

THE BRANCH

TELLING THE STORIES OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
ADVENT AND CHRISTMASTIDE 2016



We are a Christ-centered community in the Anglican tradition. As we live together as a family, we seek to grow into the image of God, loving and serving one another and our world, through worship, formation, action, evangelism, and stewardship.





Staff

Clergy:

The Rev. Dr. Christian Brady, *Interim Rector*
 The Rev. Travis Hines, *Associate Rector*
 The Rev. David Wilson, *Pastoral Assistant*
 The Rev. Dr. Stu Phillips, *Liturgical Assistant*

Office:

Leslie Tomlinson, *Executive Assistant to the Rector*
 Teresa Robinson, *Financial and Music Administrator*

Parish Ministry:

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 David Madeira, *Director of Music*
 Steven Lefebvre, *Director of Youth & Young Adult Formation*
 Sally Chambers, *Director of Communications*
 Bev Mahan, *Verger & Assistant to the Rector for Liturgy*
 Robert Smith, *Assistant to the Rector for Pastoral Care*
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 Deb Whiteside, *Children's Catechesis Director*

St. B's Bookstore:

Allison Hardwick, *Manager*

Preschool & Parent's Day Out:

Kelly Hull, *Preschool Director*

Vestry

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Melissa Ward, *Clerk*
 Alfred Dowell, *Treasurer*
 Seth Swihart, *Senior Warden*
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Advent's Arrival

An Invitation for Advent

For many people the two months after Halloween are anxious, waiting times before Christmas arrives. For the kids, or the kids in us, it is the building excitement of presents, food, and general silliness. For others, especially those of us whose loved ones have moved beyond this world, it can be the anxiety of going through yet another season of celebration feeling alone or adrift. That the days are shorter often only adds to our melancholy. But this time in the church calendar is not Christmas, that *starts* on December 25, rather in December we enter the season of Advent.

You will not be surprised to learn that the term “advent” comes from the Latin *adventus*. But while many believe it means “waiting,” it actually which means “arrival.” The Latin is itself a translation of the Greek *parousia*, which is found in the New Testament to refer to Jesus’ return, his “second coming.” For example, John encourages the early church to remain firm in the faith, saying,

1 John 2:28 *And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he is revealed we may have confidence and not be put to shame before him at his coming.*

So it is that while over the next month we will read in the Daily Offices and on Sundays portions of the Bible that refer to the Israelite expectation of the

coming of the Messiah, we are also preparing ourselves for Christ’s second arrival and the full establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven. This time is an ideal reminder that we are living in-between two worlds: the already and the not yet. As we remember the anticipation that the ancient Jews felt as they awaited the Messiah, the anointed one that God had promised, we also look to the future, second coming of Christ when this broken and hurting world will be replaced with the New Heaven and New Earth.

Advent then is a time of preparation, not of waiting. As John said, we should “abide in him” and a first step of that preparation is the study of Scripture and prayer. One of the great strengths of the Anglican tradition is the lectionary, the regular reading of all of the Bible in our services, and the Daily Offices. I encourage you this Advent to add to your schedule the discipline of daily readings, perhaps subscribe to the St. B’s Daily for morning prayer or join us on Facebook in the evenings as members of the St. B’s community lead us in Compline, the final prayer service of the day.

Let us strengthen and encourage one another as we journey together in this land between two worlds, knowing that the Messiah has come and brought salvation to the world and that he will come again and bring an end to all suffering and death.



ON THE CHANCEL STEPS

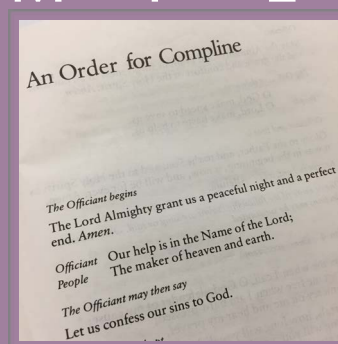
by Fr. Christian Brady
Interim Rector
cbrady@stbs.net

Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen. ✠

PRAY COMPLINE

Monday through Friday, beginning November 28 at 9 p.m., please join the staff and their families for compline on Facebook Live. Not on Facebook? We invite you to pray compline by yourselves or with those you love, Monday through Friday at 9 p.m. or at whatever time suits you.



COMPLINE OR NIGHT PRAYER CAN BE FOUND ON PG. 127 OF THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER OR ONLINE [HERE](#).

Advent word

A Global Advent Calendar



by Shannon Truss
Vestry Member
shannontruss@yahoo.com

I've always loved Christmas (the magic, the decorations, the celebration), but it's only more recently that I've fallen in love with Advent as well. For me, one of the gifts of being Episcopalian is the church calendar. I love that both Advent and Lent encourage me to wait - with hope - for the coming of Christmas and Easter. The challenge with waiting during Advent is finding a quiet space inside me. Waiting for God seems to require a certain amount of thought and concentration - otherwise the world is just too distracting for the waiting to feel purposeful. For many of us, December is an exceedingly busy time. My own schedule is packed with admittedly good things, but that leaves little time for preparing my heart to wait for the celebration of Jesus' birth and the anticipation of His eventual return.

