

The Episcopal Church of the Advent

Chronicle

Building a Strong Christian Family

Letter from the Rector—The Rev. David Thomas



Dear Friends:

What does it mean to belong to a family? In some cases, just the word "*family*" can illicit negative feelings. How sad - but it is a reality that some people were born into dysfunctional families and even some that are harmful and dangerous. Fortunately, for the majority of us, family is a good word with positive implications.

Whether the name generates warm feelings or not, we are also members of the Advent Church family. "***Building a Strong Christian Family***" is the theme for our church. Let me explain how a positive Christian family functions. A little while ago, I shared the news with all of you that my daughter was pregnant with complications. Many of you offered to watch her 15 month daughter. People have also inquired and have put her name on their prayer list. The response of concern and willingness to help is what makes a church family vital and important. Our deacon, Nancy, is living through her mother's surgery and need for her parents to relocate to an assisted living complex in Albany, NY. I know that many of you are keeping her and her family in your prayers and are offering what help you can to Nancy. When any of you are ill we have a group of parishioners who bring you food and are available to assist in whatever way is possible. Being present for each other during the storms in life as well as when the sun is shining brightly on us - is what family means. Family means accepting each other and being there for each other even when we may be quite different. It is accepting each person as a child of God.

Christmas is about families. Joseph and Mary traveled to a barn and gave birth to Jesus, and as a family, survived persecutions and death threats. The Holy Family and their commitment to each other is our example of Christian commitment to each other. May we all celebrate the birth of our Lord and give thanks that we are a part of a loving and caring family called Advent.

A Blessed Christmas to all.

The Rev. David Thomas

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Wesołych Świąt Bożego Narodzenia

Annual Chili Dinner – December 7th



Church of the Advent's Annual Chili Dinner is December 7, 2008. We will dine at 5:00p.m.

Mark your Calendars, and start rinsing your beans, browning your beef, roasting your chilies! All are invited and encouraged to participate in the chili cook-off, the corn bread bake off, and the best salad spin off.

We will be taking reservations beginning November 16th. Please plan to attend! This is a great event to have some fun, meet new friends, catch up with those who attend different services, and of course witness Fr. Dave's true talent of auctioneering! AND, you get to eat the best darn chili in town!

Ladies and Gentlemen this is an event not to be missed!

Consecration Sunday Results

Many thanks to everyone who completed an estimate-of-giving card as part of our November stewardship program. On Consecration Sunday, November 9, **158 member families** did just that! If you were not present and have yet to return the card mailed to you, please do so as soon as possible. While we do not prepare our budget prior to the stewardship request, without your estimate-of-giving card we are unable to determine how our resources match up to our needs. Therefore, if you haven't completed a card in years past, please reconsider and understand how it impacts our ability to minister. Currently, Advent serves over 450 families. If everyone would complete a card it would SIGNIFICANTLY enable us to increase our reach and impact.

As you know, this years Stewardship Commission chose to take a spiritual approach to giving and asked us to prayerfully consider what God is calling us to give. With this in mind, we were reminded that all our blessings come from God and we should pay God first with a cheerful heart. As you prepare to fulfill your commitment, we encourage you to consider using the convenient electronic funds transfer method. Forms are available from the church office.

Youth Schedule

Youth December Schedule

On Sunday mornings during advent all youth attend the intergenerational events at 10am in Parish Hall. Sit with your family or with other youth; just attend!

Dec. 7 - 5pm attend all church **Chili Supper**

Dec. 13 (Saturday) 10:00am -2:00pm *Angel Tree Party!*

Dec.14 - 3-7pm *Taking Advent to the Mall* (mall trip to KOP)

Dec. 21 - 6pm *Caroling at Pocopson Home*

Dec. 28 – *Christmas Break; No YG*

(Meet at church for all events; transportation provided to off-site events. All participants need current permission forms to participate!)



Look for Advent devotions...in either calendar to color or in book form. Your choice! They will be available in the Youth Room starting November 23rd.

THANK YOU from Wilson Somers, Music Director

Thanks to all who made our first Jazz Vespers of 2008-09 a success. We collected \$1,000 in free will offering for the Kennett Food Cupboard. Special thanks to the Youth Choir parents for their 'extra' duty of driving each week and to Ed Kirkpatrick for his 'inspired' tenor saxophone performance. Thanks to Doug Keller for the his video support.

