NOVEMBER 2018

# THE BELL

THE STORIES OF A PEOPLE CALLED ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S

## ST. NICK MAKES HIS ANNUAL VISIT TO ST. B'S ON SUNDAY, DEC. 2

## *That We Might Greet With Joy...*

STORIES FOR ADVENT AND CHRISTMASTIDE

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

**Clergy:**
The Rev. Sammy Wood, *Rector*
The Rev. Travis Hines, *Associate Rector*
The Rev. David Wilson, *Pastoral Assistant*
The Rev. Dr. Stu Phillips, *Priest Associate*

**Parish Ministry:**
Carla Schober, *Director of Family & Children Formation*
David Madeira, *Director of Music*
Sally Chambers, *Director of Communications*
Hughes McGlone, Director of Youth Formation
Bev Mahan, *Verger & Assistant to the Rector for Liturgy*
Leslie Tomlinson, *Executive Assistant to the Rector*
Teresa Robinson, *Financial and Music Administrator*
Robert Smith, *Assistant for Pastoral Care*
Julia McGirt, *Organist*
Gaylene Latham, *Nursery Coordinator*
Allison Hardwick, *Bookstore Manager*

**Educational Ministry:**
Kelly Hull, *Preschool & Parent's Day Out Director*
Meredith Flynn, *Homeschool Tutorial Director*

**Vestry:**
Eddie Latimer, Jim Chaffee, Brian Roark, Pat Bowlby, Steve Heaston, Yvonne Poindexter, Molly Cole, Gretchen Abernathy, Heather James, Phyllis Xanthopoulos

Shannon Truss, *Sr Warden*
Andy Michel *Jr Warden*
Beth Ramsey *Clerk*
David West, Jr. *Treasurer*

4800 Belmont Park Terrace
Nashville, TN 37215
615.377.4750
www.stbs.net

4 A NEW-OLD NAME
The Branch gets an updated look, new-old name, and refined vision

Cover Photo: Caroline Allen

08 LIFE IN CHRIST
Fr. Travis invites us to be formed this Advent.

10 WALK THIS WAY
Bev Mahan, Asst. for Liturgy, looks at our liturgy through Advent, Christmas, & Epiphany

12 HOW CAN I KEEP MYSELF FROM SINGING?
David Madeira, Dir. of Music, takes a deeper look at Advent Lessons & Carols

14 THE WONDER OF IT ALL
Carla Schober, Dir. of Children, introduces two of our newest members

09 KEEPING IT REAL
Parishioner Michelle Andrade offers a vulnerable and real take on being a parent

20 NEW KID ON THE BLOCK
Hughes McGlone, Dir. of Youth, gives an update on what's going on in the youth ministry

24 SETTING THE TABLE
Thorunn McCoy, head of the Altar Guild, talks about the tables and gatherings that happen in her

26 LIVING SATISFIED
Parishioner, Ellie Kinard thinks about Advent and meal times. - recipe included

28 VESTRY CORNER
Vestry Member, Yvonne Poindexter celebrates the great mystery of serving on vestry

31 CREATION CARE
Katherine Bomboy, chair of our creation care initiatives, shares tips on having a "green" Christmas

06 FOR THE LIFE OF THE WORLD
Fr. Sammy reflects on his first year at St. B's and invites us into Advent

# A NEW YET OLD NAME

WORDS MATTER

*Sally Chambers*
*Director of Communications*
*schambers@stbs.net*

I imagine the bell has rung every Sunday since 1957 when it was installed. This spring we ceased ringing the bell as an alarm (5 minutes until church starts) and began ringing it as part of the liturgy. Our worship actually begins with the peal of the bell. I love it.

I've always loved the role that bells have played in calling and gathering the people of God together. I have walked down many an English street and stopped to "lift up my heart" at the sound of a church bell in the distance. I often wonder if those who live near to St. B's stop to do likewise when they hear our bell every Sunday morning.

Somewhere on a hard drive I have photos of our bell that I took long before I called St. B's home. And so it's no surprise that the bell has held my attention since my work began here in 2011. I find it to be poetic, mystical, incarnational, beautiful, and sacramental. Whether it is silent or ringing, our bell reminds me of who God is calling us to be as a people.

I began tossing around the idea of reimagining and renaming *The Branch* before Fr. Sammy arrived, but it took a year hiatus from the publication before new ideas took shape. When I suggested calling it *The Bell,* I was surprised to learn it had been called *The Bell* before it was *The Branch*. As we walk in the shadow of All Saints, remembering those who have gone before us, I think that's pretty cool that *The Bell* is both old and new!

So on the cusp of Advent , a season that marks not only the beginning of a new church year, but also, what I expect to be a deepening into a new chapter for St. B's, I present to you, *The Bell,* the quarterly magazine that tells the stories of a people called St. Bartholomew's. Take it. Read it. Sit with it. And know that through these pages I pray that you might be encouraged to live intentionally and incarnationally though the season at hand; that you might better translate into the details of life what it means to be church and to follow the One we call our Emmanuel; and that you might grow to love God and each other more.

Did you know that our bell was purchased from a Nashville junkyard for $450 with money the youth of St. B's had saved? The 1852 cast-bronze bell was erected in 1957 with help of parishioner, R.H. Chilton. It weighs 2700 lbs and hails from Meneely's Foundry in Troy, NY. [1]

1. Credit goes to Marjie Smith for gathering this information about the bell for St. B's 60th.

## TWELFTH DAY OF ADVENT

DARE I ASK you to SURPRISE me once again?
How can it BE you CARE more than I BELIEVE?
My WORSHIP falls short of whom you are…
I bow to REPENT…over and over you FORGIVE.
Oh, Lord Most Holy…
empty I come – filled I go
for You alone GIVE flesh charge to PROCLAIM good news
my fondest dream
…to WAKEUP in You!

Sherry Paige, copyright 2015
Art by Mimi Heldman

FOR THE LIFE
OF THE WORLD

*Fr. Sammy Wood Rector*
swood@stbs.net

# YEAR TWO BEGINS

## AND ADVENT COMES AGAIN

As I type this article, we're approaching the end of my first year as your rector. Hopefully you had fun while this time flew by – I know I certainly did!

Anniversaries, birthdays, the beginning of a new season, a calendar turning over to a new year – all are opportunities for reflection, which I've been doing quite a bit of lately. In my first letter to you last December, I posed some questions for us –

> How do I fit into parish life at St. B's as your new rector? How do each of you fit in here, with your diverse sets of gifts and abilities and needs? And, most important of all, how does God fit into all this?

That's the work we entered upon, to pray and dream about a shared vision for our common life and ministry. Now a year in, I can see so many things God is doing in and through us, so let me trumpet some successes:

- As Renee and I rode the "circuit" of the footprint of our parish, visiting your neighborhoods and homes to listen to your stories about life at St. Bartholomew's, we discovered the deep love you have for this place and for each other

- The vestry commissioned an Organizational Review Team to review just about every aspect of our parish life and report back on our "beautiful and beloved" community, making suggestions (which we've already begun to implement) about how to foster growth in our lives.

