

The Episcopal Church of the Advent

Chronicle

Building a Strong Christian Family

Letter from the Rector—The Rev. David Thomas



Dear Friends:

People get so excited about a ball dropping many feet but not breaking. I have often marveled that so many people are willing to pack themselves, like sardines, into Times Square and watch a ball fall and then scream and yell and hug total strangers. Well, maybe the last part might be interesting, but usually it is really cold and it just isn't appealing to me. Perhaps you feel differently and that's ok also.

However you choose to celebrate bringing in the New Year, it is only one evening and then back to the routine of day-to-day living. The new year does offer an opportunity to assess one's life and to attempt to make improvements where necessary or possible. New Year's Resolutions are normally as substantial as the relationships developed in Times Square while waiting for the ball to drop. No, I'm not going to resolve to become a body builder or a competitive triathlon contestant any more. What I am hoping to do is first look at my own spiritual life and find ways to grow in my knowledge and love of the Lord.

The Jews of old, had a wonderful custom of forgiving anyone who owed them anything at the beginning of each new year. Granted, the economy was different and people often bartered with animals or trinkets - but the concept is interesting. A new year is an opportunity to start over. You don't have to feel angry, or cheated, or ugly, or defeated. We choose to integrate negative feelings about ourselves and life in general - but we don't have to. One can accept the forgiving and loving nature of God as known through Jesus Christ and begin a new life. We can choose to make the best of whatever life deals us and to be an inspiration to others.

A new year is a perfect time to get healthy, to feel better about ourselves and to establish positive relationships with family and friends. It is absolutely the right time to turn to the supreme power and allow His love to fill you and sustain you. Remember, with God you will never be alone.

God's blessing all year.

The Rev. David Thomas

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Emergency Phone Chain



Advent uses an automated phone system to contact parishioners in case of inclement weather closings. While we make every attempt to ensure that our call list is up to date--omissions occur. If you are new to the church since last winter, or if you have never received an automated call in the past, please contact Helen Bilinski and give her your name/phone number ASAP. Helen can be reached at 610-347-0401 and bilinski2@aol.com.

Updated Pictorial Directory

The Updated Pictorial Directory is now available! We are proud to say that 57 families were added! Many thanks to Advent's photography committee: Suzette Butler, Frank Czeiner, Patsy Keller and Ed Kirkpatrick! Please be sure to pick up your copy in the narthex on your way into church!

Thank You from the Outreach Commission



The Outreach Commission wishes to thank all those people that participated in the Annual Outerwear/Coat Drive . Approximately **240 coats**, including 30 new coats from Operation Warm, were collected as well as numerous hats, gloves and scarves. These much needed articles were distributed to Doris Haley's prison ministry and the Santa Maria Mission in Avondale. **Advent's generosity is never ending!**

Project Outreach~

Its difficult to believe that another year has gone by... The Outreach Committee continues to work on Project Outreach. In 2009, our mission is to have an event every season.

Our "Project" began last fall with the Rummage Sale and then moved to the Fill the Bus event. Sandi Reynolds, from the Kennett Food Bank, said that everyone was so appreciative of our donations. On November 20th , they gave out 500 baskets to families in town. The Government Shipments arrive quarterly to the Food Bank, but Sandi does not know the date of the next shipment. She said in January cupboards will be bare again. The Outreach Committee plans to do a Fill the Bus event again in January—watch for the upcoming date! As usual, we appreciate all the wonderful participation our fellow parishioners at Advent give us.

This winter we are going to have a book sale timed to coordinate with the Unionville Book Sale. The Outreach Committee will then go on to a Spring Rummage Sale.

All the money raised by Outreach is used to help with a number of local Charities. Some of these groups are fortunate to receive funding from other sources, but there are times when Advent is the sole donor. We are blessed by the ability to give.