One practice that has helped me find a spot of quiet during this busy season is the Advent Word of the Day. The Society of St. John the Evangelist (SSJE) publishes a list of words before Advent begins. Each day, I receive an email with the word and a short reflection on that word. I then look for a way to share a photo, a scripture or a phrase that embodies that word for me. I have found this exercise goes perfectly with the anticipatory waiting of Advent. It's like hide and seek for what God will do each day.

Sharing my Advent word is also a way for my social media outlets to show my faith.

The first year I did the Advent words, my hairdresser asked me what advent was. It was a great opportunity for me to share what this season means to me as a counter to the busy, consumerist message the Christmas season has in our culture.

I sometimes think God will only talk to me if I have a large span of time to sit in the quiet and wait for Him. The Advent word of the day has reminded me again and again that God will show up, if only I will look for him. And while there are other Advent resources I love (especially God With Us, edited by Pennoyer and Wolfe), the one that has been a constant companion are SSJE's Advent words. I would love it if you would join me this Advent and use the tags #stbsadvent and #adventword.



Adventword: Worship posted by Shannon Truss on Instagram last year



Adventword: Shine posted by Shannon Truss on Instagram last year.

Join the rest of the Anglican Communion in creating a global Advent calendar through considering one word for each day of the season as offered by the Society of St. John the Evangelist (SSJE), an Anglican/Episcopal order of monks.

Sign up here to receive the word via email:
www.anglicancommunion.org/adventword.

The Jesse Tree

An Advent Journey for Families

When you open your Bible to the beginning of the New Testament, you find the genealogy of Jesus. Layered within the first 16 verses, are 42 generations of his ancestry. You see names of patriarchs and kings intermingled with shepherds and servants. Some names are those we have little or no knowledge of, yet all of them are important to God's story. Their names, not their list of accomplishments, were written down to show Jesus' lineage; to show it was his people who mattered.

When we dig deeper into this genealogy we see a picture of God's love and compassion. It shows us a

family familiar with pain and suffering. It doesn't attempt to hide away or silence the sins of the fathers. Rather, this genealogy provides us a picture of God's love for his fallen creation that we all can relate to. And culminating from this imperfect family tree is the birth of God's ultimate, perfect gift to us; redemption through his own son, Jesus.

To better understand God's family, this year we will be offering a centuries old family Advent study called the Jesse Tree. The Jesse Tree offers daily Scripture readings beginning with the creation of man, up to the birth of Jesus.

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THE WONDER OF IT ALL

by Carla Schober

Director of Family &
Children's Formation
cschober@stbs.net



PICS WITH ST. NICK! SUNDAY, DEC. 4 9:30 - 10:30 A.M.

FAMILY & FRIENDS, ST.
NICHOLAS WILL MAKE HIS ANNUAL
VISIT TO ST. B'S BETWEEN
SERVICES ON SUNDAY, DEC. 4.
COME HAVE YOUR PIC TAKEN!

A Family Celebration

St. B's Pageant

Is your family in town this Christmas? If so, we invite you to join in celebrating Jesus' birth with our St. B's family.

One of our parish traditions is the St. B's Children's Christmas Eve Pageant. Our pageant is the children's opportunity to share the story of Jesus' birth through their eyes and impressions, not an adults. There are no lengthy memorizations, solo auditions, or extensive set building. Your children make their own costumes with the supplies we provide on site. And the script hasn't changed for over 2,000 years.

It's been said that this night is organized chaos. We like to say our children are simply imitating that same innocent chaos that played out on the hills above Bethlehem that Christmas long ago. Some might even call it the best live action play a family can participate in together. How about yours too?

We hope your family will join us this year. Please read the details on the following page and mark your calendars.

Tree continued from pg. 5

Each day's readings will be accompanied with colorable card stock ornaments for children or adults to take home, fill in and hang on whatever form of tree you prefer. Each Sunday you will also notice a wooden St. B's Jesse Tree located in the center of the narthex greeters table.

Also this year, instead of in-house printed copies of a Jesse Tree devotional, we recommend you purchase, "The Jesse Tree, A Family Craft for Advent" by Catherine Fournier. This short book with instructions can be found on [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com) for under \$10. Our Children's Formation ministry will provide the weekly packets of pre-cut card stock ornaments to take home. These will be located in both the narthex and at the downstairs Children's Formation greeters' table.

May this tangible reflection of Jesus' genealogy be a blessing to your Advent season and an encouragement that God loves us no matter what.



amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.

Shopping on Amazon this holiday season? When you shop on Amazon through smile.amazon.com you'll find the same low prices, vast selection, and convenience and amazon will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to St. B's. even your prime membership works. choose St. Bartholomew's as your charity when you first visit smile.amazon.com by searching for "St. Bartholomew's Episcopal".



Pageant Rehearsal:
Saturday, December 17
9:30 - Noon

Drop your children off in Wallace Hall between 9:15 & 9:25 a.m. Join your child and help with their costume(s) at 11:30 a.m. downstairs in the designated rooms. This rehearsal is for 4 years through 6th grade. Children, 2 & 3 years, are invited to participate but do not need to come to the rehearsal.

Christmas Eve Pageant
Dec., 24, 4:30 p.m.