- We installed a new Director of Youth Formation and rebooted St. B's Youth Ministry in the fall.

- We implemented an inaugural Season of Gratitude and Generosity, learning together about financial discipleship, then pledging our time and talent and treasure to each other and God's work in and through St. B's.

- The staff continues to grow together and operate at a high level, assisted by a team of dedicated folks from the parish commissioned to help staff and clergy set and achieve ministry goals.

And all the while we've worshiped and celebrated together, shared each other's joys and shouldered each other's burdens, and begun conversations about our Values and Vision and the future of our facilities. As your rector, I'm incredibly grateful to look back at our first year together and see God doing all this and more!

I'm also mindful of the opportunities that lie before us:

- Having begun a conversation about worship, particularly how we might worship more regularly as a multi-generational family, we move into the phase of listening in early 2019. I'm grateful you have let me begin to describe a vision of us all worshiping together, and I'm eager to hear your thoughts and concerns and hopes, as well.

- We continue to face the realities of aging infrastructure, coupled with almost a decade of level giving and tightening budgets as costs increase.

- And there's never been a more important time for us to be what God calls us to be – a motley group of sinners finding grace, deeply in love with each other in the sight of an increasingly divided and violent world.

At this time of year – when we've practiced thanksgiving for God's blessings, and as we turn the page on another liturgical year and Advent comes 'round again – it's encouraging to look back at our first year together and realize God's been at work among us even when I didn't see it. And it's motivating to see the challenges we can lean into together, too.

So let this be your invitation to Advent, a time for mindfulness about how, as God once showed up in the form of a child, God continues to show up in our lives today. Consider:

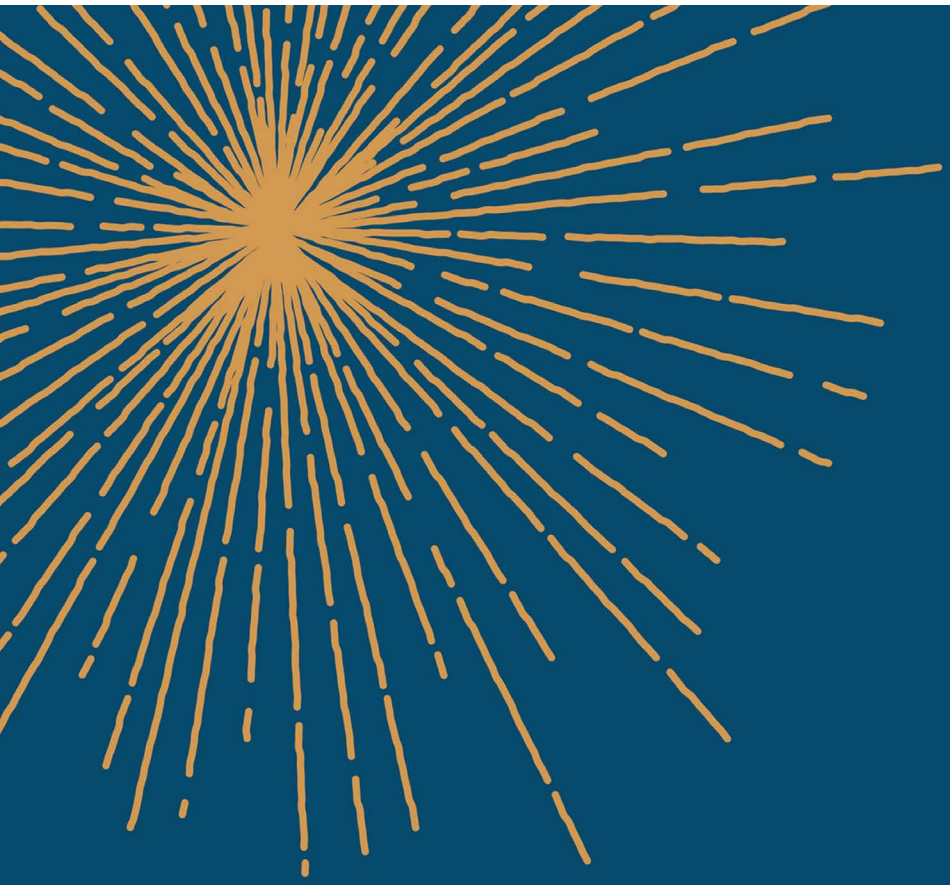
> Advent marks something momentous: God's coming into our midst. That coming is not just something that happened in the past. It is a recurring possibility here and now. (Watch for the Light: Readings for Advent and Christmas (Farmington, PA: Plough, 2001): xv.)

Advent is an invitation into hope and a journey into opportunity. Will you join me this season and carve out time to reflect on the year behind and pray for the year to come? Where did God show up in your life in 2018, and how will you open your hands to his coming in 2019 and beyond? Will you thank God for successes and name new opportunities?

I'm convinced of nothing so much as that God will indeed show up when we wait for him. This Advent, let's wait together – in our Sunday eucharists, at Lessons & Carols and the Family Christmas Concert, and as we gather in the darkness at 4:30 and 10:30 on Christmas Eve (notice just the two services this year) to wait for God to come.

O Come, Emmanuel.

Your Rector,



# Advent Quiet Day

*WITH FR. SAMMY*

Saturday, December 1
9am - 2pm

please bring a sack lunch
rsvp to churchoffice@stbs.net

# LIVING IN ADVENT

LIFE IN CHRIST

by Fr. Travis Hines
Associate Rector
thines@stbs.net

Every day, each of us is formed. Think about how you spend your time, your daily rituals, your sources for news and entertainment, the technology you use, and your primary ways of connecting with people. All of these, and more, form how we understand and live in this world. Essentially, they become *liturgies* that shape and express our "primary loves and convictions." As Christians, of course, we are aware that there are competing liturgies in our culture; there are others who seek to form in us values and behaviors contrary to the loves cultivated in us through Christ. These words from another pastor challenge me:

> Christians' primary loves and convictions are not formed by the church. Instead, secular liturgies, which are both omnipresent and effective, form the primary loves and convictions that Christians then bring with them to church.

Advent provides the antidote through its liturgies of the coming Kingdom. There are the obvious seasonal liturgies that the church offers:

- A quiet day guided by Fr. Sammy in December inviting us to listen through the daily office, reflections, and shared silence.

- Weekly Sunday services shaped by Advent prayers, Scriptures, and songs that reorient us toward Jesus who has come, is here, and is coming again.

- Daily lighting of Advent wreathes, using a simple liturgy that reminds us to "Rejoice! The Lord is at Hand."

- Each evening, praying Compline together through Facebook live, watching with Christ, and resting in peace.

- Gathering together for services and celebrations (like Lessons and Carols and St. B's Family Christmas) that re-turn our focus toward the yearning and joy of God's coming Kingdom.

Advent also forms within us loves and convictions that grow well beyond these seasonal liturgies. I like the way Fleming Rutledge puts it:

> In a very real sense, the Christian community lives in Advent all the time. It can well be called the Time Between, because the people of God live in the time between the first coming of Christ, incognito in the stable in Bethlehem, and his second coming, in glory, to judge the living and the dead.

