

THE PROPHET

ADVENT/CHRISTMAS/EPIPHANY 2012 - 2013

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PARISH OF CHRIST CHURCH

From the Interim Rector...

As I write to you, I am overlooking the Sydney Harbor from my hotel room, having been in Australia for over a week, seen my first solar eclipse, experienced rain forests, (by walking in them, riding over them in a gondola and skirting them in a small gauge railroad along the side of a cliff), snorkeled in the Great Barrier Reef, and explored the northern Victoria area with dear friends from seminary. This is an adventure I never expected I would have, although I hoped I would. Now that it is here, I am very grateful for it and am relishing it.

Even as I am delighting in every moment and day here, I am thinking forward, thinking about you, about our time together and how we might prepare Christ Church for a new chapter in its life. This is the third time I have served a congregation for a short time or an "interim period" and have come to think of such ministry as a sort of "John the Baptist" experience. I will be celebrating and remembering with you the wonderful things about Christ Church past, but will also be pointing toward what is coming, what is new, and what is possible for the future. When I mentioned this to the Vestry, Jeff Gill was quick to point out that I also need to remind folks that while I am pointing to what's coming, your next rector, she or he will NOT be Jesus! Jesus is, of course, already here.

Even so, how appropriate that we begin our time together during Advent! I think of Advent as a time of new beginnings, hope, and looking forward. It is also a time when we dare to dream dreams we know will come true, but likely not in the way we expect. The people of first century Palestine expected the Messiah and they knew that Messiah would come, but they didn't expect a baby in a manger. I am not sure John even expected his cousin was the Messiah as they were growing up.

But Advent is a time to dream dreams about how to fully become the people God is calling us to be. It is a time to be open to possibilities we never expected. It is a time to let

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Monday, December 24

Christmas Eve

4 p.m.

Family Holy Eucharist
with Pageant

7:30 p.m. & 10 p.m.

Festival Holy Eucharist

Tuesday, December 25

Christmas

10 a.m.

Holy Eucharist

Sunday, December 30

First Sunday after Christmas

10 a.m.

Christmas Lessons & Carols &
Holy Eucharist

our faith take us to where God is calling us, without telling God where we want to go and what our expectations of God are! Imagine if John had been able to only see Jesus as his cousin! Imagine if Mary and Joseph had not been willing to hear God's desire for their son and their role in raising him.

As we together explore how Christ Church might be in the future and who might be the right person to call as the Rector going forward, the kinds of questions we need to ask ourselves and each other do not have to do with "how are our needs best served?" or "what traits do we want in a rector?" or even "who will raise the most money so we can keep everything we already have!"

No! The kinds of questions that should undergird the search and the call of a new rector are far more "Advent" in nature than these pragmatic and slightly self-serving ones. Advent questions have no pat answer and look beyond "self" to servanthood and ministry. Advent questions we might ask are: "Who will continuously keep us seeking God's will? Who will encourage us to serve God individually and as a community? Who will dream dreams with the Holy Spirit and dare us, cajole us and encourage us to bring

them into fruition? Who will help us find our deepest servant selves? Who will help us make Christ known to those we have not even met yet?"

This transition time in the life of Christ Church is a time pregnant with possibility. Anything is possible if it is that which God wills. We are reminded in Advent that when Mary was pregnant with the Living God, she didn't know really what that would mean to the world or even to her as she felt life grow within her. It will be good for us as we travel this road together to carry that thought of pregnant possibilities with us. We all have ideas about what it means to call a new rector and what might be the best for Christ Church or what is most important from our point of view, but we will need to listen to each other, work together and most importantly pray constantly if we are to be able to let go of what we think we want, and be open to and able to see and embrace what God intends and wants for us.

Just as Australia has been an adventure I never expected, being among you, a parish I have long watched and admired from afar, is not what I expected. But it is absolutely a great delight that my husband Ernie and I are looking forward to. It is where you and God have called me to be for an interim time! With God's help, we will live into a new dream, and Christ Church will continue to be a place of hope, community and faith where Christ is made visible in ever new and changing ways for generations to come.