Please arrive no later than 3:45 p.m. on Christmas Eve. Children will gather in the room where they made their costume.

Carla is also looking for 30 teen and/or adult volunteers to help with the pageant. For more information or to help please email Carla at csschober@stbs.net.



MARK THE ADVENT SEASON
WITH THE CHOIRS & MUSCIANS

**A FESTIVAL OF
LESSONS & CAROLS
SUN., DEC. 4**

DURING BOTH SERVICES

**ST. B'S FAMILY CHRISTMAS
CONCERT & CAROL SING**

**SUNDAY, DEC. 11
6:30 - 8:00 P.M.**

Childcare for 4 yrs. and under
RSVP to churchoffice@stbs.net by Dec. 7



Get Ready Look Out

Advent as another Season of Transition



WALK THIS WAY
by Bev Mahan
Verger & Assistant to the

I attended the annual verger conference in Spokane, WA in September. The plan was made months ago, but when the time came, the conference occurred during the St. B's budget shortfall, and I felt a bit guilty about spending the money. I attended with ears to hear about churches in transition, and to gain insight into a verger's role during transition. I came away with confidence in our system of calling a new rector, and a sense of comfort in the uncertainty. Thank you to all who give faithfully to St. B's for helping make the verger ministry possible.

It strikes me that our season of transition is much like the season of Advent, in that it is the beginning of something new, that we are living in a state of anticipation, that we are preparing ourselves for what comes next. Our preparation includes providing feedback for the parish profile, adopting changes in our worship service such as a full Gospel procession and the placement of our tithes on the credence table under the

aumbry. Some of what makes us unique as a congregation comes from the makeup of our membership, and some from the clergy leadership. At our core, we are Jesus followers who worship in the Anglican tradition. At the same time, we are St. Bartholomew's Church, a reflection of all of us, and like no other. That is why we can visit any Episcopal church anywhere and recognize the liturgy, but also note differences in the way congregations worship and exercise their call. This Advent in particular, we have the opportunity to prepare ourselves for new leadership, and to consider how God might want to use us in the new year to accomplish His purposes at St. Bartholomew's Church.

The start of the new church year in Advent is also a good time to recognize our members who volunteer every Sunday to facilitate our worship. We have 32 acolytes from 18 families who get to church early and strive to bring the light of Christ to the world. Likewise, we have 32 lay Eucharistic



Former Presiding Bishop, Katharine Jefferts Schori spoke at the Annual Verger Conference

ministers (LEMs) who seek to serve you as you receive the body and blood of our Savior. These are roles taken seriously by every member of the worship team, every time it gathers, be it on Sundays, at weddings or funerals or special services during the week. During the four Sundays in Advent, please try to notice who is serving you and thank them.



Acolytes: Maggie and Nora Sullivan

An Advent & Christmas Vocab Lesson

Perspectives from the Altar Guild

As an English teacher, I adore words and the richness of our common language. And as an Altar Guild member, the vocabulary that we use provides an interesting lexicon to explore.

So, class, today I want to share two of my recent favorites with you—the prefix *trans-* and *festival*. And, yes, there's a test.

First, *Trans-*.

Transition. Transformation. Transfer. Transcendent. And, from the comic-strip philosophers, *Calvin and Hobbes*, Transmogrify.

The Latin root word common to all of these words is *trans-* meaning “across, beyond, through.” Within that definition is a sense of change, but it's certainly more than that; there's a destination implicit in the words themselves. When we transition or transform or transfer, it is not merely change for change's sake. There is something on the other side that we are striving to achieve, a new understanding or sense of being. Whether it is better or worse, we often don't initially know. We are bound for another place and to get there may not be a one-step process as there is something else, something that is probably new or unfamiliar, to cross.

And so it is with Advent.



SETTING THE TABLE

by Thorunn McCoy

Altar & Flower Guild
tmccoy@email.usn.org

We are crossing beyond into a new Christian year. But, somehow, we're not quite there yet. There's this liminal space, Advent, where we journey from our comfort of ordinary season into a joyous season of Christmas. During the past few months, things have been the same in our sanctuary. Indeed, there's such a strong sense of the ordinary that we can become complacent. We expect that certain things are in the church, and as a result, we don't really see them.

Advent is a time of contemplation as we await our Savior's birth and return. In essence we are striving toward something, a specific destination—the arms of Jesus. And, this time, Advent, is the space in which we journey.

Your test: During Advent, I challenge you to really look around the church. What's there? What's not there? What has changed? How does the purple signal a shift from ordinary time's green? Is something extraordinary about to occur? Do the flowers reflect our time of crossing through and going beyond? Do the collects draw us to anew place—perhaps one where we haven't been before? Too often our stasis in an old mindset keeps us from growth. While traditions provide safety

and comfort, they can also become empty, devoid of meaning. Advent gives us a place to reset our thinking. To wait and anticipate a new year, a new priest, a new calling, a new adventure in our Christian life.

Second, *Festival*.