We need this reminder that we live in the Time Between these two very real events. And because they *are* real events, may we *not* be formed by the liturgies of this world, but by the liturgies of the coming Kingdom of God.

# FOR SACRED PAUSES IN ADVENT

**Books**:

- *WinterSong: Christmas Readings* by Madeleine L'Engle & Luci Shaw
- *God With Us,* ed. Greg Pennoyer & Gregory Wolfe
- *All Creation Waits: The Advent Mystery of New Beginnings* by Gayle Boss
- *Watch for the Light: Readings for Advent and Christmas* by a variety
- *O Come Emmanuel: A Musical Tour of Daily Readings for Advent and Christmas* by Gordon Giles
- *Advent: The Once and Future Coming of Jesus Christ* by Fleming Rutledge.
- *O Wisdom: Advent Devotions on the Names of Jesus* by Forward Movement that i*ncludes art by Mimi Heldman*
- *Star Over Bethlehem: Poems and Holiday Stories* by Agatha Christie Mallowan
- *Light upon Light* compiled by Sarah Arthur
- *Waiting on the Word: A Poem A Day for Advent and Christmas* by Malcolm Guite
- *The Christmas Tide* by Frederick Buechner

**Especially good for families**

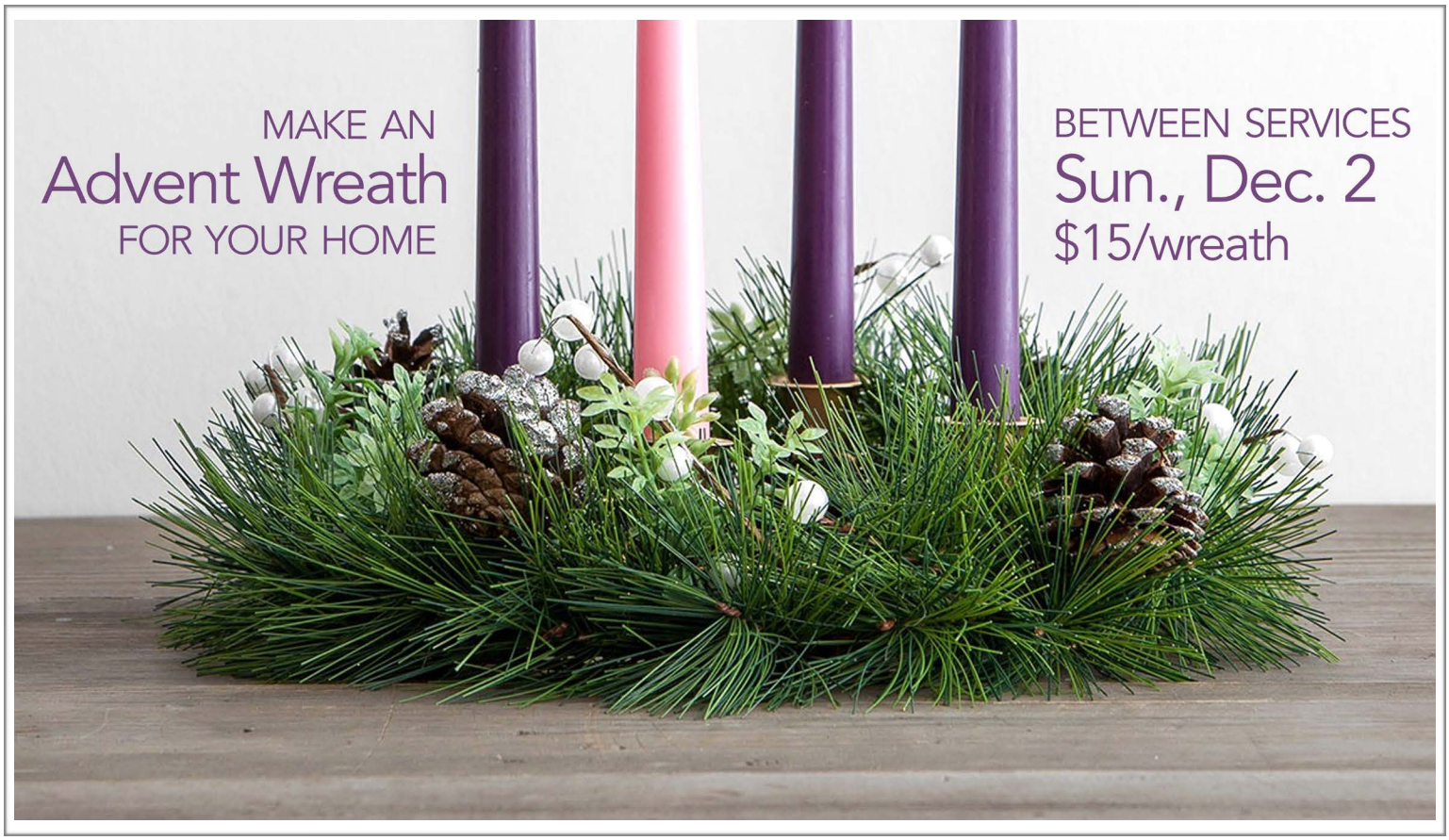
- *The Advent Book by* Jack and Kathy Stockman
- *The Glorious Impossible* by Madeline L'Engle
- *Angela and the Baby Jesus* by Frank McCourt
- *Slow + Sacred Advent*, by Jennifer Naraki www.jennifernaraki.com
- *Kids Advent Activity Pack*, found in the bookstore
- Free downloadable Advent calendars for kids & adults at www.prayingincolor.com

**Music**:

- *Christmas with the Dale Warland Singers*
- *Salvation is Created* (Bifrost Arts)
- *Advent in Ephesus*
- *Behold the Lamb* by Andrew Peterson
- *Advent, Vol. 1* and *Advent, Vol. 2* by The Brilliance
- *Advent playlist* by Fr. Sammy (cubswn) on spotify

**Social Media:** Transform your social media presence with www.adventword.org. The poem on pg. 5 was written using advent words in 2015.

**Please remember to shop local whenever possible this season. Allison can order most of these titles for you in the bookstore if she doesn't already have it in stock.**



# THE LITURGY IS SUFFICIENT: ADVENT, CHRISTMAS, & EPIPHANY

Recently in a staff meeting, Fr. Sammy said something that resonated with me, and that influences my thinking about the upcoming seasons in our church life. As we began to plan for the seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany, Fr. Sammy reminded us that our liturgies are sufficient. They contain words, symbols, scriptures, texts, vestments, and prayers that are shaped by the seasons and feasts of the church year. Each one expresses the reality of God's presence in our lives, and draws us together as one. As we consider the liturgies of the coming seasons, it seems clear that the wisdom of the ages has handed down to us all that is needed to experience the love of God and unity in Christ.

