

ALL SAINTS' BULLETIN  
The Monthly Newsletter of All Saints'

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December, 2018

228-9242

[www.allsaintsthomasville.org](http://www.allsaintsthomasville.org)

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Dear Friends,

Sunday will be the first Sunday in Advent.

Each season of the Church's calendar speaks to an aspect of Christian faith and spirituality. What Advent addresses is the fact that we live our lives "in the meantime." We are awaiting the fulfilment of God's work. The baby has been conceived but is yet to be born. Jesus has conquered death and sin and is ascended but his reign on earth will need to wait for a second coming. We have been saved but that doesn't mean we are perfect. Our sanctification is still a long way off. Recognizing that our lives are lived "in the meantime", how then should we be living?

When I completed my purchase of my groceries yesterday, the checker at Publix said the now familiar, "have a blessed day." While I hear that all the time and think little of it, yesterday I thought about it all the way home. First my mind wandered over who had pronounced the blessing on me, a priest. I concluded that it mattered not a bit that a checker was blessing a priest. In doing so, she had brought God into the usually secular moment of concluding a transaction in a grocery store and I was grateful for that. I forget God all the time and she had prompted me to remember Him. She had given me a spiritual gift.

My second thought was that she could have said, "have a nice day". As I thought about that, I was reminded that 'blessed days' may not be 'nice

days'. On a 'blessed day', you might be challenged in a way that leads to personal growth and the challenge might not be 'nice'. On a 'blessed day' you may experience a 'sweet sorrow' that will from that moment on be part of your life and part of your life's richness. On a truly 'blessed day' you receive nothing that apparently benefits you, but you give something selflessly to another.

My third thought was this, that the words 'have a blessed day' are filled with encouragement. They represent a compressed prayer that God will be with us, and if God is with us what can be against us! The checker was reminding me that Jesus promised his disciples that he would always be with them. Amid the tumult, the disappointments, the setbacks, the fears he would equip them not just to endure but to flourish. With that thought in my mind, I was cheered, and my spirits were lifted.

In that checker's parting words to me were three crucially important lessons about how to 'live in the meantime' and how to live in the spirit of Advent. First, when we live in the meantime, we will be ready to witness to the faith that is within us. I didn't go to Publix to get God. I went to get food. But I got God and I was grateful for it. We can all do for each other what the checker did for me. Second, when we live in the meantime, we will be ready to embrace and seek God in everything that he causes to come into our life. We won't expect it all to be nice and we won't think he has abandoned us if it is not. We will value a blessed life, far above a nice life. And third we will be encouraged, and we will encourage others. In the Gospel that we will read on Sunday we will hear Jesus tell his disciples, 'People will faint with fear and foreboding about what is coming upon earth', and yet he tells his disciples, 'Stand up and raise your heads'.

I wish you every blessing as you prepare your homes and your hearts for Christmas.

Paul+

## **SMELLS AND BELLS**

Dear Friends,

With the, um, advent of Advent (and Christmas), we will be using two traditional liturgical elements at the Eucharist with which perhaps not everyone is familiar. It might therefore be profitable for me to say a brief few words about them, lest a riot break out.

Firstly there will be incense, which we will use, as is our custom, at the “Midnight Mass” on Christmas Eve. I will make three observations with respect to why we (occasionally) use incense at All Saints’:

1) We’re doing what Christians have always done, everywhere, as far as we know. Incense has been used at Christian liturgies seemingly from the very beginning, and was used at the Jewish liturgy before that, all the way back to the time of Moses. The Torah contains detailed instructions on how the Israelites were to handle and burn incense at their worship (see, for example, Exodus 30 – or Numbers 16, where the Lord kills 250 men for using it incorrectly!). Incense has been normative at Christian worship throughout the world for the past 2,000 years. Interestingly, in 2006, archaeologists announced that they had found an ossuary containing the bones of the Apostle Paul in the 4th century basilica built over the place of his burial. With the bones inside the ossuary the archaeologists found bits of purple cloth and grains of incense.

