

Good
SHEPHERD
News

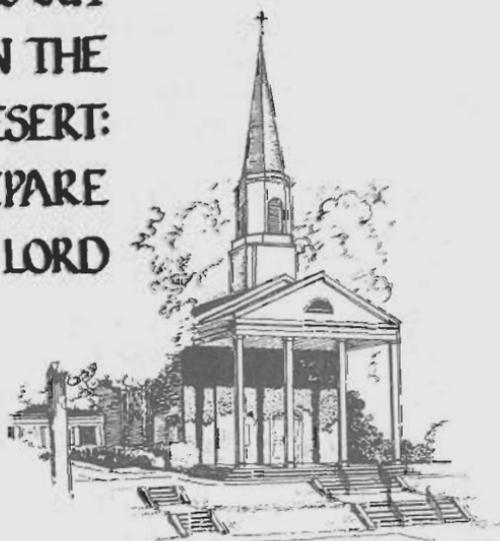
Church of the Good Shepherd, Athens, Ohio

December

2006



THE VOICE
OF ONE WHO
CRIES OUT
IN THE
DESERT:
PREPARE
THE WAY OF THE LORD



The Episcopal Church on the Campus of Ohio University
Since 1875 - Established 1907 - Parish 1958

Dearly beloved,

Soon, we will enter Advent together. Advent is a dry, dark, and cold season of the Spirit. Like Lent, it has traditionally been a penitential season and a season of preparation, but Advent is different from Lent. In Advent, the accent is on hope and expectation. God is about to do something new, and, once it happens, we can never be the same.

On the four Sundays of Advent, the children of our parish will be taking on a new part in the liturgy. At the offertory, they will bring up some straw and place it in a manger to prepare for the baby Jesus. (At the early service on Christmas Eve, they will place the baby in the manger.) May this be to us, as it will be for them, a sign of our community's preparation for the coming of God's holy Child. It would be helpful if we could think of similar ways to mark the themes of waiting and preparation in our own homes, lest Advent be overwhelmed by Christmas. The two seasons belong together. Four weeks of preparation lead to twelve days of joyful fulfillment. Even our preparations may be suffused with joy. Advent is an indispensable season of preparation for the Messiah, who fulfills the longing of every heart. As a favorite Christmas carol has it, "let every heart prepare him room."

But Jesus does not merely fulfill the desires of our hearts. He is also the "rod of Jesse," "the desire of the nations," and the "Prince of Peace." The Child we await changes the world and the course of history.

As we journey toward Bethlehem together, we do well to remember that Bethlehem means "house of bread." What we will find at the end of our Advent journey is the living Bread, who gives life to the world. He is the same Bread, who comes to us week by week and day by day in the Eucharist. Even at the darkest moments of our life's journey, we can find this Bread, who was anticipated in salvation history by the manna with which God fed the children of Israel in the desert.

In the dry, dark, and cold seasons of the Spirit, God sometimes seems absent, even painfully so. For many of us, the holidays can be a very difficult time, as we remember absent loved ones and unfulfilled hopes and dreams. For Christians, even the apparent absences of God can become paradoxical signs of the loving Presence who will not let us go. In Advent, as in Lent, we can rediscover the desert experience of the ancient mothers and fathers of the monastic tradition. The desert is a lonely place and a place of temptation, but it is also the site of the

primitive encounter with God. Our God is a God who brings us “out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.”

Ruminating on another journey toward Bethlehem, T. S. Eliot speaks in the voice of one of the Three Kings:

All this was a long time ago, I remember,
And I would do it again, but set down
This set down
This: were we led all that way for
Birth or Death? There was a Birth, certainly,
We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and death,
But had thought they were different; this Birth was
Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.
We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,
With an alien people clutching their gods.
I should be glad of another death.

As we make our Advent pilgrimage this year, may we find ourselves no longer at ease with the ways things are and with the ways (so we’ve been told) they must be. May we set aside false gods and their empty promises and embrace instead the Bread of Life. May we discover and rediscover our Savior, who shepherds us through the wilderness, out of death into life.

The living God is about to do something wonderful. Let every heart make room.

In the hope and joy of Jesus,

Bill

A Note About Pastoral Care

For many of us, the holidays bring up pastoral concerns. I am available for any needs you may have, even those seem “minor.” If it is bothering you, it is not minor. If you are in need of pastoral care at any time of year, please call the Church office at 593-6877 to make an appointment. In emergencies I can be reached at home (592-1436) or on my cell phone (590-7106). Anyone who is not able to attend services on Christmas Eve may call the parish office to arrange for a visit with home communion. I regularly visit those who are shut in, and this is an important part of the ministry of a parish priest.

*Festival
of
Advent
Lessons & Music*

Sunday, December 3rd, 2006

4:00 p.m.