The four weeks of Advent begin on December 2 and end on December 24. Advent marks the beginning of the church year, so December 2 can be considered New Year's Day in the church. Licenses for Lay Eucharistic Ministers and Visitors are renewed. Our acolytes change the color of the ribbons of their crosses, indicating their number of years of service. The subtle changes to our liturgy include an Advent collect for each week and an Advent preface used throughout the season. The Advent wreath is added to the chancel, and a candle is lit each Sunday. Many churches offer distinctive prayers for each candle as it is lit. There are many resources available for these prayers, and many individual churches write their own for the occasion. The linens and vestment colors change from green to purple. The altar flowers change from no blooms to twigs and greens, as we expectantly await the Savior. The scripture readings offer themes of hope and promise, and Dave Madeira, our Music Director, selects hymns and songs that reflect those themes. A unique practice at St. Bartholomew's Church is the inclusion of O Antiphons each Sunday in Advent. Traditionally sung during evening prayer on the last seven days of Advent, each begins with "O" and a name or attribute of God from

ancient Hebrew texts, and each uses "come" to represent our anticipation of and longing for the Messiah. Finally, St. B's often includes some version of a crèche in the chancel. At press time, ideas were still being generated for what that might look like this year.

If you know your Christmas carols, then you know that the Christmas season in the church calendar lasts twelve days. You might not realize that it is the shortest season in the church year. Despite the emphasis and endless hype the popular culture places on Christmas, it is not the penultimate celebration in the church year. The Christmas season begins on December 25 and ends on Epiphany, January 6. As you might expect, there are changes to our liturgy, including a new focus in the readings and song lyrics, festival white linens and vestments, flowers, Christmas collects, and prefaces. The crèche may stay in place as the Magi make their way, looking for the promised Messiah.

This year, Epiphany actually falls on a Sunday, which pleases fans and followers of the Magi. The season lasts eight weeks, and is followed by Lent. Epiphany means manifestation or appearance. The liturgical color remains

## WALK THIS WAY

**by Bev Mahan**

Verger & Assistant to
the Rector for Liturgy
verger@stbs.net

white, and the lectionary focuses on the revelation of Jesus to the world. In modern vernacular, people often say that they had an epiphany, a sudden flash of understanding or insight. This year, may the people of St. Bartholomew's Church be like the Magi, actively seeking our Lord and Savior, and experiencing our own epiphany that brings us closer to the fullness of Christ.

# A NEW TIME, AN OLD SONG

## HOW CAN I KEEP MYSELF FROM SINGING

*by David Madeira*
Director of Music
dmadeira@stbs.net

As the great cultural consumer feeding frenzy gradually gains speed and intensity in the days between Halloween and Christmas, and especially during the month of December, it can be a real challenge for the Church calendar-following Christian to go against the grain and remain in the spirit of Advent. Everything in the surrounding culture seems to be celebrating Christmas full-bore, and wants you to as well, particularly by participating in the annual cultural liturgy of spend spend spend.

We curmudgeons in the Church remain committed to *letting Advent be Advent*, and we hope to win you over to this, because our belief is that Christmas can't mean for us all it is meant to mean without first spending time leaning into the tension, the longing, and the hope of Advent.

However you attempt to navigate the season, whether you avoid the Christmas radio stations like the plague and mute every Christmas ad on TV until December 24, or whether your halls have been decked with boughs of holly since November 1, we invite you to come be present to the liturgical season by attending our service of Advent Lessons & Carols on the evening of Sunday, December 9.

While the format of Lessons & Carols is similar to the pattern of lectionary readings and music observed at the Easter Vigil, it is not an ancient liturgy. It was originally designed in 1880 as a Christmas Eve service for the congregation at Truro, England, by E. W Benson, who later became the Archbishop of Canterbury. Truro's cathedral was under construction at the time, and so the first Lessons & Carols service was sung in a small, simple wooden structure – a fitting location for the celebration of the Lord who was born in a stable!

It was at King's College in Cambridge that an adapted Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols was first performed and popularized. In fact, this year marks the centenary of its first performance on Christmas Eve 1918, mere weeks after the end of World War I. Ten years later the service began to be broadcast by the BBC, and with the exception of the year 1930, the service has been broadcast every year, even during World War II when all the stained glass and heat had been removed from the chapel.

While this form of Lessons & Carols popularized at King's College is a Christmas Eve service, it was not long until an alternate form was developed for use during Advent, and today, both services remain popular throughout the world, primarily in Anglican churches.

Like the Easter Vigil, the service's primary movement rests on the sequence of lessons. The (typically nine) readings progressively tell the story of God's intervention in humankind's self-destruction, from the fall in the garden of Eden to the annunciation of Jesus' incarnation to Mary. The bulk of the service is spent in the words of the prophets, especially Isaiah, whose visions foretell a day when God will remember the sins of his people no more, when a new

covenant will be established, and when all the world will come under the peaceful reign of a promised Redeemer.

Lessons & Carols has been an important tradition at St. B's for many years, though it has typically been reduced to a smaller number of readings and used in place of the normal Liturgy of the Word during a Sunday morning Eucharist.

This year, however, we will offer Lessons & Carols to the evening, and as a stand-alone service, allowing us to observe it in its fullest: nine readings, progressively telling the story of creation, fall, and the coming of the Messiah, interspersed with hymns, carols, and choral anthems.

The choir at St. B's is excited to present this beautiful service on the evening of December 9 at 6:30pm. This is a wonderful opportunity to bring friends, neighbors, and colleagues.

I hope you will join us as we enter into the profound mystery of the Word made flesh, the coming of Christ the Lord.

# MEET TWO OF OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

THE WONDER OF IT ALL
*by Carla Schober*
Director of Children & Family Formation
cschober@stbs.net

## A welcome to the Church!

It's my pleasure to introduce some of the newest baptized members of St. Bartholomew's and their families. Join me in getting to know the Vo and Larsen families.

### Ruth Vo, baptized October 14

**Quyen, Sam and big sister Mai-Linh**

The Vo family have attended St. B's for approximately a year after moving here from Waco, TX. According to Ruth's Mom, Sam, they were drawn to St. B's because of its welcoming community that both accepts them for who they are and challenges them to grow.

And how did their daughter's baptism affect their family? Sam wrote, "We felt very moved and supported throughout the entire process. The fact that we were standing in the middle of the congregation reflects the support that we have received since becoming a part of the St. B's community. In particular, standing in a pew near the baptismal font was someone who prayed for baby Ruth throughout our pregnancy. We felt gratitude for the love and the care that the congregation has given our baby since before she was born."

Ruth was born on August 29.

# MARKED & SEALED AS CHRIST'S OWN FOREVER

ON SEPTEMBER 30, WE WELCOMED AMELIA SMITH, DAUGHTER OF RACHEL AND JASON INTO THE CHURCH THROUGH BAPTISM. HERE SHE IS PICTURED BEING ANOINTED BY FR. TRAVIS.