Gale+

It's Christmas Until It's Epiphany

The Three Kings will bring their presents and present them to the Christ Child on the Feast of the Epiphany - which we will mark with our annual burning of the greens, king's cake, and a rousing collection of Barbeque recipes and potluck favorites! 5 p.m. in the Parish Hall, get ready to wassail! If you would like to bring something to share OR if you would like to be one of our Barbeque masters (and have a favorite recipe!), please email Rev. Kit.

Blue Christmas Service, our *Come As You Are* offering for December

Join us for our Come As You Are service on Sunday, December 16th at 5 p.m. - this month, we will offer a Blue Christmas service at Christ Church in collaboration with St. Paul's in North Andover. A Blue Christmas service honors that the holiday season is not always easy or always joyful for many - but we are reminded in the readings, meditations and Eucharist that Christ came into a broken world, not erasing the pain of our wounds, but offering love, healing and compassion instead. Come As You Are, bring whatever weighs on you, or come to escape the 'jolly' of the season for a time of deep, confounding joy.

J2A Babysitting Day

Need a little time off to get a few errands, chores or presents wrapped? Or just to curl up into a fetal position and close your eyes before the holidays begin? Drop the kids off at the J2A's Christmas Babysitting Day Saturday, December 15th from 1-5 p.m.! Children 3-12 years old are welcome to join other kids for an afternoon of games, crafts, story time and maybe even a dance party! Cost: \$7/per hour, per child; \$12/ per hour/ per two children (same family); \$15/ per hour/ per three children (same family). RSVP to Connie Molinaro by Thursday, December 13th molinaroconnie@gmail.com. See you there!

We Want You in our New Parish Directory!

It's been three years since we've published our last parish directory, and many e-mail addresses and phone numbers have changed. So we've set up the dates of December 6, 7, 8, 27 and January 8 & 9 (added date) as portrait-taking dates with Lifetouch (the company that bought Olan Mills). We want 100% participation because it helps us all know each other better, and it's more fun if everyone's picture is in it! You can sign up for your portrait session by going to our website, www.christchurchandover.org and clicking on the button on the right side, or clicking on the link in the eProphet. You can also sign up at Coffee Hour, or you can call Mary Ann Lennon at the Glebe House at 978-475-0529 Tues.-Thurs. 9-1 and she can sign you up online if you don't use a computer. You do not need to buy any photographs to be in the directory; in fact, you get a free directory and a free 8x10 portrait!

Dear friends,

Words cannot express what I feel as Carolyn and I make our way from Andover to Seattle. The two final services were occasions of both great joy and also some real sadness at leaving a place we love. But you more than made up for the sadness we feel with your expressions of love and support and gratitude. The memory book is something I will treasure the rest of my life! And the many other cards and letters and notes that have come will feed our souls for a long time. I'm only sorry that I may not be able to respond to each and every one of you personally, but do know of my love and my deep gratitude for all you mean to me and to Carolyn. Thank you so much also for the very generous purse you gave to Carolyn and me. We sincerely appreciate it as yet one more token of your loving care for us over the past ten years.

Although I managed to stay composed during the services on the 18th and 28th, I know the tears will flow - perhaps even today as I leave Andover for the last time and get on a plane to Seattle. We wish you the very best in this next stage of life at Christ Church and will be praying for you as the search for a new rector gets underway. It has been a wonderful privilege to be part of the life of this wonderful parish. God bless you all!

Love, Jeff and Carolyn

Supporting Family & Friends with the Challenges of Serious Illness

Ned Rimer, husband of former Assistant for Christian Formation Katie Pakos Rimer, will be offering this free three-part seminar on **Saturdays, February 2, 9 and 16**, from 9:00 a.m. - 12 noon (a light breakfast will be offered). The series prepares family, friends, co-workers, neighbors, and community members to support families that are caring for a parent or other relative with chronic or life-threatening illness. **Registration is required, and the deadline is January 21st.** Please email Rev. Kit or call the Office for Registration Information.

Advent Quiet Day

Take a time out from the hubbub of the never-ending holiday season and reflect on the meaning of Advent for a morning—the joyful anticipation of the Incarnation! Saturday, **December 15th** from 9 a.m.-12 noon in the North Chapel, simple lunch to follow. Meditations, time for silence and quiet, finished with noonday prayer and lunch to chat with each other! Questions? Please email Rev. Kit!