I hope to see more of you on January 25, 2009 at 4 pm. For our next Jazz Vespers honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and featuring the music of Duke Ellington and Clifford Brown. This will also benefit the Kennett Food Cupboard.

Adult Spirituality Commission

Notes from the Adult Spirituality commission:

How do you plan to celebrate the season of Advent? How do you prepare yourself? Your family? Are you in the Spirit? Or, are you in the stores? This year let your spirit soar!

Resolutions and moving your spirit forward:

Because the **Women's Breakfast** and the **Men's Breakfast** were instant successes, we are going to do it again! The men will gather on January 17th in the Parish Hall, the topic will be Men's Health issues. The women will gather on January 31st. We will be discussing the book *The Shack* by WM. Paul Young. Both "parties" will begin at 8:30 and concluded by 10:00 a.m. More details to come, read your bulletin!

Wishing you all a very merry Christmas, and an Advent season that will light and warm your soul all through the new year!

Fill the Bus! Kennett Food Cupboard Collection A Huge Success!

Fill The Bus is a Penn State Tradition where 50,000 students fill 500 buses with donations for various charities. The Advent Outreach Committee decided to try it for ourselves. Despite a poor economy Advent Parishioners were generous enough to fill our Church of the Advent Bus to the roof on a cold rainy Saturday. Early on we tried to keep the aisle of the bus free so we could off load the bus from the back but by noon we gave up on that and just filled every nook and cranny we could. One person came and told us that when she was in line at Big Lots she was talking to other people in the line with her. Two women said that sounded like a great idea and sure enough later in the afternoon two women showed up with Big Lots bags. We also had several people who brought the list printed in the Bulletin having purchased one of everything on the list! The food bank in Kennett was truly appreciative of all that Church of the Advent provided. We are truly blessed by the act of giving.



Christmas at Advent--Audio Recorded to CD for Sick and Shut-ins



Parishioners--If you, or someone you know is unable to attend Christmas Services and would like a CD, please contact Helen Bilinski at 610-347-0401 or bilinski2@aol.com. We will be sure to get a copy out. Missed a Sunday? You can also listen to past sermons by accessing our website!

“Mama Says...” a column by the Director of Youth Ministry, Jan Schroeder,
known to the God Squad as “Mama J’.

LIVING FROM THE INSIDE OUT~

Think Sound of Music. Recall the tune to “My Favorite Things” in your mind. Now read! **Boys in black dresses with gray satin sashes; *sparkles that stuck to our nose and eyelashes; * big hats with flowers and serapes as wings; *these were the God Squad’s most favorite things!* We sat in a circle and as music played we had passed around bags of clothing from the rummage sale. When the music stopped – whoever was holding a bag had to put on an item of clothing. The theme was “Living from the Inside Out”. At one time or another we all get the urge to change something about ourselves. It might be getting a new hairstyle, buying some new clothes, working out or losing weight. Our culture tells us we need to look certain ways through advertising, magazine articles, TV shows or movies. So we identify our flaws and seek external changes thinking that will make us feel better. We do all we can to look good, hiding our fears about failure or what other people think of us.

But being Christian isn’t about external changes or impressing others. 2 Corinthians 5:17 says “So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation; everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!” When we let God in to our lives, we change from the inside out. We don’t work on impressing **God** with our good behavior; we let **God** work on **us**. We ask God to dwell in our hearts and change us to reflect the love we know God has for us. When we turn our lives over to God our old ways of thinking pass away and we become new. So when the game ended and the music was turned off, there we sat with all these layers of clothes on. There really was a boy in a black dress with a gray satin sash. Glitter from it had stuck to everything. And the hat with flowers and serape? Yup - there and being worn. And we named all the ways we live from the outside while we pulled the “dress-up” clothes off layer by layer. We were left with who we are as Christians. It is not always easy to be who we are; to take unpopular stands with friends; to treat people not *how we are treated but as we want to be treated*; to own up to our failings and mistakes. But there we were anyway. A bunch of teen believers with a few adults thrown in; believers who willingly said “yes” to God and surrendered their old ways; believers who belong to God and are living from the inside out! (Theme and game from Combos for Youth Groups, 2006 Abington Press)

Parish Register

Baptisms:

Addison Woelfel
Granddaughter of Tom & Bobbie Curry
Daughter of Alyssa Curry Woelfel & Eric
Woelfel



Deaths:

Ruth Rundle	9/23/08
John Schwartz	10/20/08
Margaret Evans	10/29/08

Marriages:

Andrea Talley & Joel Frederick	10/18/08
Melissa (Misty) Carter & Jason Schlitzer	10/25/08

Family Fun Night Returns!