## Sara Ruth Larsen, baptized August 12.
### Erik, Jaclyn and sisters Ivy and Ava

Erik and Jaclyn have attended St. B's for over 10 years. While dating, they had visited several churches to see what might be a good fit considering they had come from different traditions - one grew up Baptist and the other, Catholic. St. B's became that great fit. Erik especially felt comfortable with the style of worship, and Jaclyn gravitated towards the sermon and music. Early on they began volunteering within the church in both Children's Formation and Room in the Inn. Three children later, they haven't stopped. According to Jaclyn, those activities are what they have enjoyed most and have given them opportunities to serve their church, their community, and helped them get to know other families and members better.

Jaclyn continued with her expression of the blessing of their children's baptism. "For us, baptizing our children was one of the ways we used an outward expression and ritual to express our faith. Before baptizing our youngest, Sara, Father Sammy asked to meet with us as a couple, on a weekday. That meeting proved to be beneficial not only in that we got to visit with Father Sammy, but that, as a couple, we got to reaffirm our beliefs, by discussing our backgrounds, our faith and how that plays out in our family and raising our children."

# WELCOME TO ALL THOSE BAPTIZED

**Hudson Pace Snyder,** son of Katherine & Erick, baptized on February 4

**Clare Evangeline Bordeaux** daughter of Bethany & Keith, baptized on March 31 (born Dec. 28)

**Emmerson Linlee Cotton** daughter of Courtney & Christopher, baptized on April 1

**Henry Eades and Theodore Whitfield James,** sons of Heather & Stephen, baptized on May 6

**Lucas Sebastian Moore** son of Racheal & Chad, baptized on May 27 (born Dec. 28)

**Peter Noel Smith, s**on of Jessica & Samuel, baptized on June 3

**Camille Click** daughter of Jeannie & Adam, baptized on July

**Abigail Marie Garcia,** daughter of Shannyn & David, baptized on August 12 (born Mar. 15)

# AND BORN THIS YEAR

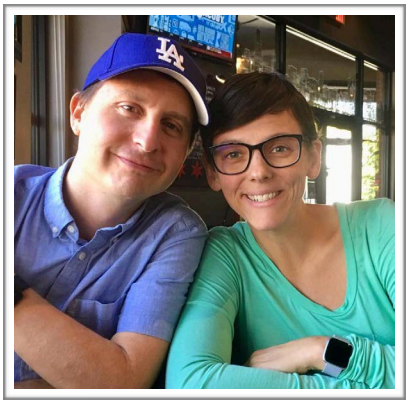
**Spencer James Tennyson Brown,** son of Fawn & Collin Brown, born on March 29

**Alice June Nichols,** daughter of Kyla and Chas Nichols, born on September 15.

## Reading Mary Oliver in the Snow

Watching red bird
as snow falls
I can see the word
is out
Boot tracks
on the path
may have tipped
them off
and then again
my wanderings -
less interesting to them
than theirs to me -
are likely
of little notice
but etched in white
may yet
invite their snowy
search
for seed.

Copyright 2018, Sherry Paige, from *To Find a Stone*
Art by Mimi Heldman



# PARENTING FOR REAL

KEEPING IT REAL
Michelle Andrade
michelle.w.andrade@gmail.com

Sometimes I have those moments with my kids… When I think I'm going to lose it! It's like I don't have what it takes to actually be there in that moment with them. Sometimes I do lose it and I may yell, or make threats, or lash out. Parenting is one of the hardest jobs on this planet, and doing it with presence is even harder. Parenting is not one of those things you get a Ph.D. in, then go out into the world and become an expert. It is an ongoing growth process. I know that my role changes as they change, and my goal is that when they leave our home they know they were always loved and supported and that home is a place they can always come back to.

I used to think that parenting meant feeding and clothing children and keeping them "in line," making sure they did what they were supposed to do. When we had children, I did not know what a challenging gift it was. As soon as I thought I understood what I was doing, I was thrown for a loop in the world of parenting and challenged beyond what I ever thought I could do.

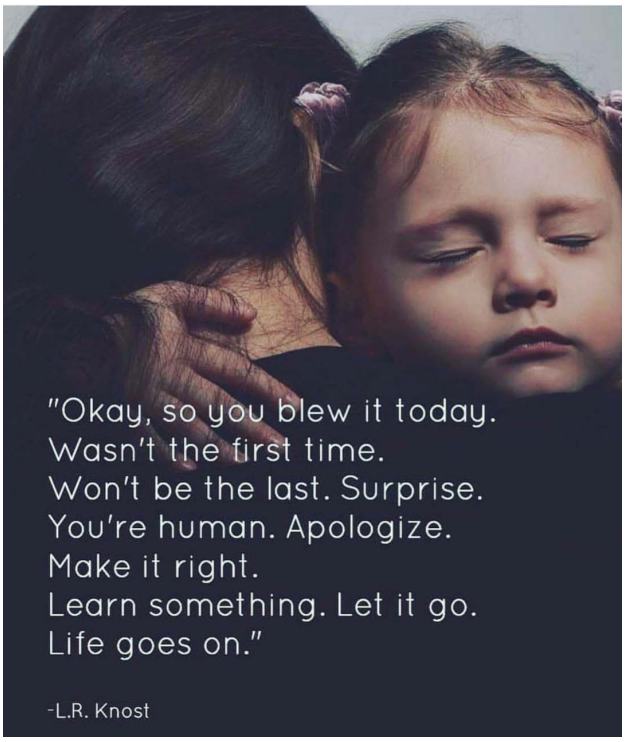
Along the way, I realized that I wanted to parent in a way that kept all of us attached as a family. Attached and enmeshed are not the same thing, so I had to learn about healthy attachment and what tools were needed for that. I had no idea how to allow everyone to be an individual while maintaining unity in our group. Choosing to be loving, kind, connected, honest, and slow to anger takes a lot of work. I realized I needed to go outside of myself for this.

I have learned quite a bit about parenting through years of studying and practicing nonviolent communication and

having a daily spiritual life. All humans do what they do to get some need met and if that means yelling at the top of their lungs to be seen and heard, that's what it means. This revelation was a game-changer for me. The same is true for me. I have found that when I lose it, it's usually because I have a huge unmet need. *I am responsible for identifying my own needs and I am responsible for finding ways to meet those needs.* My active spiritual life coupled with learning skills has helped me in this endeavor. It has also helped me be responsible for my part, take responsibility for my wrongs, and lean into God to help me as I continue to grow.

When our children were smaller, it meant lots of talking about feelings and needs. It meant deep breathing and drawing to help get feelings out. Now it means lying in bed together at night and having shorter dialogues about what happened in the day or impromptu conversations when alone in the car driving somewhere. Books and snuggles have always been key connection pieces for our family. In the past two years, visual arts have come in to foster connection. We also congregate around music and cooking often in our home.

I make mistakes often. OK, I make mistakes daily. Our kids make mistakes daily. We are nowhere near "the perfect family," but we apologize often, take responsibility for our part in situations, and seek to find ways to reconnect when there is a divide. We can fight hard, but we also love hard. We have a basic model in our home that reminds us that each of us has our own feelings and needs and each of us is doing our best each day. We may lose it, but, somehow, we remain connected and attached as we are all growing into who we were created to be - there is a deep bond between us that is threaded with a loving God that expresses through each of us.