2) Incense is used at the liturgy in heaven. According to Revelation 5 & 8, “elders” (aka priests in Greek) and angels offer incense before God, and the smoke of the incense ascends together with the prayers of the faithful on earth. So just like the singing of certain hymns (the Sanctus and the Gloria in Excelsis), which Scripture says are sung in heaven (see Isaiah 6.3, and Luke 2:14), the use of incense at the liturgy is an aspect of the continuity of our liturgy on earth with the liturgy of heaven.

3) Incense is costly and sweet smelling. This is integral to the Biblical symbolism with respect to sacrifice. In the Old Testament, the children of Israel offer in sacrifice things that were dear to them: the first fruits of the soil, animals without blemish... and indeed incense. Most of us spend the majority of our lives working, transmuting our energy and our labor into money. Some of that money we donate to the church (hopefully). And the church uses some of that money in turn to buy incense, which is then burned at the altar, the place where we ask God “of his fatherly goodness mercifully to accept” what we sacrifice there (in the words of the Holy Communion service), in union with the self-offering of Jesus on the cross. When the grains of incense are consumed in the fire, they ascend to heaven as smoke, something that we can no longer grasp or hold on to. Thus the incense becomes a tangible symbol of the unequivocal offering of our energy and labor to God, and the pleasant odor is a tangible symbol of the spiritual sweetness of this dynamic – that offering our lives to God in this way is pleasing to him and, ultimately, pleasing to us too. So incense is a tangible symbol of our participation in the dynamism of Christ’s cross, where he offers himself without reservation to the Father as a “sweet-smelling oblation” (see Numbers 28 where, God commands that, among other things, wheat, wine, and an unblemished lamb are to be offered in sacrifice – Christ in the Eucharist is the archetype “fulfilling the law” in this way).

Which brings us to the matter of bells which, thanks to the generous donation of a fellow parishioner, we will be able to chime at their traditional place at the Holy Communion. Again, let me offer three brief observations about the use of bells:

1) As we saw with incense, Christians have used bells throughout the world and down through the centuries. Indeed there is a linkage between the use of bells and the use of incense at the liturgy in the custom of our Eastern Orthodox brethren to attach small bells to the chains of their thurible

(incense pots). Thus when their priests swing the incense at the liturgy (which the Orthodox do A LOT), the bells jingle as the smoke of the incense ascends. We have no plans to adopt that custom at All Saints', but that doesn't need to prevent us from noticing and appreciating the symbolism.

2) Bells have very practical purposes. We are already accustomed to the use of bells in connection with the liturgy in that we have a tower bell that we ring to announce the commencement of the liturgy each Sunday. As anyone who has travelled through Europe will know, this is a very widespread Christian custom. Historically, before everyone had watches and clocks, the ringing of church bells helped people to mark the passage of time, to know when certain services were taking place at the church, or when to recite certain prayers during the course of the day, or when to head to church themselves for service. The autobiography of John Betjeman, Poet Laureate of the UK and a devout Anglican, in which he recounts his conversion to Christianity, is entitled "Summoned by Bells." In it he writes about his time as a student at Oxford:

Silk-dressing-gowned, to Sunday-morning bells,  
Long after breakfast had been cleared in Hall,  
I wandered to my lavender-scented bath;  
Then, with a loosely knotted shantung tie  
And hair well soaked in Delhez' Genêt d'Or,  
Strolled to the Eastgate. Oxford marmalade  
And a thin volume by Lowes Dickinson  
But half-engaged my thoughts till Sunday calm  
Led me by crumbling walls and echoing lanes,  
Past college chapels with their organ-groan  
And churches stacked with bicycles outside,  
To worship at High Mass in Pusey House.