Special Winter Music Events

Sunday, January 20, 2013 at 4:00 p.m.

Concert by Convivium Musicum

Boston-based Renaissance Choir of 20 singers

Michael Barrett, Conductor

Early Music & Works by Johannes Brahms

Saturday, January 26, 2013 at 7:00 p.m.

Brass & Organ Concert

James Thompson & Richard Given, Trumpets

Kevin Owen, French Horn

Philip Swanson &

Gabe Langfur, Trombones

Barbara Bruns, Organ

Works by Gabrieli, Strauss, Campra,

Humperdinck, Rimsky-Korsakov,

Hovhanness & Gigout

Sunday, February 10, 2013 at 4:00 p.m.

Three Choirs Festival at

All Saints Church, Chelmsford

The combined youth choirs of

Christ Church, Andover,

All Saints Church, Chelmsford &

Grace Church fifth annual choir festival.

Special anthems include a newly commissioned setting of Psalm 23 by

Louise Munding.

Music under the direction of

Maggie Marshall & Barbara Bruns.

Adult Baptism, Confirmation and Reception Class!

If you are over the age of 18, and would like to be Baptized or Confirmed in the Episcopal Church, or if you have been baptized and confirmed elsewhere and would like to be Received into the Episcopal Church, please be in touch with Rev. Kit by JANUARY 15th, 2013. We will offer this class in the winter, with adult baptisms at the Easter Vigil, and Confirmations and Receptions with our diocesan bishops in the spring. Class times will be arranged once we have a roster! Questions? Please be in touch with Rev. Kit or Rev. Gale!

Come As You Are

“We all come with different personal feelings to the Christmas festival. One comes with pure joy as he looks forward to this day of rejoicing, of friendships renewed, and of love... Others look for a moment of peace under the Christmas tree, peace from the pressures of daily work... Others again approach Christmas with great apprehension. It will be no festival of joy to them. Personal sorrow is painful especially on this day for those whose loneliness deepened at Christmastime....And despite it all, Christmas comes. Whether we wish it or not, whether we are sure or not, we must hear the words once again: Christ the Savior is here! The world that Christ comes to save if our fallen and lost world. None other.”

These words, preached by Dietrich Bonhoeffer in 1930, still ring true today. Regardless of what we are told to feel around Advent and Christmastime, our responses can be vast. But whether you feel pure joy or pure dread as the holidays approach, or something in the middle of that spectrum, remember this: Christ came as an unexpected guest into this broken world, offering healing, peace and hope. He did not deny the hurt, but looked deeply into it to find the life therein. This season, we will offer many ways to celebrate and honor this time—joyful wrapping and crafts, Christmas pageant rehearsals, and for the first time, a Blue Christmas service as our Come As You Are offering on Sunday, December 16th at 5 p.m., in conjunction with St. Paul’s in North Andover. That service is an opportunity to not hide behind tinsel, but to quietly listen to the true story of the Incarnation.

As the shepherds trusted in that the star in the sky would herald something new, let us join them in this journey of Advent and Christmas. Let us shift our gaze to the Christ child—the most unexpected God and savior we could have imagined. And in our joy, in our grief, and all in that is in between, come, let us adore him.

Blessings, Kit+

Now Enrolling for September 2013

Enrollment for the 2013-14 school year is underway! Christ Church Children’s Center is now accepting application forms from currently enrolled students, their siblings, and church members. Pledging church members receive preference in enrollment in all of our programs! For more information or to schedule a tour, please call us at 978-475-4037 or email Christy Harvey at charvey@christchurchandover.org

An Update on our Finances

I am pleased to report that 2012 is expected to end right on budget. As you may recall, in March, I presented a revised budget at a Special All-Parish Meeting where we made the following cuts:

- ★ Diverted \$20K of Thrift Shop funds from building improvements to the Operating budget
- ★ Reduced our reserve for long-term building repairs from \$30K to \$20K.
- ★ Reduced the Bell Tower Loan Principal and Interest from \$20K to \$14K
- ★ This still left us with a shortfall of \$70K. To stave off impending staff cuts, our parishioners more than closed the gap through increased pledges of \$37K, and generous one-time gifts of \$39K.