*Church of the Good Shepherd
64 University Terrace, Athens*

a free will offering to benefit the June Black Music Fund

*Reception and Mini-Holiday House following
Child-care provided*

Sunday, December 24th /Christmas Eve services– The Fourth Sunday of Advent Holy Eucharist Rite II will be held at 10:30 a.m. in the Nave. At 4:00 p.m. an Inter-generational Festival Nativity Eucharist will be held in the Nave. Prelude Music will begin at 10:00 p.m. in the Nave with the Festival Nativity Eucharist beginning at 10:30 p.m.

Wednesday, December 27th – Fr Carroll will preside at a Midweek Eucharist at 5:30 p.m. in the Nave

Sunday, December 31st – Fr Carroll will preach and preside at a Holy Eucharist Rite I at 8:00 a.m. and a Holy Eucharist Rite II at 10:30 a.m.

Please note the following changes

Holy Eucharist Rite I at 8:00 a.m. will not be held on Sunday, December 24th.

Adult Education and Godly Play Sunday School will not be held December 24th and 31st.

Sunday at 5:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist will not be held the month of December.

Community Seasonal Events

The Heart of Christmas will be presented by the Coolville Community Choir on Thursday, December 7th, at 7:00 p.m. at the Christ Community Wesleyan Church, State Route 50, Albany. The public is welcome to attend.

Messiah Community Sing-a-Long will be held Friday, December 8th, at 8:00 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church, 2 South College Street, Athens. The piece will be conducted by Dr. Peter Jarjisian and area guest conductors. Bring your own score or borrow one that evening. Free and open to all.

A Program of Advent and Christmas Music will be held Friday, December 15th, at 7:00 p.m. at the Christ Lutheran Church, 69 Mill Street, Athens. This is an annual event sponsored by the Southeastern Ohio Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. Many local organists will have the pleasure of performing on the new Schantz pipe organ. The bell choir from First United Methodist Church is scheduled to play. All are welcome to this musical celebration.

December Events at Good Shepherd

					1	2 10:00 am – CR
3 8:00 am – HE I 9:00 am – Ad Ed 10:15 am – SS 10:30 am – HE II 4:00 pm – Advent Festival	4 11:30 am – Bible Study 7:00 pm – Boy Scout Meeting	5 7:30 pm – Alanon 8:00 pm – AA	6 noon – Free Lunch 5:30 pm – MW 7:00 pm – CR	7 7:30 pm – Alanon	8 5:30 pm – Ultreya Potluck & Meeting	9
10 8:00 am – HE I 9:00 am – Ad Ed 10:15 am – SS 10:30 am – HE II 1:30 pm – YG 2:00 pm - LI	11 7:00 pm – Boy Scout Meeting	12 7:00 pm – CR 7:30 pm – Alanon 8:00 pm – AA	13 noon – Free Lunch 5:30 pm – MW	14 7:30 pm – Alanon	15	16
17 8:00 am – HE I 9:00 am – Ad Ed 10:15 am – SS 10:30 am – HE II 3:00 pm – YG	18 11:30 am – Bible Study 7:00 pm – Boy Scout Meeting	19 7:30 pm – Alanon 8:00 pm – AA	20 noon – Free Lunch 5:30 pm – MW 7:00 pm – CR	21 7:00 pm – Vestry Meeting 7:30 pm – Alanon	22	23
24 10:30 am – HE II 2:00 pm – LI 4:00 pm – HE II 10:00 pm - Prelude Music Begins 10:30 pm – HE II	25 Parish Office Closed	26 7:30 pm – Alanon 8:00 pm – AA	27 noon – Free Lunch 5:30 pm – MW	28 7:30 pm – Alanon	29	30 3:00 pm – YG
31 8:00 am – HE I 10:30 am – HE II						

Key Guide:

HE I – Holy Eucharist Rite I
LI – Lindley Inn Eucharist

HE II – Holy Eucharist Rite II
SS – Sunday School

MW – Midweek Eucharist
CR – Choir Rehearsal

YG – Youth Group Meeting
Ad Ed – Adult Education

December Birthdays & Anniversaries

					1 Lucille Jennings	2
3	4	5	6	7	8 Lynn Graham Charles Seymour	9
10	11 Chris Seymour	12 Betsy Irwin Jim Karageorge	13 Jane Ergood	14	15	16
17 Levi Lackey	18 Alex Buckley Anthony DeBerardinis	19 Marsha Dutton	20	21 Don Randolph	22 David & Marti Black	23 Joanne Larson
24 Karen Eveans- Romaine Jim Mowery Al Topping Jim & Lynn Graham Mowery	25 Shawn Parson	26	27 Kathy Auflick Karen Bump Sheppard & Peggy Black	28	29 Harold & Jane Lou Smith	30 Al & Margaret Topping
31						