Festival. The word itself denotes a joyous time, bounty, and celebration. During Christmas, the altar is draped in a cloth that the Altar Guild refers to as Coronation Festival. It is a rich brocade of swirling embroidery that shimmers in the light. The organic tendrils spring, intertwine, and spread across the altar with an abandon but a regularity of pattern. Within the tapestry are the green of ordinary time, a time when we follow Christ's life; white and gold, the colors of Easter's triumph; and red, the color for ordinations and for Holy Week. Missing is Advent and Lent's purple pall. This is a fabric of majestic joy. Interwoven with gold threads that catch the light and reflect back their richness to the congregation, this material exudes a regal presence stately enough for any visiting king or queen.

Christmas is one of the seasons when we use this stunning cloth. We acknowledge not only Christ's birth but also his position as King in our lives. While the nativity scenes show our Lord swaddled in the dirty hay of a manger, we see what the shepherds and magi saw—a transcendent Ruler who reigns over all.

Your test: Note the other times during the year when we use the Festival Coronation frontals and altar hangings. How do these times tie to the kingship of Jesus in our lives, both individually and corporately? What might this say about marriage? Death? How might it bring a richer experience to our celebration of Christmas in terms of those other uses?

I'm sure you all will earn A's on this.



Tuesday
Dec. 6
6 - 8:30 p.m.

WOMEN'S ADVENT PARTY

At Lynn Ferguson's
4409 Farriswood Dr.

Celebrate the season with a holiday party! Bring a sweet or savory item to share. Beverages welcome, too. Please bring a treat to share. RSVP to Brea Cox at breacox@att.net.

christmastide SERVICE times

Christmas Eve, Saturday, Dec. 24

4:30 p.m. Family Eucharist with Pageant

8:00 p.m. Family Eucharist

10:20 p.m. Carol Sing Prelude

10:30 p.m. Family Eucharist *with incense*

Christmas Day, Sunday, Dec. 25, 10:30 a.m. Family Eucharist

Sunday, Jan. 1

10:30 a.m. Family Eucharist

*Nursery for 3 years will not be offered on
Christmas or New Year's Day. Christian formation
classes for all ages resume on January 8*



Reaffirmation of Leaning In



WHOLENESS MATTERS

by Steven Lefebvre

Director of Youth
slefebvre@stbs.net



Advent is upon us... although... it has felt very Advent-y around here for quite some time. Since Pentecost we have been in a season of waiting and preparing for a new rector and if you're like me, Psalm 13's, 'how long O Lord,' has a particularly relatable sentiment to it. At this time, an invitation to Advent almost seems unkind to our community.

But if we thought of Advent in the context of our interim period, there is a significant amount of life happening in the longing. I've seen great gifting in the administrative abilities of the search committee. I've witnessed our vestry rise up to the challenges this time has brought with tremendous servant leadership. I've eaves dropped on insightful conversations about our community's identity and vision as our volunteers prepare Wednesday Supper for our children and youth. Our parents have stepped up in significant and new ways as well: gathering regularly to plant seeds and cast a vision for our future, leading a Wednesday night

bible study and opening their homes to gather our young people. Yes, we are waiting for the new rector to come and perhaps a more settled feeling will rest on the community at that time, but I believe there is plenty of more fruit to glean in this in-between time.

Last Spring we asked the community to 'Lean In.' It was our mantra, to remind the community that with the absence of our rector, we all need an extra bit of intentional presence, service and giving. As I mentioned, we have indeed put into practice that calling.

Leaning In isn't the staff begging the community to stay when things get difficult. Instead, it's an invitation to the community to help us reaffirm our identity. In the same way, when we welcome a new member into our community through the sacrament of baptism, the entire community reaffirms their baptismal covenant. In order to make space for someone new, we stand, and affirm who we are; in doing so we build the invisible foundation and walls of our God-communing home and welcome that person in. God is beginning to show me that this time is a great gift. The more we keep faithfully showing up, giving, and struggling, the more we truly discover about ourselves. Sacramentally it's quite beautiful, in

an 18 – 24 month interim process it can be downright brutal.

This season has been, hands down, the most challenging of my vocational ministry. When Jerry left, I continued on, business as usual, assuming someone would come along eventually, fill that space and tell me what to do. When an interim rector didn't come right away, I was forced to *lean in* myself. The season of inactive waiting expired and it was time for me to make preparations of my own. During this season I made many choices, some of them hastily, some well planned out, some from a place of wisdom, and some from a place of foolishness. All along the way, it was painful and difficult; failure hurts every time. However, with every step I've taken towards trusting God and listening to the affirmation of the Holy Spirit, I am well aware that this is all part of the process. In every miscalculation, impulsive decision, or shortcoming, someone from our community has *leaned in* with great gifting and the ministry has strengthened and grown.

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Leaning In continued from pg. 11

During this time of Advent, much of the youth-specific programming takes a back seat to all of the wonderful, sacred gatherings St. B's has to offer. Our youth begin their winter break and I reshuffle the deck for our spring and summer gatherings. There are preparations to be made for the Justice Pilgrimage in June. Father Christian and I will be building a confirmation class from scratch. Our Wednesday night formational gatherings for middle school and high school students need maintenance. There's the Shrove Tuesday pancake supper, the Diocesan Youth Service Day, and the spring youth retreat to plan.

