

# The Glebe Gazette

Monthly newsletter of the Glebe Episcopal Church  
Bennett's Creek Parish, Suffolk, Virginia  
December 2009

## FROM THE RECTOR

Beloved in Christ:

The season of Advent is upon us. The word advent simply means, "the arrival of a notable person or thing." If you look in your dictionary, you will find additional meanings linking the word to the Church, and noting that it signifies the first season of the Church Liturgical Year.

I like to watch a TV sports talk show called, "Pardon the Interruption" in which two sports journalists, Tony Kornheiser and Michael Wilbon – both from the Washington Post – discuss current events relating to sports. They have a new "game" they play called Word. In this game each player uses one word to describe an event, an action, or a person. Borrowing the game, I would probably describe the Advent Season as "startling," or perhaps as "beginning." Or maybe, breaking the rules a bit, we might call it a startling beginning. We always think of Advent as a quiet time of patient waiting, but the event that we are waiting for brings about a new and startling truth to the world. Christmas is about God entering into His Creation as the infant Jesus to bring about Salvation for all. If that is not a startling turn of events, then our language is too poor to describe the generosity of God's love. My thought then, is that Advent is the startling beginning of something very important and wonderful. That something is the birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ. If the dictionary defines Advent as the arrival of a notable individual, the dictionary left out many more adjectives to describe the arrival of Jesus. Adjectives like, Saviour, Messiah, Lord of all, King of Kings, and our merciful advocate and judge

We Episcopalians like to spend Advent in quiet contemplation of this coming of God's wonderful gift. Quite frankly that is rather hard to do, what with all the Christmas music, secular and sacred, blaring at us 24/7, as well as all the decorations, plays, ballets, musicals, and every thing you can imagine about Christmas raining down upon us. Maybe we can just ignore all the hoopla and withdraw into a quiet contemplation of the coming of Christ as we go about our daily tasks. But, it is very hard to ignore the gaily decorated elephant standing in the middle of our lives. I think that this year I will change my outlook and join

in the anticipation celebration. After all, what we are looking forward to is certainly a full burst of Joy. I will save singing *Joy to the World* for Christmas Eve, but this year I am not going to be quiet or contemplative in my Advent spirituality. Instead, I will go happily about my shopping and pre-Christmassing, eschewing the "Happy Holidays" for my boisterous "Merry Christmas."

On a more logistical note for Christmas we have changed our Christmas service schedule just a little bit. You will note these changes in your bulletin at Church. The Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services and times have not changed, but our – somewhat traditional service – Lessons and Carols has been pushed back into January. That is because the First Sunday after Christmas is December 27<sup>th</sup>, just two days after Christmas. Therefore, we will have only one service, Holy Eucharist, on Sunday, December 27<sup>th</sup>. Then, on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, we will have one service, Lessons and Carols. Both the December 27<sup>th</sup> Holy Eucharist and Lessons and Carols on January 3<sup>rd</sup> will be at 10:00am. We will have all the services we usually have, but we are just changing the order.

Janet joins me in wishing all of you a most Merry and Joyful Christmas.

Peace,  
Ross+

## NEWS FROM THE ALTAR GUILD

It is hard to believe that we are already into the Advent season and marching quickly to Christmas. As part of our Christmas celebration, we have our traditional greening of the church. This year we will *green* the church on Sunday December 20. I ask that all who can assist with this please join us after the 10:30 service concludes (about noon).

If you have evergreens in your yard, please share the bounty! You can bring them in and leave on the breezeway between the church and parish hall. Greens that are needed are Magnolia, holly, pine, cedar, boxwood, juniper, fir, etc. The windows on street side of the church get very warm during the day, so only the hardiest of evergreens hold up well to the heat!

It is a fun and festive event; please join us if you can!

Shirley

## MUSIC NOTES

Once again, the swiftly turning year brings us to Advent, the beginning of the church's calendar. One of the hymns we often sing during Advent is, "Sleepers, Wake!" There are two versions in our hymnal, hymns #'s 61 and 62. The principal biblical reference in its text is the parable in Matthew 25:1-13, in which Jesus tells the story of ten bridesmaids waiting for the arrival of the bridegroom. Custom dictated that the bridegroom fetch his bride, with her attendants, from her parents' home to his own. Five of the bridesmaids were wise and had brought extra oil for their lamps; five were foolish, and had not. When the bridegroom was delayed, they slept, only to be awakened at midnight with a shout that the bridegroom was about to arrive. By now, the lamps of the foolish maidens had gone out, and they had to leave to buy more oil. It was only the wise maidens, prepared with ample oil for their lamps, who joyfully accompanied the bridegroom into the wedding banquet.

"Sleepers, Wake!" Most of us are asleep, when it comes to a sense of our mortality. Rushing through our days, trying to meet our own goals and others' expectations, we have little time to think about the end of life. And when we do have to face it, we are ill prepared.

So the sentinels of Advent remind us, "Sleepers, Wake!" This Advent sentinel astounds us by calling us, instead to a wedding feast! We are invited to bring our lamps to welcome the Bridegroom, to hasten through the streets to meet him. The Bridegroom is Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. We are swept along with the other guests into the city of God.

How do we prepare? With what oil can we sustain our light? The hymn might remind us to stop hurrying through life mindlessly. We need to allow the melody to open our souls to the mystery of God and make one of our priorities in life our relationship in prayer with the Bridegroom whom we are called to greet.

For it is prayer that sustains our light. Prayer, above all, is a breathing in of the life at the source of our being; God's life and love, into the world.

Praying in preparation for a wedding feast is a good way to begin the year. A good way to prepare for Christmas. A good way to prepare for eternity.

Keep singing through the season! And stay prayerfully awake!

And keep singing!

Jo Anna

## THANKSGIVING DINNER

The hospitality committee would like to extend a very heartfelt thanks to all of those amazing cooks at Glebe. We are all some pretty darn special cooks and I know that I'm not the only one that might have eaten just a tad too much. Thank you all for the wonderful dishes. From the looks of the serving dishes, everything was very well received. Thanks to carvers, Harvey and Jesse, wine steward, Philip Ford, and Jay for frying a turkey. A huge thanks to all of those in the kitchen on dish detail.....Jesse, Taya, Brian, Mary, Chip, Kathy....I'm sure I missed some, but those are the ones I chased out of the kitchen at the end of the evening so the floor could get mopped. Thanks to Shirley, Phyllis and Becky for all of your help; I am always in your debt. Thanks to the softball team for babysitting.....I'm sure they had more of them than kids, but I think they enjoyed it all too. The people of Glebe are a truly special bunch of folks and I am truly thankful for all of them.

Hope everyone has a safe and blessed Thanksgiving. Safe travel for those on the road.

Thanks to everyone again,

Debbie Eure,  
Hospitality Chairperson

## NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Please submit all articles by Friday December 18, 2009 to [newslettereditor@glebechurch.org](mailto:newslettereditor@glebechurch.org). Visit the Glebe website at: [www.glebechurch.org](http://www.glebechurch.org). You can download Adobe for free at <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.htm>!

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