The small bells used in the course of the liturgy likewise are meant to attract our attention to, and to accentuate, what is happening in the liturgy at the moment when they are rung. Their primary use is around the

consecration of the bread and wine. As such they are, spiritually, a harbinger of Christ's coming among us in the Sacrament of the altar. They are a cue for us to focus our attention and to recollect what we are doing, to be attuned to the invisible and "ghostly" reality being effected on the altar in our midst.

3) Bells are incense for the ears. The chime of a well-tuned bell is pleasant to hear, and this aesthetic pleasure is a sacramental punctuation of the spiritual pleasure of the acts of worship with which the bell-ringing is associated, in much the same way that altar flowers – or candles or silver or stained glass or embroidered silk – are pleasant to the eye. Another analogy could be drawn to singing: we put metrical words to tunes and sing them during the liturgy. We could just recite the words without musical note, or read them silently, but that would be comparatively dull. Music is pleasant – so much so that an ancient saying, sometimes attributed (erroneously) to St. Augustine declared, *Qui bene cantat bis orat*– "he who sings well prays twice." That is to say, the words of a piece of music are a prayer, and the music itself is a form of prayer. Thus bell ringing, like instrumental interludes during the liturgy, can be understood as a kind of wordless prayer, and hence an emblem of the Holy Spirit's own prayer within us, which St. Paul says is "too deep for words," (Romans 8.26).

In sum, I hope all will appreciate the smells and bells in our liturgy during the coming weeks. They are not meant to overpower or predominate, but to accentuate the main action, to draw our attention to deeper realities beyond themselves. They're also meant to be pleasant, and I hope you all will experience them as such.

Pax,  
Will +

## **VESTRY**

The December meeting will be held Sunday, December 16 at 8:30 a.m. in the Parish Hall Library.

## **BOOK CLUB NEWS**

The November meeting of the All Saints Book Club was also a celebration of the 100 year life of our recently deceased member, Margaret Arnold. Many of Margaret's friends attended and shared stories of how Margaret touched their lives. A huge thank you goes to Nancy McCollum and her team for organizing the wonderful repast as well as leading the discussion of Delia Owen's book, "*Where the Crawdads Sing*".

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, December 12th in the Parish Hall at 11:50 a.m. We are reading and will be discussing Didi Hoffman's book, "*Beautiful Bodies: the Adventures of Malvina Hoffman*". We are honored that Didi herself will be with us to lead the discussion.

Don't let the title make you think this book is not for you.

Here is what Amazon said about Didi's book: "This is not a story about art. Although Malvina Hoffman was known as America's Rodin, her story is one of adventure, intrigue, and life among the greatest artists and powerbrokers during the early to mid-twentieth century. Every action Malvina undertook broke glass ceilings. She smashed through her fears to achieve the impossible, many times over. She was an inspiration to all."

Please join us on the 12th. We will supply beverages and sweets. Feel free to bring your lunch and bring a friend!

Maureen Monsalvatge

### **NEW VESTRY MEMBERS**

At the Annual Parish Meeting on November 18 the congregation elected for three year terms Dort Cobb, Andrea Hancock and Randy Watts. We congratulate them and offer our thanks for their willingness to serve.

### **ALL SAINTS' GIVING TREE**

Once again, we will be providing gifts for children in the CASA program in our area. Please stop by the Giving Tree in the Parish Hall foyer or the Church Narthex.

It's so simple...please write your family name and phone number down for each child and/or family group on the master list BEFORE you take your ornament(s) with you. Please deliver your wrapped, individually labeled (child's name and ornament #) and bagged gifts to the Parish Hall by Sunday, December 9. (We would like to recycle the ornaments – please return them to Nikki with your gifts.) THANK YOU for your generous support!