I believe our call to *Lean In* continues, and much like declaring our Baptismal Covenant during the baptism of every child, may we use this season of Advent to reaffirm this calling. I would appreciate, if all of you, regardless of age or standing in the parish, consider the youth ministry. St. B's Youth Ministry is a dedicated sacred space for teenagers to be known by one another and a loving God so that together, they may discern God's calling for their lives. Pray for us. Is God calling you to offer your gifts to help bring up our young people in the faith in a particular way? We can always use a hand. If you have questions, let's get coffee.

For my families with teenagers: How will your family make space in 2017 to belong to us in the way God is

calling you? Have you been on the fringes of our community? Perhaps, it's time to be known.



Volunteer, Meredith Powell and teen, Victoria Gross help prepare and serve hot dogs on St. B's Day in August.

A large group of children, mostly girls in red dresses and some boys in blue vests, are standing in a line in a sanctuary. In the foreground, there is a large, ornate Christmas star made of gold tinsel, surrounded by green garlands and white lights. The text for the Christmas Program is overlaid on the right side of the image.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S PRESCHOOL
Christmas Program
MONDAY, DEC. 12, 6 P.M.
IN THE SANCTUARY
please join us

STARS: Helping Young People Succeed

St. B's Partner in Mission

by Rodger Dinwiddie, for the Mission & Outreach Committee

My family and I started attending St. Bartholomew's worship services in 1987 however, we'd been a part of the ministries of St. B's for a while. We were Belmont Park Terrace neighbors and our young children had participated in the Preschool, Gym for Him, and my wife, Suzanne, had been blessed to work for Suzy Floyd in the St. B's Preschool.

Early on, our children attended Bob and Shirley Garth's Sunday School class. Our five-year-old son, Joe, immediately loved them! His words right after church were, "I'm never going back to the other church. They let us climb out the window to go to the playground!" The deal was sealed! Funny what God uses to get you where He wants you to be. Thus began our St B's journey!

I had recently begun my tenure (1986) with what is now known as STARS. I had been the Executive Director of Nashville Youth for Christ for 5 years

and had also taught for over 7 years in Metro Schools. Our family found rich community in the 12 Step Fellowship of the Parish, as we had begun our journey in the Steps in 1985. This intervention in our spiritual journey had led to my desire to work with STARS, a program committed to substance abuse prevention and intervention, known in 1986 as Project 714, derived from II Chronicles 7:14.

Today, the mission of STARS is to support young people in overcoming social and emotional barriers through creative and innovative programs centering on prevention, intervention, treatment, training and compassion. Through a variety of developmentally appropriate programs STARS reaches nearly 100,000 young people in Tennessee, annually. Kids on the Block (KOB) is one of those programs. KOB uses life-size puppets and an ancient form of Japanese puppetry (Bunraku) to address some very complex issues young children face; child abuse, divorce, bullying, cultural diversity and accepting differences.

Through a state licensed intensive outpatient substance abuse and co-occurring mental health treatment program, Youth Overcoming Drug Abuse (YODA), young men and women, ages 13-18, receive daily supports to help them change destructive behaviors and grow socially and emotionally. Most of the referrals to YODA are received from either the juvenile justice system or social services.

The Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) provides supports to young people from preschool-to college, who are



STARS at work to prevent bullying at Beech HS

often isolated in their environments. Only about 25% of deaf and hard of hearing young people live with family members communicating through American Sign Language. In addition, these young people are roughly seven times more likely to have substance abuse problems in their lifetime.

STARS is also one of the leaders in the nation in providing training and consultation to schools and community organizations in best practices in bullying prevention and intervention. Whether it's through adult training in the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, or Move2Stand, a STARS developed interactive youth leadership program designed to help young people stand up for those being bullied and harassed, we have been at the forefront in addressing this complex issue for nearly 25 years. Today, STARS provides a number of additional trainings in partnership with the Tennessee Department of Education as well as other States.

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Rodger Dinwiddie with his wife, Suzanne, and their grown children

Be Still & Know That I am God

Women's Annual Spring Retreat

By Sue Pichert

Look at the front of your bulletin and notice that every week we are reminded of the words of Psalm 46:10: "Be still and know that I am God."

This will be the theme of the Women's Retreat on Prayer at St. Mary's Sewanee, on Friday March 31 – Saturday, April 1.

It will be a time of teaching, sharing, song and most of all personal and corporate prayer. We are not bringing in an outside speaker but have more than 20 women involved in preparing to lead in various ways. The retreat will be broken into sessions on various

types of prayer: adoration, confession, thanksgiving and supplication.

Please mark the date on your calendar and plan to attend. It will be a time to get to know God more intimately and also an opportunity to get to know better a large number of St. B's women.

If you would like to get involved in the leadership or preparation please contact Sue Pichert at spichert@yahoo.com. We have all sorts of opportunities, but are especially looking for women who would like to share a musical offering, hymn, art or short testimony of one of the topics mentioned above.