Families with children through 6th grade enjoyed our first Family Fun Night in October. We are looking forward to our next Family Fun Night on **Friday, February 6, 2009**. Be sure to mark your calendars and look for advertisements and registration after the first of the year. We're always looking for help, so call Kathy Prible (610-444-4624) if you would like to be on the planning team or just help out the day of the activity.

Epiphany Pageant

Our annual instant Epiphany Pageant is scheduled for January 11, 2009. As always, it will be during the 9 a.m. service. Please note that there will be no Children's Chapel or Sunday School that day. Children are to go directly into church with their parents. We can use all the helping hands we can get to costume the children. Let Kathy Prible know if you can help in the day. (e-mail: klprible@yahoo.com, or phone; 610-444-4624)

Sunday School Outreach Projects

The Sunday School teachers and children have enthusiastically embraced the spirit of outreach by taking a compassionate leadership role with some of Advent's **Boost To The Future** activities.

Deacon Nancy Hauser worked with the 5th, 6th & 7th grade classes to design and stuff Halloween treat bags for the residents of the Chester County Youth Center (CCYC). The children felt honored to be invited to participate in this project.

The 4th grade class initiated the project of collecting excess Halloween candy for the Friday Movie Nights at the CCYC. They designed advertisements and created a bulletin article, generating enough enthusiasm to collect over 60 pounds of candy from our generous Advent families.

The younger classes will be participating in outreach projects throughout the Winter and Spring. Thank you for supporting the children's outreach projects, and inviting them to be included in our Advent programs.

Children's Holiday Schedule

Nov. 30, Dec. 7, 14, 21: Advent Intergenerational Event. Children's Chapel each Sunday, but no Sunday School

Dec. 28, Jan. 4: No Sunday School, No Children's Chapel

Jan. 11: Epiphany Pageant, no Children's Chapel, no Sunday School

Vacation Bible School



It's never too early to think about summer! Is anyone interested in attending or helping with a Vacation Bible School this summer? We need to get a coordinator and team in place by the end of January, in order to start plans for the summer. If anyone has a heart and interest in implementing this program, please call Kathy Prible.

December Calendar (subject to change)
Note: PCOC is the Pastoral Care & Office Center

Mon	12/1	9:30 a.m.	Angel Tree Steering Committee - PCOC
		7:00 p.m.	Stewardship - PCOC
Tues	12/2	6:30-7:30 p.m.	Youth Choir
Wed	12/3	9:00 a.m.	Bible Study - St. Ann
			E.F.M. - St. Timothy
		10:30 a.m.	Eucharist - Chapel
		7:30-8:45 p.m.	Chancel (Adult) Choir
Thurs	12/4	9:30 a.m.	Staff Meeting
		11:00 a.m.	Eucharist at Jenner's Pond
Fri	12/5	CHRONICLE DEADLINE	
		9:00 p.m.	Youth Group Lock-In
Sat	12/6	3-5:30 p.m.	Rehearsal for Concert of Classical Music
Sun	12/7	2 Advent	
		8:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist - Rite I
		9:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist - Rite II
		10:00 a.m.	Intergenerational Event - Parish Hall
			NO Sunday School
		11:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist - Rite II
		3:00 p.m.	Concert of Classical Music - Sanctuary
		5:00 p.m.	Chili Supper - Parish Hall
			NO Youth Group
Mon	12/8	9:30 a.m.	Angel Tree Steering Committee - PCOC
		6:30 p.m.	Membership Commission - St. Nicholas
		7:00 p.m.	Outreach - PCOC
Tues	12/9	11:00 a.m.	Eucharist at Kendal
		1:30 p.m.	E.F.M. Book Group - St. Ann
			NO Youth Choir
Wed	12/10	9:00 a.m.	Bible Study - St. Ann
			E.F.M. - St. Timothy
		10:30 a.m.	Eucharist - Chapel
		7:30-8:45 p.m.	Chancel (Adult) Choir
Thur	12/11	9:30 a.m.	Staff Meeting
		11:00 a.m.	Eucharist at Crosslands
Sat	12/13	9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.	Angel Tree Party - Parish Hall
Sun	12/14	3 Advent	
		8:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist - Rite I
		9:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist - Rite II
		10:00 a.m.	Intergenerational Event - Parish Hall
			NO Sunday School
		11:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist - Rite II
Tues	12/16	6:30-7:30 p.m.	Youth Choir
Wed	12/17	9:00 a.m.	Bible Study - St. Ann
		9 a.m. - Noon	E.F.M. - St. Timothy
		10:30 a.m.	Eucharist - Chapel
		7:30-8:45 p.m.	Chancel (Adult) Choir
Thurs	12/18	Depart at 11:30 a.m. for 1:00 p.m. show	<i>A Christmas Miracle Show</i> at Sight & Sound, Lancaster, PA
Fri	12/19	CHRONICLE MAILING DATE	