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

JANUARY 2009! LET’S PARTY~

January 2009. A new year! Maybe there’s a blanket of fresh snow on the ground so that even the starkness of winter appears adorned in a sparkling new coat of white. The calendar begins again. It is a time of starting over and making resolutions. And resolutions always start with choices. Deciding to do something and resolving that this time, right now, you are going to do it!

In youth group our theme has been “Let’s Party”! Choices abound at parties too. We get invited to one and we want to go – but what if we know inappropriate things may occur? Things like underage drinking or drugs. What do we do then? How do we uphold our Christian values when they come under attack by good friends? It all comes down to the choices we make!

Parents—This month choose to spend some time as a family reviewing your Christian values. Be clear about what each of you believe. Check in with one another to see if you still have the **same** values you did this time last year. Teens face an amazing amount of change from year to year. What they swore they would *never* do last year might be something everyone else is *doing* this year. They might be feeling pressure to make choices that they are not sure about. If **you** can’t talk to them about it, trust me, someone else **will**. Try to listen to one another and be honest about the “hard” issues. Try to decide together as family how your teens should respond if they are offered alcohol or drugs at a party. What words can they use? What choices can they make? What about peer pressure? How do they respond to what has been a good friend when that friend makes a different choice? Help them develop a plan ahead of time because it is much harder to make decisions under pressure!

- Set boundaries now about what is ok and what is not ok.
 - Develop a response for a bad situation. Choose a code phrase they can use if they run in to trouble and call you saying something like “send the pizza to (address where they are) at (time they want you to come). Friends won’t know who they are calling and it keeps their need to leave private.
 - Give them permission to blame you saying things like “my parents would kick me out of the house if I did that”.
 - Coach them to stick to the decisions they make with you. Encourage, encourage, encourage!
 - Help them find friends with similar values that respect their boundaries.
- Offer options to potentially bad situations. For instance make time to take a group to the movies or ice skating instead of going to a party.

Like it or not, teens will be exposed to things that are inappropriate. Helping them understand what your family values makes it easier for them to stick to those beliefs when they are challenged. Giving them words and phrases ahead of time prepares them for unexpected situations. You may think your teen knows them already, but things change. It’s a new year! Make the choice to stay strong this year as a family with values everyone knows and uses. Have a blessed new year!

Youth Schedule

The God Squad meets Sunday evenings from 6:00pm-7:30pm in the youth room and parish hall. Grades 7&8 meet together; and grades 9-12 meet separately.

January 4 ~ No Youth Group; Christmas break

January 11 ~ Epiphany Party!

January 18 ~ No Youth Group; MLK Birthday

January 25 ~ Meet at church

February 6-8 ~ Tentative Ski Trip (see email for details)

February 15 ~ No Youth Group; President’s Weekend

February 22 ~ Meet at Church

January 2009 Calendar (subject to change)			
Note: PCOC is the Pastoral Care & Office Center			
Thurs	1/1	OFFICE CLOSED	New Year's Day
Fri	1/2	OFFICE CLOSED	CHRONICLE DEADLINE for February Chronicle
Sun	1/4	2 Christmas	
		8:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist - Rite I
		9:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist - Rite II
		10:00 a.m.	Sunday School
		11:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist - Rite II
		6-8 p.m.	Youth Group
Mon	1/5	7:00 a.m.	Stewardship - PCOC
		10:00 a.m.	Grief Support Group - Sacristy
		5:30 p.m.	Vestry - PCOC
Tues	1/6	6:30-7:30 p.m.	Youth Choir
Wed	1/7	9:00 a.m.	Bible Study - St. Ann
		9:00 a.m.	E.F.M. - St. Timothy
		10:30 a.m.	Eucharist - Chapel
Thur	1/8	9:30 a.m.	Staff Meeting
		11:00 a.m.	Eucharist at Jenner's Pond
Sat	1/10	9:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.	Safe Church Training - Parish Hall
Sun	1/11	1 Epiphany	
		8:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist - Rite I
		10:00 a.m.	Epiphany Pageant
		11:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist - Rite II
		6-8 p.m.	Youth Group
Mon	1/12	10:00 a.m.	Grief Support Group - Sacristy
		7:00 p.m.	Outreach - PCOC
		7:30 p.m.	Worship - Fr. Dave's office
Tues	1/13	1:30 p.m.	E.F.M. Book Group - St. Ann
		6:30-7:30 p.m.	Youth Choir
Wed	1/14	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	1/15	9:30 a.m.	Staff Meeting
Fri	1/16	CHRONICLE MAILING DATE	
Sat	1/17	8-10 a.m.	Men's Breakfast - Parish Hall