### **CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY DINNER**

Over the years many families have helped prepare and deliver this meal to the residents of Providence Plaza. We now also prepare meals for Halcyon House, The Rescue Mission and the Good Shepherd community. In 2017 we were able to feed 200 people. Should there be others who might go hungry on this special day, please contact Nikki in the office. If you would be willing to give a tiny portion of your day on Monday, December 24 or Christmas morning, please contact Ed Davis at 226-2355. On Monday, December 24 we will carve and bag bread and dessert; on Christmas Day we will make final preparations and delivery.

Rozzie and Eddie Davis



**Body & Soul -- Wednesday, December 5 at 5:45 p.m.**

**Topic: St. David**

Reservations please.

### **CHOIR NEWS**

Adult Choir News:

We are excited about our December services. The Adult Choir has lovely music planned for Advent, Lessons and Carols and Christmas Eve 11PM Service. I know everyone appreciates all they do to make the services beautiful.

St. David Choir News:

St. David's Choir will be rehearsing every Wednesday between now and December 24 (5:30 PM) service. I'm really looking forward to the angelic sounds of the children. As in the past we will have them sing Evensong with the hired singers which includes Preces and Responses, and Nunc Dimitis. Elise will perform The Magnificat. All Children's Choir members are welcomed and encouraged to participate in the pageant after Evensong and their Offertory Anthem. They should be in the choir loft at 4:45 to run through music and processing. They can wear their pageant costume under their robe and add head pieces and wings in the narthex just before they process.

Margit Miller - Music Director - Choir Director - Organist. 850-524-0176

### **ALL SAINTS' YOGA**

Take time out of the busy Christmas season for an hour's worth of mindfulness and a good stretch! Bring a yoga mat and a water bottle and wear comfortable clothing. Mondays at 5:00 p.m. (note time change) and Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. Madeline Rollins

## **CHRISTMAS PAGEANT**

The Christmas Pageant will take place, as always, at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, December 24th, Christmas Eve. Every All Saints' child is invited to participate. **Pageant practice and costume fitting will take place immediately following Lessons & Carols on Sunday, December 23.** All pageant participants should come dressed for the pageant on Christmas Eve and meet in the church.

## **ALL SAINTS' ANGEL TREE**

Advent season is upon us, so we urge those who have not purchased an angel ornament to do so and bring it to the church office so it can be hung on the tree.

Please place a card on each ornament stating who gave it and the person's name in whose memory or in thanksgiving for whom it is given. We will keep those in a special memorial book to be placed in the vestibule each year.

## **OFFICE CLOSING**

The office will be closed in observance of Christmas on Tuesday, December 25 and again in Observance of New Year's on Tuesday, January 1.

## **ALTAR GUILD**

Advent is here! The liturgical color for Advent, the first season in our church year, is blue, which symbolizes hope. Blue can also symbolize truth and eternity. On Christmas we will change to white, which symbolizes purity, gladness, light, and the joy of Christ. Meanwhile, we give a special thanks to Jinanne and Bob Parrish for providing the Advent wreath for the chapel.

## **ALL SAINTS AUCTION**

**Mark your calendar, the All Saints' Episcopal Church Auction will be on Tuesday, March 5, 2019.** This year, we are asking for everyone to volunteer on a committee. There are five committees: set up/decorations, live auction items, silent auction items, food and drinks, and checkout. A description of each committee is listed below. You can sign up for as many committee as you like! Call or email Libby to let her know what committee you would like to join.

Set up/Decorations – This committee will meet a month before the auction to plan table decorations and Parish Hall Decorations. We have a lot of supplies and decorations left over from past auctions that can be used along with black tablecloths and napkins. Fun, new items can be ordered as well. The week before the auction, this committee will start transforming the Parish hall to a Mardi Gras theme party.

Live Auction committee – This very important committee will come up with fun live auction items, trips, and experiences. They will need to call people for donations and gather all information to write a brief description to be used for the catalog.

Silent Auction Committee – This committee will organize the silent auction items that are donated to the church. They may also ask some community shops and restaurants for donations.

