



The Eagle's Nest

St. John's Episcopal Church December 2015

Diocese of Springfield

Bishop

The Rt. Rev. Daniel H. Martins

Staff

Rector

Rev. Richard Swan

rector@saintjohnsdecatur.org

Deacon

Rev. Donald Coventry

dncvnt@aol.com

Secretary

Mrs. LaVetta Williams

secretary@saintjohnsdecatur.org

Parish Nurse

Susan Currie, RN

Vestry

John Byler

Betsy Curlin

Bob Ellison

Chris Gregory

Ken Jordan - Parish Warden

Tyler Kitchens

Kathy Phillips

Melissa Rhodes - Rector's Warden

Charla Robb

Padr 's Pen

“The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.” (John 1:9)

We enter the Season of Advent on the last Sunday of November this year. The Advent Season is commonly referred to as a Season of light. Each Worship service we will light the Advent Candles as we visually draw closer with ever increasing light to the celebration of the Incarnation of our God in the person of Jesus on Christmas morning. As our Patron Saint tells us, “in him was life, and the life was the light of all people.” (John 1:4) From the first century it has been known that this demonstration of God’s love for us has been an event of light overcoming the darkness of sin and death. John the Baptist’s father, Zechariah, prophesied, “...By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.” (Luke 1:78-79) See Canticle 16, on page 92 of our Book of Common Prayer. Most of us know the comfort of even a small candlelight when we are surrounded by darkness. Many of us have added a flashlight to our phone to avoid darkness!

So our Savior, Christ Jesus, came into the world to bring light in the darkness. He is still with us as he lives in us and provides us with the comfort of his light and his love in the dark times of our life. Yet this is not the extent of it, the story doesn’t end for the larger world with his death and

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resurrection. In John's Gospel we hear, "Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.'" (John 8:12) So we who follow him are now the bearers of light and life to this lost and broken world. We get this from his own words, not just once, but several times. Later in John's Gospel our Lord tells us, "While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of light." (John 12:36) Recently the world has been shocked by inhuman violence in the Mid-East and attacks in Europe, this is a part of the darkness of this broken world that John told us Jesus came to overcome.

Jesus has instructed us, as his disciples, as "children of light" to be the light in our own generations and to those generations that follow us so that they may not forever walk in the darkness of the shadows of death. There is fear involved in the acceptance of refugees from Syria, and other places; it is understandable. We have, however, an opportunity to show others just what Christ's light can do for them in their lives. I saw a Muslim from birth come to Christ in prison after learning of the love of God in Jesus, practiced, not preached by observing Christian love. If we turn them away then we confirm the lies that they have been told about Christians.

Just as we have had the benefits of those who came before us and have now joined the Church Triumphant we can bear Christ's light to the world. They lit the way for us and now we are called to light the way for others, as it is written in the Acts of the Apostles, "For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, 'I have set you to be a light for the Gentiles, so that you

may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.'" (Acts 13:47)

This Advent pray for God's guidance and resolve to be the light of Christ in just one life this coming year. What a wonderful Christmas present you can be.

"In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven." (Mat 5:16)

In Christ's love, Fr. Swan

Vestry Meeting Highlights

Melissa reported that the RENEWALWORKS workshops have been well attended and are going well; we delivered Meals on Wheels on 12 routes the 9th to the 13th; we had a joyful Baptism at the 10: AM Eucharist on the 15th and then we filled 100 shoe boxes at coffee hour that same day; we are hosting the Heritage and Holly Tour on the 27th and 28th. Ken brought us up to date with the completed outside door sealing (I have noticed that the doors close much more quietly); the plaster repair quotes and that we have a contract with AJ again this year for snow removal (they even did and will do our sidewalks). Fr. Swan reported that a new blue Dalmatic for Deacon Don has been ordered for the Advent season from the Memorial Fund; we have obtained a quote for a new phone system; we will participate in the Church Street walk on the 13th ending here for Lessons and Carols; he is trying to obtain a reduced price quote from Decatur Ambulance for the AED device and that our ASA is up. We discussed a new pictorial directory in the future.