The preliminary 2013 budget excludes significant one-time gifts, restores expected Thrift Shop funds for building improvements, and restores the long-term building repair line item to the \$30K. Adjusting for these items requires \$69K in new and increased pledges. 2012 was the third year in a row where the budget was balanced through one-time gifts of ~\$30K, and we cannot continue to expect annual gifts of this size.

In 2013, we have found increased revenue sources through higher rent income at Park Street and booth rentals at Andover Crafts in the Park, but these are offset by increased Salary and Benefits (no raises for the 3rd year) and reduced income at Christ Church Children’s Center.

Overall, we are forecasting a need for an addition of \$67K in pledging income from what was pledged in 2012. I am pleased to report that pledging income for 2013 is coming in at an average increase of 6% from what was pledged in 2012, but even if this continued it would be less than half of what is needed to bridge the gap. We need all pledges and one-time gifts received soon, so the Vestry has time to make the necessary adjustments and approve a balanced budget by early January for the Annual Meeting.

My term as treasurer will be ending in January and I’m looking for two new co-treasurers. Please reach out to me directly if interested and I can provide details about the position.

Bill Hastings, Treasurer

Back by Popular Demand! Parent Toddler Playtime begins in January!

Do you want to have fun with your toddler without the mess? Christ Church Children’s Center offers a program for toddlers and their parents. Come join us for a session of play where you will meet other parents and spend quality time with your own child. We will provide the space, activities, and the snack. You just arrive with your child and experience how much fun it is to play together. Our winter session of Parent Toddler Playtime will meet on Monday mornings from 9:30 to 10:45 a.m. from January 28 through March 18, 2013. For more information, give us a call or log onto our website at www.cccandover.org.

Yoga at Christ Church

Yoga is coming to Christ Church on the first Sunday of the month from February until May. It is open to the public and community. All ages and abilities are encouraged to attend.

Instructors: Cheryl Cronin, Jackie Salvesen
Donations will be accepted for Christ Church ministries.

Senior Warden’s Message

As soon as we learned of Jeff’s new call to Trinity Parish in Seattle, the Diocese suggested I print the “PARISH TRANSITION PROCESS”. This 52-page document got us prepared to search for an Interim Priest and discuss the suggested salary and benefits for the position. The Diocese suggested Gale Davis and I promptly had lunch with her and introduced her to the staff and Vestry. The start date was December 2, the first week in Advent. She will serve the parish until a new Rector has been accepted by the Vestry. The next meeting was with a consultant from the Diocese to review our financials to prepare for the next rector (a year away). We passed. The Wardens meet with our appointed Search Committee consultant, Karen Montagno. She will assist the Search Committee when they are commissioned and begin their work. The Staff, clergy and the Wardens spent much time on planning for Jeff’s departure. The Vestry now turns its attention to the 2013 budget, appointing the Search Committee members, and providing leadership for the parish until a new Rector is installed.

The Prophet
The Parish of Christ Church
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The Parish of Christ Church

www.christchurchandover.org

Christ Church Staff

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Matt Tringali & Emily McDowell, Sunday Sextons
Catherine Rosen, Head Verger

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Christ Church Children's Center 978-475-4037
Christ Church - 25 Central Street, Andover, MA 01810
Website Address - www.christchurchandover.org

Dates to Remember

December 12, 7 PM
Wrapping & Hot Cocoa

December 15, 9 AM—1 PM
Advent Quiet Day
1-6 PM
Babysitting

December 16, 5 PM
Come As You Are - Blue Christmas

Christmas Eve
4, 7:30, 10 PM
Christmas
10 AM

January 5, 5 PM
Epiphany Barbeque & Burning of the Christmas Greens

January 20, 4 PM
Convivium Musicum

January 26, 7 PM
Brass & Organ Concert

January 27, 11:30 AM
177th Annual Meeting

Ash Wednesday - February 13
Holy Eucharist & Imposition of Ashes
7 AM, 12 PM, 7:30 PM

February 16
Lenten Quiet Day

February 17, 4:30
Organ Recital, Carol Doran
5:00 PM
Evensong