Nonviolent Communication (NVC), sometimes referred to as compassionate communication, focuses on three things: self connection, honest self-expression and listening with deep compassion. NVC shows us how to value everyone's needs and find strategies that lead to lasting peace. Learn more at nvcnashville.org

# WHAT'S GOING ON?

## NEW KID ON THE BLOCK

by Hughes McGlone
Director of Youth Formation
hmcglone@stbs.net

It's been an incredible first few months here at St. B's for me. I've enjoyed getting to know you all more, and have been humbled by the welcome I and my wife, Kirsten have received. So I'm excited to get the chance to share with you what we are are up to, why we do what we do, and how we go about it.

On Sunday mornings, we gather informally from 9:45-10:30 with donuts, bagels or muffins; we play ping pong and catch up on our week past and the week ahead.
At 10:30 we begin what I call, **Messages**. During this hour we read all the lessons from the liturgy and search for the connections between them, as well as consider how the Gospel reading is applicable to our lives. Each week, we end our time together by praying for our local community and for the world at large.

**Midweek** takes place on Wednesday nights. Here we take time during our busy week to practice being community. Each semester we will focus on a single aspect of the Christian life. This semester our focus has been prayer. We have studied the biblical examples of prayer, the Book of Common Prayer, and other historic ways of prayer, such as rosaries, the Jesus prayer, the Stations of the Cross, and

*Pumpkin carving fun also included a brief Service of Light. Pumpkins were blessed to carry the light of Christ from St. B's out into their neighborhoods.*

labyrinths. By teaching and learning these different ways of prayer, I hope that we become more comfortable and confident in the important practice of prayer in our daily lives.

Our bi-weekly Friday **prayer breakfasts** are a casual opportunity to start the day with breakfast, fellowship and prayer outside the grounds of St. B's. We gather early in the morning at someones home to mindfully begin our day.

The goal of these regularly scheduled gatherings (as well as the intermittent pumpkin carving, game nights, and runs for ice cream) is to intentionally build community. How great it is that our youth choose to set aside a few hours every week to be together and deepen their faith and understanding of what it means to be a Christian while strengthening these unique and powerful relationships with each other.

As we look ahead to spring and summer, we are planning to hold a service-service-oriented youth retreat in April at the Dubose Center in Monteagle. And in the summer ahead, we are also planning "Hometown Mission Trip", working with local organizations to help those in need in our community.

Lastly let me say, I'm still building my volunteer team! Our youth are pretty incredible and it's a gift to spend time and live out my own faith in community with them. So, please ask God if you are called to join us on Sundays, Wednesdays, or any other time we are hanging out together.

## CHRISTMAS TREE

To be
Brought down at last
From the cold sighing mountain
Where I and the others
Had been fed, looked after, kept still,
Meant, I knew—of course I knew—
That it would be only a matter of weeks,
That there was nothing more to do.
Warmly they took me in, made much of me,
The point from the start was to keep my spirits up.
I could assent to that. For honestly,
It did help to be wound in jewels, to send
Their colors flashing forth from vents in the deep
Fragrant sables that cloaked me head to foot.
Over me then they wove a spell of shining—
Purple and silver chains, eavesdripping tinsel,
Amulets, milagros: software of silver,
A heart, a little girl, a Model T,
Two staring eyes. Then angels, trumpets, BUD and BEA
(The children's names) in clownlike capitals,
Somewhere a music box whose tiny song
Played and replayed I ended before long
By loving. And in the shadow behind me, a primitive IV
To keep the show going. Yes, yes, what lay ahead
Was clear: the stripping, the cold street, my chemicals
Plowed back into the Earth for lives to come—
No doubt a blessing, a harvest, but one that doesn't bear,
Now or ever, dwelling upon. To have grown so thin.
Needles and bone. The little boy's hands meeting
About my spine. The mother's voice: *Holding up wonderfully*!
No dread. No bitterness. The end beginning. Today's
Dusk room aglow
For the last time
With candlelight.
Faces love-lit,
Gifts underfoot.
Still to be so poised, so
Receptive. Still to recall, to praise.

James Merrill (1926-1995)

# Christmastide Service Times

## Christmas Eve, Monday, Dec. 24

4:30 pm Holy Eucharist with Pageant
10:00 pm Carol Sing
10:30 pm Holy Eucharist with Candlelight

## Christmas Day, Tuesday, Dec. 25

10:30 a.m. Family Eucharist
*All ages are invited to participate in the liturgy*
*Nursery will not be offered on Christmas Day*

## First Sunday of Christmas, Dec. 30

9:30 a.m. Family Eucharist
*Nursery for 3 yrs. and under. All ages are invited to participate in the liturgy. No formation classes*

## The Epiphany, Sunday, January 6

8:30 & 10:30 a.m Family Eucharist
*Nursery for 3 yrs. and under. All ages are invited to participate in the liturgy. No formation classes.*

DOES YOUR CHILD WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CHRISTMAS PAGEANT ON CHRISTMAS EVE? EMAIL CARLA SCHOBER AT CSCHOBER@STBS.NET FOR MORE INFO.

# GATHERING AT THE TABLE

## SETTING THE TABLE

*Thorunn McCoy, Altar Guild*
tmccoy@usn.org

At our house, we have three tables. Each has a story.

The smallest table, an old Formica two-top used at a diner (years ago there were pieces of gum mashed to the bottom of it), was an item left in Roger's apartment by a former tenant. It was the table where he fixed me dinner for the first time (chicken, potatoes, and green beans—delicious!) and where we discussed wedding guests. For many years, we squeezed four people around it in tiny apartments in Illinois and Colorado and over it we decided the big questions of where and how we'd live a life together. Now, we cover the chipped top with a cloth and enjoy sitting there for breakfasts in winter—the heating vent lies just beneath it.

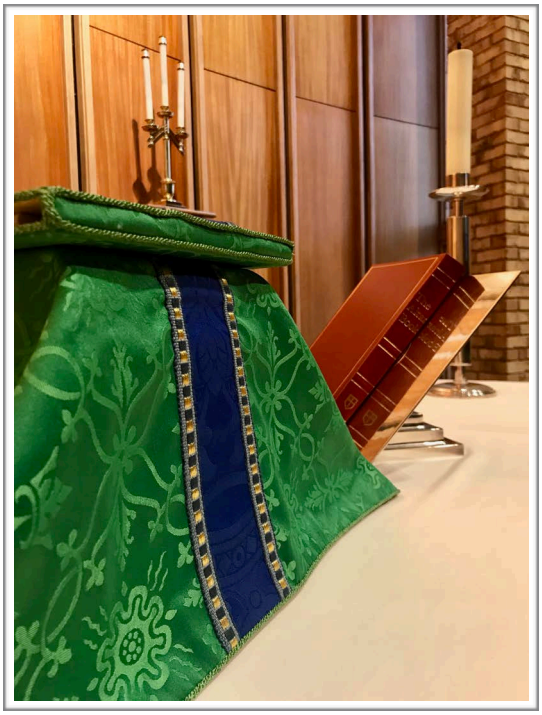
Our dining room table gets the most use in our house. A small circular affair that easily seats four, it expands to seat eight. Roger's dad helped him make an extra leaf to the table on one visit before he became too ill, and we think of him each time we stretch the table, and our hearts, out to more guests. Although it is our "fancy" table, it is the one my parents saved for and eventually bought in the early 1960s. It has survived trans-Atlantic moves from North Carolina to Paris as well as the U-Haul from Virginia to Nashville when my parents downsized. Memories of Thanksgivings, school projects, bad news, tax returns, yellow cake with chocolate icing for countless birthdays, guests and family now long dead, and daily dinners are figuratively and literally etched into the scarred top.