Favorite Recipe

Needing some ideas for side dishes for your Christmas dinner? This one has been handed down for at least one generation.

VEGGIE SALAD

1 head of cauliflower
 1 bunch of broccoli
 ½ pound of bacon (cooked and crumbled – crispy is better)
 2 C. of shredded cheddar cheese

Sauce – 1T mayonnaise, 1T sugar, enough cider vinegar to make it a little runny but not too much since you want it to stick to the veggies.

Cut the broccoli and cauliflower into bite size pieces, add the bacon, cheese and sauce. Chill for several hours to let the flavors “marry.”

Serving Opportunities

Any interested youth or adult over the age of ten interested in becoming an Acolyte, please contact James Keith or Father Swan.

Next Vestry Meeting

The next Vestry meeting is scheduled for December 16th in the Guild room following the 6:00 PM Eucharist.



Education Opportunities

ADULT STUDY

Friday Bible Study continues at 10 AM in the Guild Room. We are currently studying the Book of Mark.

Sunday Study continues at 9:00 AM. We are currently looking at Scripture through 10 lenses. VERY interesting!! It is not too late to join us.

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday school continues. There are now two classes ~ VERY exciting news! It promises to be an exciting year! Please think about children you can invite or help attend. St. John's has many resources for children and more children would allow greater opportunities for all.

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12-22-2014

WHAT DO YOU BUY THE GUY WHO HAS EVERYTHING, MADE EVERYTHING, AND HAS GIVEN US EVERYTHING?

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Outreach

Reminders:

Internal: There are several members who have signed up to cook meals for those who are sick or have someone they are caring for and could use the extra help. They are: Celeste Ames, Babbs Hazelrigg, Ken Hawley, Megan Jordan, Marv Swan and Anni Watts.

External: We are still gathering food items on Sunday for NE Community Fund. Please remember to bring an item with you. It is so easy if you just throw an extra item in your cart when shopping for yourself. Items most needed are: peanut butter, cereal, canned meats, canned “meals”, cereal, rice, beans.

HELP MAKE CHRISTMAS BRIGHTER

Of the almost 775 inmates at the Decatur Correctional Center, around 200 mothers will have children who will make a Christmastime visit in December. At the end of their visit, moms will be able to give each child one gift thanks mostly to donations from St. John’s since a Scrooge-like reduction of public and private funding for this is the current reality. Since we have taken on this ministry the prison population has more than doubled. The wardens have expressed with deep gratitude how important and meaningful it is for both the children and the mothers to be able to receive and give these gifts. Many of the children had never gotten a Christmas present from moms who may have been addicted, homeless or otherwise unable to provide for their children. Please prayerfully consider how you can help to give to these women the opportunity to participate in their children’s celebration of

Christmas in a positive parental way.

During December, put your donations in the Baptistery at the back of the church. Delivery to the prison will begin on the first Friday in December. We hope to get them there early enough that the women will be able to wrap them. There will be a list of suggested items on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall and there will be bulletin inserts.

You can help by providing:

Rolls of wrapping paper (including partial rolls, just put a rubber band around)-no ribbons or bows, but stick-on decorations OK-and tape
 Gifts which do not contain any glass and/or alcohol content (perfume, etc.) or represent weapons or have violent subject matter/content
 Mittens, gloves, hats, scarves, socks, books

For younger children:

Dolls (babies to Barbie’s)
 Dishes
 Games
 Play Dough
 Trucks/ cars
 Hot Wheels/Matchbox
 Thomas the Train
 Coloring books/crayons
 Etch-A-Sketch
 Stuffed animals
 Transformers
 Coloring books

For older children:

Footballs
 Basketballs
 Games

OUTREACH Continued on page 5...