Sun	12/21	4 Advent	
		8:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist - Rite I
			NO 9 a.m. service
		10:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist - Rite II
			No 11 a.m. service
		11:00 a.m.	Intergenerational Event - Parish Hall
		11:00 a.m.	Decorate the Sanctuary
		6-8 p.m.	Youth Group - Offsite
Tues	12/23	6:30-7:30 p.m.	Youth Choir
Wed	12/24	CHRISTMAS EVE	OFFICE CLOSED
		3:00 p.m.	Family Service
		5:00 p.m.	Family Service
		8:00 p.m.	Christmas Eucharist
		10:00 p.m.	Carol Sing
		10:30 p.m.	Christmas Eucharist
Thurs	12/25	CHRISTMAS DAY	OFFICE CLOSED
		9:00 a.m.	Christmas Service
Fri	12/26		OFFICE CLOSED
Sun	12/28	1 Christmas	
		8:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist - Rite I
			NO 9 a.m. service
		10:00 a.m.	Lessons & Carols Service
			NO 11 a.m. service
			No Youth Group - Family Time
Tues	12/30	1-7 p.m.	Red Cross Blood Drive - Parish Hall
Wed	12/31		OFFICE CLOSED
		9:00 a.m.	NO Bible Study
		9 a.m. - Noon	E.F.M. - St. Timothy
		10:30 a.m.	Eucharist - Chapel
		7:30-8:45 p.m.	Chancel (Adult) Choir



Christmas Flower Offering Envelopes

Enclosed in this Chronicle is an envelope for the offering for Christmas memorial flowers and greens. You can mail your offering to the church office, or drop it in the collection plate.

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Did you know...???

Holy Day Celebration: St. Thomas the Apostle—December 21st

The Apostle Thomas (Hebrew or Aramaic for "twin") was also called "Didymus" (Greek for "twin"). He was absent when the Risen Lord appeared to the other apostles on the evening of Easter Day, and refused to believe that Christ had indeed risen until he had seen him for himself, but when he had seen Him, he said to Him, "My Lord and My God." (John 20:19-29)

Because of this episode, he has been known ever since as "Doubting Thomas." But we ought also to remember his earlier words, when Jesus announced His intention of going to the Jerusalem area, brushing aside the protests of His disciples that His life was in danger there, at which Thomas said to the others: "Let us also go, that we may die with him." (John 11:7,8,16) If Thomas was pessimistic, he was also sturdily loyal.

At the Last Supper, Jesus said: "I go to prepare a place for you.... And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." Thomas replied: "Lord, we know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way?" To this Jesus answered: "I am the way, the truth and the life." (John 14:1-6)

Thomas is mentioned again (John 21) as one of the seven disciples who were fishing on the Sea of Galilee (Sea of Tiberias) when the Risen Lord appeared to them. Aside from this he appears in the New Testament only as a name on lists of the Apostles. A couple of centuries later a story was circulating in the Mediterranean world that he had gone to preach in India; and there is a Christian community in India (the Kerala district) that claims descent from Christians converted by the preaching of Thomas. The tradition among Christians in India is that Thomas was speared to death near Madras, and accordingly he is often pictured holding a spear. Paintings of martyrs often show them holding or accompanied by the instruments with which they were put to death.

~James Kiefer