SAVE THE DATE

Women's Spring Retreat

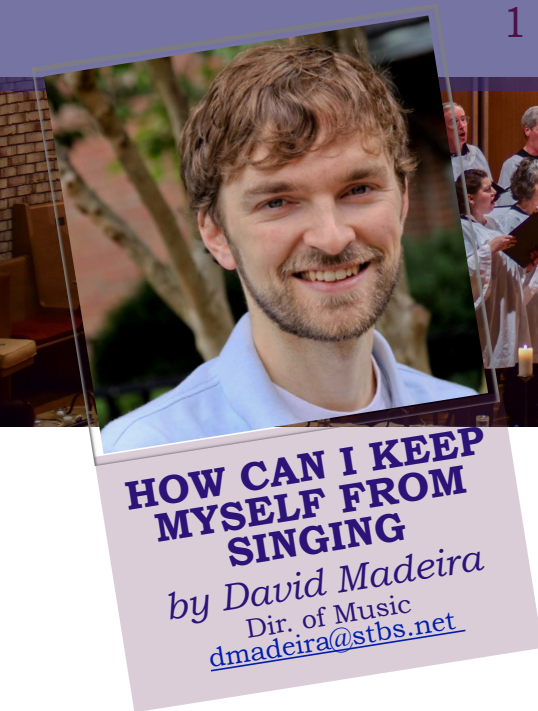
Friday, March 31
to Saturday, April 1
at St. Mary's
in Sewanee



This year's Women's Retreat, Spring 2016

A New Way to Sing the Psalms

1 2 - P o i n t C h a n t



rhythms completely open to speech patterns, I believe chanting the Psalms offers us numerous benefits.

First and foremost, chanting the Psalms puts their full text on the lips of the people, in an unaltered form. No adjustments are made for rhythm or rhyme, and therefore chanting the Psalms is a wonderful way to memorize them in our preferred translations. Chant puts each member of the congregation on equal footing and draws us together—we all sing the same text, together, and we have to listen to each other (as opposed to a rhythmic instrument) to stay together.

Unfortunately, most chant forms available to us today are either too difficult for most congregations to sing comfortably, or too simple to sustain our interest over long periods of time. To (hopefully) find a balance between the two, I have been working on a new form of congregational chant as part of my doctoral thesis, and we are currently in a trial period for determining its value at St. B's.

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I have always been interested in the Psalter, and one of my favorite things about worship at St. B's is the beautiful and varied ways this congregation sings the Psalms weekly. The Psalms are important for worshipping congregations because they connect our worship to that of all Christians in all places and across our history. Jesus sang the Psalms in the synagogue and proclaimed his fulfillment of them to his disciples, who then mined them for messages about Christ and sang them in their worship. From the first large cathedrals to the desert monasteries, from the Psalm-hymns of Calvin's Geneva to the publication of the *Bay Psalm Book* as the first printed book in English in the New World, the Psalms have accompanied Christians at every stage of their historical journey.

Sadly, and ironically, the Christians we are *least* connected to when we perform the Psalms today are those closest to us: other contemporary congregations in our own day and in our own region of the world. Psalm singing, especially among non-liturgical churches, has declined sharply in the past few centuries to the point where many congregations today wouldn't know how to sing them if they wanted to.

But the Psalms should not be lost to Christian worship. They are rich in theology, speak to us in all walks of life, form us in our praying, and connect us to the universal Church. We should sing them, and we should sing them well.

While there are many different ways to sing the Psalms, one form of singing that has been of particular interest to me in recent years is chant. While chanting the Psalms takes most of us outside our musical comfort zones as it removes the organization of a regular metrical pulse and leaves the



Julia McGirt, Brea Cox and the Cherub Choir

STARS continued from pg. 13

One of those initiatives is helping school leaders across the state implement Restorative Practices for the purposes of restoring relationships where harm has occurred and to reduce the school to prison pipeline crisis facing African Americans in our communities. Restorative Justice is a sacred practice unique to many indigenous peoples. STARS partners with the International Institute of Restorative Practices to implement these strategies.

For the last six years STARS has been providing workplace training, helping businesses, schools and community not for profits improve their work relationships. We've learned many lessons in what does and does not work in creating healthy work environments through our successes and failures. For the last four years STARS has been one of only 17 organizations and businesses to be the recipient of the Nashville Tennessean's Top Workplace Awards. In 2016, we

also finished as a runner-up for the Best Place to Work Award in the not for profit category by the Nashville Business Journal.

Finally, and perhaps one of the greatest achievements we have experienced is being recognized in 2012 by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices for our Student Assistance (SAP). This national honor is one that only 200 plus programs in the United States have received from SAMHSA. The honor is given to programs and practices that have undergone a rigorous review of research and evaluations conducted about the program. SAP helps young people address a broad range of behavioral and mental health issues.

Each one of the STARS programs and services are designed to provide supports to help young people

succeed. Whether it's to encourage the young person already making wise life-choices, or address the barriers in their lives, we've been given the privilege of standing in the gap for the valuable lives of our young people and those caring for them. St. B's has an important part in the lives of thousands of people impacted by STARS. Through the corporate prayers and financial support, you share in this work that God began over 30 years ago. Please visit our website at www.starsnashville.org for more information about the Program and Services of STARS.