Food/Drink – What is an auction without fabulous Cajun food and drinks!! If you help in this committee you are responsible for creating a menu, finding a caterer, and creating a specialty drink for the night along with picking up beer and wine.

Check out - The night of the auction this committee will check people in at the door, hand them a paddle, and at the end of the night help with check out and payment.

## **POINSETTIAS**

Those of you who would like to give (memorial or thanksgiving) poinsettias or wreaths, please call the church office no later than Friday, December 11. The cost for each plant is \$18.50 and \$75 for a wreath.

## **ECW NEWS**

The ECW had its first meeting yesterday (November 29) at Blue Bear Farm. What a beautiful setting! Dawna Bicknell discussed the origins of the farm and the goals that she and Mike have for its continuance. All had a wonderful time. Sincere thanks to Dawna and Mike for hosting this.

December is busy so there is no scheduled meeting on the calendar, but January 10 at lunchtime will be a real treat! Dina Sinclair, another new member of All Saints', is hosting us at her home where we will all be treated to Russian Christmas music, traditions that are dear to her heart, and some sumptuous recipes that are served during the Christmas and Epiphany seasons. I hope you will join us and look out for the paperless post invitation.

Merry Christmas!

Cynthia

## **GREENING OF THE CHURCH**

*Greening the Church* will immediately follow Lessons and Carols on Sunday, December 23. A light lunch will be served. This event is a not-to-be-missed fun for the whole family All Saints' tradition. Many hands make light work!

**TRANSITIONS:**

**Happy birthday in December to:**

Marley Davis	12-8-99
Bryce Cornell Rieck	12-12-07
Aleks Arwood	12-19-02
Madison Elizabeth Cook	12-25-99

**Happy birthday in January to:**

Wyatt Jackson Davis	1-8-08
Campbell Avery Smith, Jr.	1-17-10
Curry Brinson	1-18-00
Will Carico	1-18-98

**From the Parish Register**

Requiescat in Pace:

*Deacon Louise Muenz  
departed this life on November 15, 2018.  
May her soul, and the souls of all the faithful departed  
through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen*

*There will be a Memorial Service for her at All Saints'  
at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, December 21st.*

## USHER SCHEDULE

Sunday, December 2 First Advent	Holy Communion Paul Gurley John Hand	10:30 a.m.
Sunday, December 9 Second Advent	Morning Prayer Chip Hancock Brad Jackson	10:30 a.m.
Sunday, December 16 Third Advent	Holy Communion Bob Jackson Buck Mitchell	10:30 a.m.
Sunday, December 23 Fourth Advent Lessons and Carols	Holy Communion Vann Middleton David Middleton	10:30 a.m.
Monday, December 24 Christmas Eve Fourth Advent Pageant	Evensong Bernie Lanigan Ed Davis	5:30 p.m.
Monday, December 24	Midnight Service Charles Olson Al Park	11:00 p.m.
Tuesday, December 25 Christmas Day	Holy Communion Clayton Penhallegon Raleigh Rollins	10:30 a.m.
Sunday, December 30 The First Sunday after Christmas	Morning Prayer Mike Shea Will Sheftall	10:30 a.m.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

**DECEMBER**

Sunday	December 2	Advent I – Parish Covered Dish followed by Advent & Wreath Making
Wednesday	December 5	<i>Body &amp; Soul</i> St. David Choir Rehearsal
Sunday	December 9	Advent II
Wednesday	December 12	Book Club St. David Choir Rehearsal
Sunday	December 16	Advent III
Wednesday	December 19	St. David Choir Rehearsal
Sunday	December 23	Lessons and Carols Pageant Rehearsal Greening of the Church No Evening Service
Monday	December 24	Christmas Eve Evensong/Pageant Midnight Mass
Tuesday	December 25	Christmas – Holy Communion No Evening Service
Wednesday	December 26	No St. David Choir Rehearsal
Sunday	December 30	Morning Prayer/No Evening Service