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Soccer balls
Lip balm
iTunes gift cards
Jewelry
Purses
Hair bands/clips
Art/craft kits/supplies
Science kits
Construction kits

Any questions, ask Judy Ellison, Sandy Roe or Mindy Chadwick

CHILDREN'S SHOEBOX MINISTRY

We packed 100 shoe boxes to send to Samaritan's Purse! You go St. John's!!

Peripatetic Parishioners

Bob and Judy Ellison attended St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Glen Ellyn, IL on November 15th.

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(See Luke 2:1-16)

12-19-2014

IT HAD A STAR ON TOP SO I FIGURED IT SHOULD HAVE A MANGER AT THE BOTTOM

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Holy Days in December

Every Wednesday at 6:00 pm and Saturday at 7:30 am we meet for Eucharist. It is our custom to honor a memorable figure in the life of the Church down through the ages. For December, we will give thanks to God for these faithful servants:

Saints Days for December:

Wednesdays

December	2	Channing Moore Williams, Bishop
	9	Ambrose of Milan
	16	Ember Day
	23	St. Thomas, Apostle
	30	Holy Innocents

Saturdays

December	5	Clement of Alexandria
	12	Weekday of Advent 2
	19	Ember Day
	26	St. Stephen, Deacon & Martyr

Birthdays

2 nd -	Elizabeth Phillips
5 th -	Deondre Gregory Rebecca Short
6 th -	Deroan Peters
8 th -	Tom Ames
13 th -	Eli Pilger
23 rd -	Neely Jordan
28 th -	Curtis Ferguson
29 th -	Don Coventry
31 st -	Sharon Phillips



News Flash & Updates

The Chili Cook-off has been postponed until January or February – adding a game night instead of coffee hour to the mix to alleviate “cabin fever”!

Lift up Mary, Jack Ashby and Jack McDonald as Jack and Mary attend the Urbana University Student Mission Conference with SAMS, December 27-31. Pray that God will draw students to the SAMS booth. Also pray for Mary’s Gospel Goats distribution taking place in Uganda during February, for selection of the participants, healthy and productive goats, smooth and useful animal health care training and a clear Gospel presentation.

Some of you may remember Russ and Heidi Smith when they visited us two years ago and made a presentation on their mission work in Chile. Please pray for them and their children, Joshua, Joyanne and Jacelyn, who will be on home ministry assignment beginning mid-January. Pray that their ministries will carry on in the three months they are away and their upcoming visits to supporters. Maybe they will visit us again!

RenewalWorks

The final workshop will take place on December 2nd. A report will be submitted to Vestry at the December meeting and to the congregation at the Annual meeting on January 24th.

Mark Your Calendars

There is a calendar of events listed on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall for the month. The sign-up sheet for flowers and the Sanctuary Candle is on the bulletin Board outside the Nave in the Cloister.

December 2nd – the final workshop for RenewalWorks following the 6:00 PM Eucharist with a soup supper

December 12th – the greening of the Church – more details to follow

December 13th - Lessons and Carols – with a pot luck reception. *Use the flyer on the last page of the newsletter to invite someone to the service.*

January 24th, 2016 – Annual Meeting

February 9th, 2016 – Shrove Tuesday

February 14th, 2016 (the first Sunday of Lent) – Bishop’s Homecoming/Annual Visit

Christmas Services

The Christmas services are as follows:

Christmas Eve: 6:00 p.m. Service

9:30 p.m. Carols

10:00 p.m. Service

Christmas Day: 9:00 a.m. Service



Photos

Baptism, Children's Choir and packing shoeboxes for Samaritan's Purse on November 15th.



Prepare for Christmas with

Lessons & Carols

A traditional church service blending
music and scripture

Sunday • December 13th

4:30 P.M.

at

 John's
Episcopal Church

Admission is free
A reception will follow
with light food



130 W. Eldorado St. • Decatur, IL 62522 • SaintJohnsDecatur.org • 217-428-4461