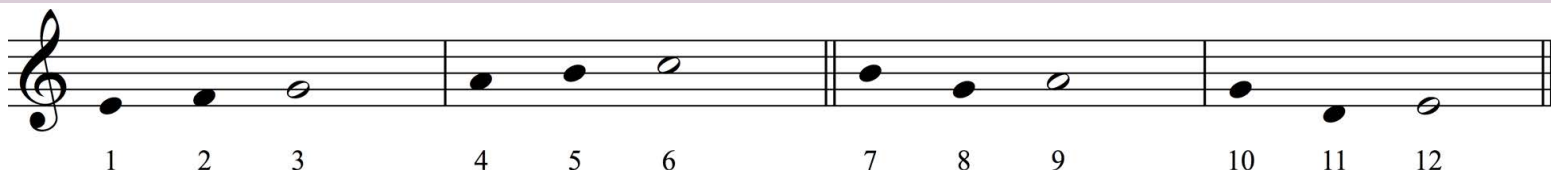
New continued from pg. 15

This is where you come in. While our tendency when faced with unfamiliar ways to sing is often to shut down and let others handle it, I invite you to dig in and give this new way of chanting your best shot. Next, your feedback is enormously valuable to me. My primary goal for this project is to assess whether this idea has the potential to benefit worship life at St. B's on a long-term basis, and also whether it is worth making available to the wider church. (And if not, that's ok—I can still pass my thesis and graduate!) But I can't assess it based on my opinions alone; I need yours to get a good reading as to whether this is a form of singing the Psalms worth continuing.

So please stay tuned in the coming weeks for a brief evaluation form, available in your bulletin and online, that will

ask for some honest feedback about this new way of singing the Psalms. With the understanding that all new things take some time to get used to, do you see this form of chanting as an improvement over other ways we chant the Psalms at St. B's? Does the music enhance our engagement with the text without being too distracting or difficult? Does it allow the texts to speak for themselves, drawing you into the Psalm text while still giving the text the primary importance? Can you see this form of chant working itself into the rotation of other ways we sing the Psalms, ultimately benefitting our worship life at St. B's? Are we onto something here at St. B's that is worth spreading to the wider church?

Happy chanting!



St. B's new 12 point chant composed by David Madeira

Advent Is ...

For many of us, New Year's Day is an opportunity to readjust our priorities. We make lists, plans, and resolutions, determined to be different this year. We do this with good intentions, but our focus often is askew. We evaluate ourselves in the light of our desires and dreams, and we draw on the strength of our will to attempt these self-determined changes.

Advent is the church's "New Year," and it also is an opportunity for reorientation. But rather than focusing on self-improvement produced by striving, Advent invites us to look forward to Jesus, anticipating his entry into our lives and the change that he alone can bring.

Advent is movement.

God moving toward us in Jesus. The Eternal Son moves from the infinite beauty of heaven into the confined beauty of a woman's uterus; from the life-giving womb of a loving mother into the death-dealing struggle of a broken world; from the unjust, sacrificial execution of his body into the grace-full, life-giving reality of his resurrection and ascension.

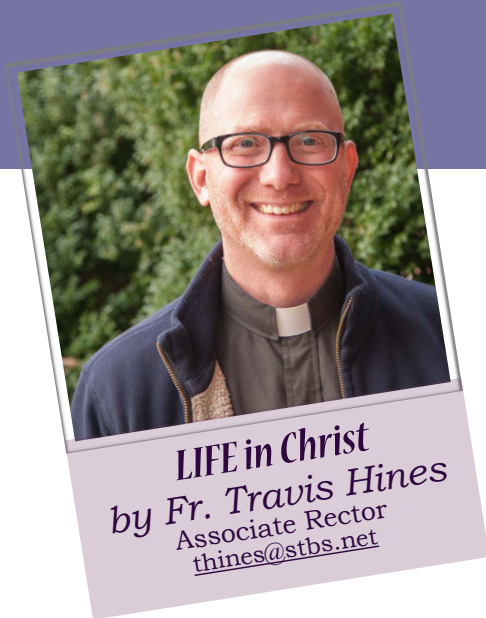
And the movement continues. Jesus is coming again – that same King is moving toward us to complete the restoration he has begun.

Advent is yearning.

We live in the tension between restoration begun and restoration completed. We yearn for release, for freedom, for justice, for endings, for beginnings that have no ends, for re-union with life. And that very yearning is an expression our need for the Spirit in our lives and in our world: "Set me free from this mirror dark; You are the ache in my heart."

Advent is hope.

The yearning ends; fulfillment is real. Jesus has come, is here, and is coming. We know that his presence brings what is absent in our lives and in our world. We have confidence in the movement of our God redeeming, renewing, and restoring every moment of suffering and confusion. We know we are loved by a trustworthy God who will go to Hell and back to bring us into his embrace.



Advent is the movement of Jesus, the yearning for Jesus, the hope in Jesus. We are invited in this "new year" to re-orient -- to prepare ourselves to respond to this coming of Jesus into our world.

And one day when the sky rolls back on us
Some rejoice and the others fuss
Cause every knee must bow and tongue confess
That the son of God is forever blessed
His is the kingdom, we're the guests
So put your voice up to the test
Sing Lord, come soon



Fr. Travis holding one of our newest members, Mabel Dowell after her baptism.