Our newest addition is a farm table out on our porch. While Roger was making it, our house was burgled, and as we waited for the police to arrive, he worked on the table, more from not having anything to do than from nerves, I suspect. Seating 10, it became an important part of healing from that unexpected violation of home. Around it, our community reconstructed our sense of safety as we celebrated engagements, retirements, and anniversaries, memories that can never be stolen.

At these three tables, we've shared life in the most basic ways—food, drink, and companionship. These meeting places are places where God's story unfolds in our lives. Eating and drinking, our most common and essential needs, bind us into communities, places and people God has given to us to help be part of his larger narrative.

This season, as we open our homes and tables, let's open our hearts to our basic shared humanity and to the love that God shares with us at his table each week. Feasts sustain us physically and spiritually for our journey, just as the stories of our tables help inform our biggest questions of who we are, where are we going, and how we are going to live together.

Gather around your tables. Listen. Eat. Laugh. Remember. Share ideas. Dream. Risk sharing what is important. These are the gifts of the season and the important stories that will linger long after the last biscuit is eaten.



Thorunn is pictured above on the left with friends around their dining table at home. She also makes sure that the table is set every Sunday at St. B's as head of the Altar Guild. Fun fact: Thorunn is continuing to celebrate her 50th by hosting a total of 50 people in her home through out the year. Breaking bread together really is a beautiful thing.

**THE ALTAR GUILD IS CURRENTLY LOOKING FOR HELP ON FIRST SUNDAYS. EMAIL THORUNN, FOR MORE INFO.**

# THE TABLE AS A PLACE TO REFUEL

To be honest, when I look to this current Advent season I am having a hard time finding the peace and joy of Christ's birth. I usually love the holiday season. It is usually a time spent with friend and family, but this year is different for me. I lost my father to leukemia, so this holiday season is now met with a lot of mixed emotions.

Baggage aside, there is so much that calls for our attention this time of year. Stressors like purchasing gifts, special events, making food, eating lots and lots of food, and sometimes even family gatherings can, in fact, be more stressful than joyful. Considering all of the pomp and circumstance of the holiday season, I think many of us sometimes forget the reason of our celebration; the Advent season and Christ's birth

So, I want to challenge myself, and you, my church family, to set aside one night of the week to prepare a quiet home cooked meal. Maybe turn the lights down, light some candles, and spend at least 30 minutes eating together as a family intentionally remembering Christ. If you are alone, spend the time speaking to God as if he is eating right there with you, because of course, he is.

I set this challenge forth because meal time is often forgotten as a holy place to truly recharge and refuel, especially during the holidays. Allowing yourself to be in a parasympathetic state, meaning the state in which your body is at rest and ready to digest, and not in sympathetic state which is the fight/flight response, you allow your body to digest your food better. To do this it is ideal to lower your heart rate, slow your breathing, and chew your food thoroughly. These simple tasks will greatly impact how you digest a meal leading to more nutrients being absorbed and less digestive issues. With everything going on during the holiday season we need all the energy and nutrients we can absorb.

So, join me this Advent season taking at least one evening to regroup and refocus towards the true meaning of Advent. Don't stress on what to make, keep it simple with a vegetable, a protein, and a starch. Try one of our favorites: chicken and broccoli!

LIVING SATISFIED
by Ellie Kinard
ELLIEKINARD@GMAIL.COM

# CHICKEN & BROCCOLI

**Serves 4**

**Ingredients:**

•4-6 chicken thighs (bone in, skin on)
•2 bunches of broccoli or 1 bag of chopped broccoli
•1 cup uncooked rice (any type is fine)
Seasonings: Olive oil, salt, paprika, garlic, cumin, and cinnamon.

**Directions:**

- Preheat oven to 350.
- Start your rice. Cook rice according to the package. (I personally use an organic chicken broth instead of water when cooking. It is a 1:1 replacement.)
- Take out your chicken thighs, rinse under water, and place onto a lightly oiled baking sheet. You may cut off excess chicken thigh skin if you prefer.
- In a bowl combine 1/2 tsp salt, 1 tsp paprika, ¼ - ½ tsp garlic, ½ tsp cumin, and 2 pinches of cinnamon. Mix together.
- Drizzle olive oil over the chicken thighs and generously season the top of the chicken (Skin side up).
- Cook the chicken on 350 for 15 minutes. Then raise the temperature to 425 for another 15 mins to help brown the skin. At the end if your chicken skin is not browning, place on broil for a 2-3 minutes. You want your chicken skin crispy.
- Once the chicken is in the oven prepare broccoli on a baking sheet. Drizzle broccoli with a little bit of olive oil and sprinkle over some salt. When you raise the temperature of the chicken to 425, place the broccoli in on the bottom shelf. Cook broccoli for 10-15 minutes or until lightly browned.

Serve your chicken, rice, and broccoli together. This recipe works great as left overs too. Feel free to double it and have a dinner ready for the next evening or to eat for lunch.

**Vegetarian option: Roast one can of chickpeas (rinsed) alongside your broccoli instead of chicken. You can use the same seasonings as the chicken on top of the chickpeas. Add 1 extra serving of vegetables to your dish. This could be fresh spinach or feel free to roast another veggie with your broccoli such as haricot verts (a version of green beans). Adding some slivered almonds or pine nuts to the final dish would be great too.*

# CLAP YOUR HANDS, ALL YOU PEOPLES

SHOUT TO GOD WITH A CRY OF JOY -PSALM 47

## VESTRY CORNER

*Yvonne Poindexter*
YVONNE.POINDEXTER@GMAIL.COM

### Celebrating the Great Mystery of Serving on Vestry

Wow! Amazingly, I am nearly two years into a three-year commitment on the vestry at St. Bartholomew's Church. Especially with our rector search, this has been a busy time! But after many long meetings, a few too many red-tinged budget reports, and some tough, seemingly untenable choices on the table–I find that (yes!), reflecting on two years of vestry service, I am pretty elated.
On the vestry, I serve as liaison to the bookstore as well as our preschool and home school tutorials. These smooth-running entities at St. B's are easy to represent, as the faithful women who lead them are a joy and inspiration to be around; the toughest challenge on the "bookstore/ little kid vestry beat" has been figuring out how to relocate a family of bats. I mention my "official" position and its simplicity because it gives me license to brag a bit about the vestry members and leaders who do the heavy lifting, and room to reveal with some humility the things that collectively we've been able to achieve. I offer these bits to keep you informed, but it's my hope that you will also prayerfully consider serving yourself. The time for nominations has just begun

### Leading through faith—and our core values.

Early in October, the vestry held a Mission/Vision Retreat to consider how to best "define" St. B's, as one way to discern God's will and be more intentional concerning the direction of the church and the decisions we make as a vestry. A small group, myself included, is working to refine these ideas and report back to the vestry. It is a joy to work with clergy and faithful volunteers on this project.

