sermon

A quiet, traditional service.

10 AM Eucharist with Music

Music arranged by Laura Russell, music director. Childcare available in the nursery.

10 AM Sunday School

11:30 Rite 13 and J2A

1 PM Misa en Español

Wednesdays

11 AM Eucharist

In the Rector's Study

Michael Feinberg to Speak at Justice for All Forum

Justice For All Speakers Forum Presents Rabbi Michael Feinberg "Faith and Labor: Partner in Justice" on Sunday December 16, 2007 @4pm at Poughkeepsie Friends Meeting (Quakers), 249 Hooker Ave., Poughkeepsie. For additional information call 845-454-2870 or visit www.allforjustice.org

Homeless Shelter Staffing

One of the Christ Church Community Ministry projects is to help out at the Dutchess County Coalition for the Homeless. Beginning December 18, Christ Church will begin staffing the homeless shelter on the third Tuesday of each month. We will be providing the hot meal as well.

Volunteers need to be at the shelter by 8PM to welcome guests and serve meals and will usually be finished with their tasks by 10PM or 10:30PM at the latest.

Now that the cold weather is here, this ministry is especially important. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Louise Crans at lacrans@optonline.net or 845.437.7727.

A Note from Kairos Prison Ministry:

10/28/07



God's Special Time

Dear Christ Church Parishioners,

We are so grateful to count you as a partner who has taken time to help build Christ's kingdom by bringing His light of love, forgiveness, and new life inside one of the darkest places on earth – prison.

Kairos 22 at Beacon Correctional was an incredible experience where the Holy Spirit tore down walls that had been built around broken hearts. He healed many of those broken hearts and breathed new life into damaged souls. Listen to how some of the inmates described their experience:

How I came:

I came dead, aching for spiritual growth. I came with a broken heart and lost relationships. I've been a broken woman since 1999. I knew the church, but I was like a balloon filled with air – taking up space but nothing inside.

What I found:

Love and forgiveness. I found restoration. New life in Christ. Jesus Christ in my new family. I saw angels. I cried and hugged, cried and hugged – which you never do in prison.

We wanted you to know how much your gifts were appreciated by the Kairos team and especially by the inmates themselves. Over the course of the three days, they began to realize that the body of Christ is a very real thing, not just some theological imagery. Your gifts of love are the instrument that God uses to open their eyes to that reality.

We can't adequately communicate how important your gifts of prayer, financial support, cookies, placemats, and letters are! We are fully convinced that your gifts are instruments of the Spirit, and they are every bit as important as the clergy person who lovingly ushered a new soul into the kingdom on this weekend. Your actions are truly fruit being produced on behalf of Christ!

We sing praises to God with you for how His family sacrifices their interests so they can "do it unto one of the least of these." We are grateful to call you a partner in ministry to the prisoner.

God bless you,
Lorraine Witkowski

"An angel of the Lord opened the doors of the prison and set them free." Acts 5:19

EfM at Holy Cross Monastery



Education for Ministry, affectionately known as EfM, is a program of theological education-at-a-distance of the School of Theology of the University of the South. Students sign up one year at a time for this four-year program. It covers the basics of a theological education

in the Old and New Testaments, church history, liturgy, and theology. You will find that EfM teaches you how to think theologically, deepens your faith and your understanding of our Christian heritage, and provides you with a new confidence to be Christ's minister.

The current EfM class at Holy Cross Monastery is finishing up the current year on Thursday, December 13th at 6:30. This last class is an open meeting for anyone who might be interested in joining in January. This class will begin at 6:30 and include a question and answer time and conclude with party foods.

For more information, please contact Juliette Graham-Hayes. hayesgra@aol.com.

Christmas Greens And Poinsettias

Each year the church is beautifully decorated for the Christmas Eve and Christmas season services, when we celebrate the nativity of our Lord and Savior. Donating a portion of the greens and poinsettias to the Glory of God is a special way to remember a loved one who is in God's nearer presence, or to honor someone living whose life and ministry is special to you. The following opportunities are available this year:



Two Poinsettia 'Mini-Trees' - \$60 each

Eight Wreaths at the various doors to the church - \$25 each

Presentation of greenery, flowers & candles in one the stained glass windows in the chapel, narthex, and choir transept (20 windows) - \$25 each

Presentation of greenery, flowers & candles in one the stained glass windows in the All Saints Columbarium (7 windows) - \$20 each

Large single poinsettias behind the altar - \$20 each

Small single poinsettias around the pulpit & lectern - \$15 each

Miscellaneous greens throughout the church – a donation in any amount

Please use the Flower envelope enclosed in this copy of *The Courier*. A listing of the memorials and those being honored will be acknowledged in the Christmas Eve service bulletins. Deadline is Friday, December 21st.

Pledge Update



Thank you to all of you who have pledged! As of Nov. 27, we have received 85 pledges for 2008, for a total of just over \$181,000. Last year 103 parishioners pledged to the church, and we expect about the same number to pledge this year. So far, the average pledge is up slightly to \$2,134 and there are 5 new pledgers. We are very appreciative of your gifts to the church. If you have not pledged

and would like to do so, stewardship materials are available at the front and back of the church.

Carlie Graves, Treasurer

Vespers

An Order of Worship for the Evening
upon the

Feast of St. Lucia

Thursday December 13 at 6:00pm

A service of readings, anthems and hymns in honor of the patron saint of Sweden, featuring a candle light procession and choral music sung in Swedish.

A reception featuring Swedish delicacies follows the service.



A Reflective Christmas Prayer

Father God, when your precious Son became a tiny baby in a stable in Bethlehem in poverty and simplicity, you changed our world. As we imagine those surroundings, we join with the shepherds and the wise men in wonder and praise. We thank you for our material lives, praise you for our spiritual lives, and trust in you for our eternal life. Amen.

from <http://www.prayerguide.org.uk/christmas.htm>

Youth to Host Intergenerational Projects



Christ Church
Youth Education
will be hosting
three
intergenerational
craft projects on
upcoming
Sundays:

December 2 Advent wreath making
December 9 Piñata making
December 16 Origami workshop

The recommended donation to participate in the wreath making is \$10. Please call Michele at church office to register so we can plan to have enough equipment for all.

Come Join The Fun Help Get The Church Ready For Christmas

Join us on
Saturday, December 22 at 9 AM
to help with

The Greening of the Church

Annual Meeting Election Results

Newly elected vestry members:

Michael De Cordova
Herman Alan Harmelink
Lorenzo Colombo

New Rector's Warden: Mike George
New People's Warden: Paul Conrad

These newly elected people will
assume office in January.

Courier Editorial Board

Marge Bliss, Carlie Graves,
Jeanne Marie Perry, Editor

Next Courier Deadline: December 21
Please send articles to Jeanne Marie
Perry at sadlbun52@aol.com

Christ Episcopal Church

Rector: Fr. Blake Rider †
Music Director: Laura Russell
Parish Administrator: Michele Haynes
Property Steward: Notoe Hodge
Rector's Warden: Michael Wood
People's Warden: Michael George

Christmas Schedule

Monday, December 24th

**Christmas Eve Family Service
at 5:00 pm**

**Guadalupe Christmas Eve Service
at 6:00 pm**

**Choir with organ and strings
at 10:30 pm**

The program will include:
Three Christmas Motets by Francis Poulenc
O Magnum Mysterium by Victoria
Noel We Sing by Daquin
Christmas Day by Gustav Holst

**Festival Christmas Eve Service
at 11:00 pm**

Tuesday, December 25th

**Christmas Day Eucharist
at 10:00am**