The quotations in this reflection come from two songs I often sing to myself during Advent. The first is from "Weary of the Moon" by Brooks Williams. The second is from Josh Garrels' version of "Farther Along." I recommend you find a quiet space, turn up the volume, and listen to them a few times this season.

From Glory to Glory

Acknowledging the glory that grows in and among us

Births

| | |
|--|------|
| Logan James <i>parents Chas & Kyla Nichols</i> | 5/19 |
| Sarah Caroline <i>parents Rod & Amy Jones</i> | 5/20 |
| Mabel Charity <i>parents Alfred & Abigail Dowell</i> | 6/14 |
| Walter Gabriel <i>parents Michael & Rachel Stevens</i> | 6/28 |
| Sarah Caroline <i>parents Rod & Amy Jones</i> | 5/20 |
| Miriam Ann Madeira <i>parents David & Elizabeth Madeira</i> | 8/26 |
| Hadley James <i>parents Matt & Annie Poag</i> | 8/29 |
| Sarah Ruth <i>parents Erik & Jaclyn Larsen</i> | 9/16 |

Baptisms

| | |
|---|-------|
| Matthew Ryan Paul Schutt <i>parents Jordan & Shandra Boone</i> | 6/12 |
| Evelyn Macie Madeira <i>parents David & Elizabeth Madeira</i> | 6/12 |
| Miriam Ann Madeira <i>parents David & Elizabeth Madeira</i> | 8/26 |
| Isaac William Moore <i>parents Chad & Racheal Moore</i> | 8/28 |
| Alana Renee Moore <i>parents Chad & Racheal Moore</i> | 8/28 |
| Mabel Charity Dowell <i>parents Alfred & Abigail Dowell</i> | 10/16 |
| Henry Aldana Vasquez, Jr. <i>parents Henry & Anna Vasquez</i> | 10/16 |
| Walter Gabriel Stevens <i>parents Michael & Rachel Stevens</i> | 10/30 |

Deaths

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| Miriam Ann Madeira | 8/26 |
|--------------------|------|

Weddings

| | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Sally Chambers & Matt Rhea | 8/6 |
|----------------------------|-----|

Being transformed
into His likeness with
ever-increasing glory.
I Cor. 3:18.



Family Christmas Program

GIVE PRESENTS, CLOTHING AND SCHOOL SUPPLIES TO FAMILIES IN NEED. THIS YEAR, DONORS WILL BE MATCHED WITH A SPECIFIC FAMILY.

Adopt-A-Senior Program

GET MATCHED WITH A SENIOR AND PROVIDE GIFTS FROM THEIR CHRISTMAS WISH LIST.

Christmas House Toy Market

DONATE TOYS WHICH ENABLES PARENTS TO SELECT PRESENTS FOR THEIR CHILDREN AT A GREATLY REDUCED PRICE.



FOR MORE INFORMATION EMAIL
CHRISTIE.BEARDEN@STLCH.ORG.



Thanks to Amy Nelson, for her generosity in sharing her gifts and talents with us. She created new headers based on the logo that she designed for us over a year ago. Amy is a freelancing graphic designer and has been part of the St. B's family for 4 years.



New Childcare Guidelines

The Vestry has decided, in view of our current financial situation, that good stewardship regarding the Childcare for Special Events budget needs to be a priority. Beginning immediately, a minimum number of RSVPs will be required by the publicized deadline before childcare will be confirmed for any given event. Also, they have stipulated that parental participation be enlisted in the form of paying \$10 per family per event. For a series of classes, payment for the full series is expected up front. Thank you for understanding - and please remember to RSVP!!!

Questions can be directed to Teresa Robinson at stbschildcare@stbs.net.



Children having snacks in the nursery during the Thursday women's Bible Study.



St. B's Annual Epiphany Celebration

Come and celebrate the end of the Christmas season and the beginning of the celebration season (Epiphany) on Sunday, January 8 from 5 - 7 p.m. Come and feast on chili, conversation, connection with others, and warmth from the bonfire. It's a beautiful and satisfying thing when the church family comes together to celebrate.

Chili Cook-Off

Our evenings gets started with a chili dinner. All ages are welcome to compete in our popular chili cook-off. The categories are Best Hot Chili, Best Medium Chili, Best Mild Chili and Best Decorated Table. Each contestant determines which category to compete in - Hot, Medium or Mild. All contestants will automatically qualify to compete for the Best Decorated Table.

If you wish to provide chili for the celebration, but do not want to compete, please still sign up. We need 35 chilis total. And if chili isn't your thing, sign up to bring star-shaped cookies! The church will provide cheese and sour cream.

Christmas Trees & Bonfire

After dinner, we'll move outside to our larger than life bonfire comprised of Christmas trees. Christmas trees can be dropped off on the church grounds near the fire pit any time after December 25.

To sign-up to bring a chili or star-shaped cookies, please email churchoffice@stbs.net.



Randall Ferguson's chili won for being the "hottest."



Contestants are also judged for the creative table decor.

O God, by the leading of a star you manifested your only Son to the Peoples of the earth: Lead us, who know you now by faith, to your presence, where we may see your glory face to face; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.



St. B's Annual
EPIPHANY CELEBRATION
chili cook-off & bonfire
SUNDAY, JANUARY 8
5- 7 P.M.