### Safe and secure, with God's help.

In July, we, the vestry, asked a hardworking group led by former vestry member Rick Lundgren to consider how safe we are at St. B's. In recent months, this group has advised the vestry on matters from emergency response and communication, controlled access to our buildings, fire safety, and safe church practices for all who serve our youth and children, just to name a few of the topics addressed. Our goal is full compliance with Diocesan policy in all areas, with some standards exceeding expectations. Important to note: the vestry recently approved the purchase of several new AEDs - a purchase that could literally be a lifesaver. Speak to clergy or a member of the vestry if you are interested in special training related to CPR and the use of the new AEDs.

## What Other Vestry Members Think:

•For me, it is a privilege to pray over and work on the nitty-gritty mechanics of the church. Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God, but somebody had to wash his clothes. Vestry feels like doing God's laundry.

•I have been thankful to serve or vestry for two main reasons: to give back to St. B's for all I have learned here and for the people I've learned from by serving alongside them.

•Serving on vestry has given me a deeper understanding of the challenges of "building" a church. The need for prayer and seeking God's wisdom and guidance in all we do. The importance of listening to each vestry person and being open to the Holy Spirit. What is also interesting to me is seeing how God has brought all these different people together with various gifts and talents to serve at this time and to watch his plan unfold.

VESTRY MEMBERS SERVE FOR 3 YEARS AND ARE ELECTED BY LOTS AT THE ANNUAL MEETING. LEARN MORE ABOUT THE REQUIREMENTS TO SERVE ON VESTRY IN THE ST. B'S WEEKLY. NOMINATIONS ARE DUE BY DECEMBER 15.

### Financial stewardship

David West, our new treasurer, has "blessed us" with simpler spreadsheets, sound advice, and visuals that help guide our financial decisions. We have set goals for a reserve fund that will give us a firm foundation for doing God's work moving forward–and toward that end, we have voted in support of introducing pledge cards, designed to put a good-faith focus on stewardship in a way that retains St. B's sensitivity to individuals' financial realities and standing in their walk with God.

### Our "House" of God.

The vestry has been trying to discern how to best manage the physical spaces we're blessed with, from the ministry house, to the sanctuary and sacristy, to the parish hall. Thank you, Altar Guild, & Vergers for your extraordinary patience as we discerned the best way forward on badly needed repairs in the sacristy. The vestry hopes to share more details soon regarding this important topic.

### Spiritual development.

We have always been prayerful in vestry meetings, but Father Sammy has provided us with even greater time for spiritual development. I think it's safe to say that all of us on vestry feel blessed by these efforts. We give thanks for Father Sammy and his family as they approach their first anniversary at St. B's, for Father Travis's faithfulness, and for the staff who support us. And speaking of leadership, God has been giving great strength to our Andy Michel and Shannon Truss, our junior and senior wardens, respectively. They and many others on the vestry give so generously of their time and talents.

Why I am I so happy? For the first time in years, St. B's is fully staffed and, from my perspective on the vestry, in a great position to support its members collectively and individually as we try our best to be Christ to others, full of hope, and growing closer to God.

# GREENING CHRISTMAS

## IDEAS THAT HELP US CARE FOR CREATION IN THE GIFT GIVING SEASON

by *Katherine Bomboy*, kat@katboy.net

Nashville has many great options for locally crafted, sourced, fair trade, and sustainable gifts for the holidays. Here are some suggestions for the season to bring cheer without negatively impacting God's Creation.

### *Gifts with a St. B's Connection*

*Newly* is a Nashville based company that offers beautiful 100% recycled or repurposed home goods including glassware, cutting & serving boards, and acrylics. The best part is that Newly was started by 5 guys, with connections to St. B's: Joel Griffith, Michael Graziano, & Barrett Ward.

Barrett Ward's *ABLE* is a lifestyle brand focused on ending generational poverty by providing economic opportunity for women. ABLE, headquartered in Nashville, is the place to find "ethical fashion, offering leather goods, handmade jewelry, denim, clothing, and footwear." You can shop their holiday line online and read about this amazing company's mission.

### *Festive Food*

If food is a festive favorite for your friends and family, consider creating a menu with savory or sweet courses sourced from local Tennessee products. Local butchers are another great place to go like Bare Bones and Porter Road. When grocery shopping: pay attention to the packaging of food. Opt for no packaging if you can. Buy in bulk whenever possible, use your own container, and ring your own bags.

*Newly* 100% recycled Throw Blanket made from 51% recycled cotton & 49% recycled plastic bottles (12 plastic bottles and saves 2250 gallons of water.)

*Photo by Katherine Bomboy*

## *Consignment, Charity and Thrift Stores*

Nashville also has a plethora of consignment stores and thrift shops . Check out Designer Finds, Designer Renaissance, and Flip for shopping near St. B's. Making thrift and consignment purchases for the holidays helps keep like-new and valuable items out of Nashville's landfill. It also prevents the extraction, transportation, and use of new materials to create brand new products. Buying secondhand and local also keeps carbon emissions down by eliminating long-distance shipping and packaging.

## *Gift Bags & Wrapping*

Go one step further and consider alternative or no gift bags or wrapping paper. I use a colorful scarf or reusable tote bags to disguise holiday bounty for family and friends. If you are going to use paper, buy wrapping paper that can be recycled. Reuse tissue paper, gift bags, and wrapping paper. Yes, wrapping paper can be re-used.

## *Sustainable Experiences and Tours*

Consider giving an *experience* rather than a *thing* this year. Sustainable Travel experiences are possible with a little planning. Websites like the Tennessee Department of Tourism offer suggestions for local and regional travel and experiences that will get family and friends outside, active, and engaged with people and places.

## *Green Gifts*

How about a green gift idea that is actually green. Indoor plants bring joy year round and have numerous health benefits for home or office. Interior landscapes improve air quality by reducing carbon dioxide levels, reducing stress, improving memory and mental well-being and naturally adding coolness and humidity to the air. Don't worry, there are several varieties of indoor plants that are easy to take care of for those without a green thumb.

With all of these great gift ideas that support our local economy, health, and well-being, you are ready to give green this holiday season! Happy Holidays!

St. B's Annual
EPIPHANY CELEBRATION
chili cook-off & bonfire
SUNDAY, JANUARY 6
5- 7 P.M.
SIGN UP TO BRING CHILI AT
CHURCHOFFICE@STBS.NET