

Church of the Holy Cross + Episcopal +

Newsletter

December 2009

Advent Calls Us to Seek The Mystery of God's Light

By Richard Valantasis & Doug Bleyle

The purpose of Advent as a season of the Church is to call us to remember and connect again to the reality of this great and cosmic mystery in which our God became a human to guide us humans into the divinity, into the life of God. Although the days are getting shorter and shorter in this season, the light of God may become brighter and brighter. We look expectantly for the Light of God, the incarnate God, who comes to us in the darkness and fills us with light. Advent tells us to keep this reality of God coming to us, the reality of the mystery, at the heart of our lives, even when our lives seem to take turns unexpected and hurtful. The mystery continues, and in this season we train our minds, bodies, and souls to connect with it, to stay connected, and to contemplate the reality of God with us, in us, through us, around us, behind us, before us, above us, below us. God is here, present and acting and living out the mystery in our midst.

Advent tells us that there is a miraculous and wonderworking icon in our midst, the God-human Jesus, the sign of Light in the midst of darkness. Turning to that wonderful sign, we look in wonder and delight that God deemed the material and human world so worthy that God came to dwell in them so that we can once again experience the union with God that transforms the pain and suffering of living into an occasion of salvation. And we give thanks.

Check out the Institute for Contemplative Living, Website at: www.institute-contemplativeliving.org

Celebrate Christmas Eve With Different Services

We'll sing in Christmas on the Eve in different ways this year, one with pageantry and the other with the traditional carols.

The first will be at 6 p.m. with the Children's Pageant to celebrate the Nativity with the Christmas story. The pageant will serve as our sermon and the service will conclude with the Eucharist.

The second service will begin at 9 p.m. with traditional Christmas Carols led by our choir, followed at 9:30 p.m. with a traditional celebratory Eucharist that will end with the singing of *Silent Night* and *Joy to the World*.

The Christmas Day and New Year's Day services will include music on our new Allen organ played by Linda Raney.

Please share our Christmas schedule with your neighbors and friends,

Strings Continue Chamber Music

Please plan to join us for our next Chamber Music festival at 2 p.m. Sunday December 6. We'll open with wine and cheese and fellowship, and then adjourn for the music of strings that will feature the works of Franz Joseph Haydn.

Breaking Bread during Advent

We will gather in fellowship starting this Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. for soup and bread at the church to reflect on the Advent season. Please join us. We will break bread together following the 6 p.m. Healing Eucharist, to which you also are invited.

Holy Cross Youth Group

Taking a Look at Godspell

By Amy Pospichal

Attention all Youth and Parents! We hope your Thanksgiving was a fun, safe and blessed one. Sunday, December 13, 27 and going through January, we shall meet at 9:00 a.m. in the Youth Room. Mark your calendars to watch Godspell and get ready for some cool music and interesting discussions.

Did you know that 6 out of the 15 songs in this musical actually came from the Episcopal Hymnal of 1940? And, one of their songs "Day by Day" hit #13 on the Billboard pop chart. Since December 27 is right in the middle of Christmas vacation please let Amy or Marlin know if you can make it, or if we need to shift the dates around. (Amy: apositchal@yahoo.com and Marlin: marlin@southmountainsound.com).

The word "godspell" is the Old English spelling for the word "gospel." The movie Godspell was adapted from the stage in 1974. The people have fluffy hair and funky clothes, yet the message of the Gospel story is definitely in this film. It is a musical (mostly rock and roll) about the life and sayings of Jesus. This musical can take us on that journey that is at times amusing, and at other times, heart-wrenching. It should call forth our questions about the meaning of discipleship and some of those old sayings in a fresh light. So come on out and start watching with us!

Women's Bible Studying

The Beauty of Ephesians

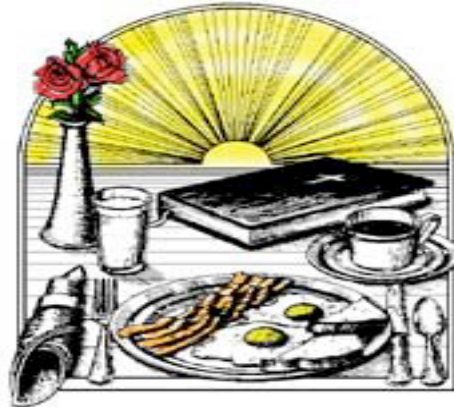
By Amy Pospichal

Greetings to all of the women of Holy Cross. We have just had our first in a series of studies of Ephesians, getting a general overview of its themes and historical context. It was a very small turnout, but we had an excellent time of fellowship and conversation about the opening prayer in Ephesians 1:1-14. On Thursday, December 4, we will read the remainder of Ephesians chapter 1, from 15-23.

Ephesians is a beautifully-worded, worshipful homage to Paul's theology. The letter covers many of Paul's theological ideas, such as grace in Jesus Christ, fellowship and unity in Christ, reconciliation in Christ, among others. It opens with a prayer that is very dense in ideas, but uses the rest of the letter to discuss those different ideas. Ephesians says that in Jesus Christ all things shall be gathered up together "in the fullness of time." It can be a comfort to know that there is a plan!

This letter addresses some of the ongoing issues in the early church, where there were differences between Jewish and Gentile Christians. It tells us that even though there are differences between

people, Jesus Christ can be that linchpin that pulls us together into fellowship, because of his grace. This is a rich epistle and I hope that you can join us next time! See you next time at 7:00 p.m. in the church library on December 3 and again on December 17th!



Men's Prayer Breakfast - First Saturday

Men Will Breakfast on God's Word

The Holy Cross Men's monthly "Prayer Breakfast" will be changing this year to a Breakfast and Bible study. On Saturday December 5th at 8:30 AM, we will meet for breakfast cooked by Ray Tucker with some Church business discussed over the meal, and then retire to the Library for Bible study. The Bible study will last as long as we want it to.

Nominees Sought for Vestry & Delegates

In January Holy Cross will be electing four persons to serve on the Vestry. Holy Cross also will elect two delegates and two alternates to represent the church at the Electing Convention next year.

The Election of the Ninth Bishop of the Rio Grande will be on April 24, 2010 at St. John's Cathedral. If you are interested in serving the Parish with the gifts of administration or as a delegate, please talk with a member of the Vestry or Father Raymond.