Sun	1/18	2 Epiphany	
		8:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist - Rite I
		9:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist - Rite II
		10:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist - Rite II
			Newcomer Coffee - St. Nicholas
		11:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist - Rite II
			NO Youth Group
Mon	1/29	OFFICE CLOSED	Martin Luther King Day
Tues	1/20	11:00 a.m.	Eucharist at Kendal
		6:30-7:30 p.m.	Youth Choir
Wed	1/21	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	1/22	9:30 a.m.	Staff Meeting
		11:00 a.m.	Eucharist at Crosslands
Sat	1/24	4-7 p.m.	Vespers 2 Concert
Sun	1/25	3 Epiphany	
		8:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist - Rite I
		9:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist - Rite II & Baptism
		10:00 a.m.	Sunday School
			FORUM: Advent Financial Report #2 - Parish Hall
		11:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist - Rite II
		6-8 p.m.	Youth Group
Mon	1/26	5:30 p.m.	Vestry - PCOC
Tues	1/27	6:30-7:30 p.m.	Youth Choir
Wed	1/28	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	1/29	9:30 a.m.	Staff Meeting
Sat	1/31	8-10 a.m.	Women's Breakfast - Parish Hall

Parish Register

Births:

George Alessandria

- ~Grandson of Bruce and Deborah Murray
- ~Son of Samantha Murray and George Alessandria

Haley Hoover

- ~Granddaughter of Tom and Bobbie Curry
- ~Daughter of Amanda Curry Hoover and Jay Hoover

Baptisms:

Zachary Frey

11/16/2008



Rector

The Rev. Canon David P. Thomas

Deacon

The Rev. Nancy Hauser

Parish Administrator

Jim Power

Music Director

Wilson G. Somers

Christian Education Director

Kathy Prible

Youth Ministry Director

Jan Berry Schroeder

Office Manager

Kathy Gebhart

Parish Secretary

Ann Daemer

Sexton

Brian Walls

Website Editor: Mary Doscher

mdoscher1@msn.com

Chronicle Editor: Dawn Deivert

rooneytunes11@verizon.net



The Episcopal Church of the Advent

Church: 401 N. Union Street, Kennett Square, PA 19348

Offices: 201 Crestline Drive, Kennett Square, PA 19348

Phone: 610.444.4624 Fax: 610.444.1842

Website: www.church-of-the-advent.com

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Did you know...???

Feasts and Holy Days: The Conversion of St. Paul~ January 25

On January 25th we remember Saul (or Paul) of Tarsus, formerly an enemy and persecutor of the early Christian Church. Saint Paul is considered by some to be the greatest missionary of Christianity and its first theologian, and is often called the Apostle to the Gentiles.

Paul became a Christian after experiencing a vision of Christ during a journey from Jerusalem to Damascus (see Acts 9:1–19, 22:5–16, 26:12–18). Paul himself, in referring to this event, never uses the term *conversion*, which implies shifting allegiance from one religion to another; he clearly perceived the revelation of Jesus Christ to mark the end of all religions, and thus of all religious distinctions (see Gal. 3:38). Instead, he consistently spoke of God's having "called" him. Paul viewed his call to be a Christian and his call to be an evangelist to the Gentiles as a single and indivisible event. He recognized the legitimacy of a mission to the Jews, as carried out by Peter, but he was convinced that CHRISTIANITY, was God's call to all the world, and that God was making this call apart from the requirements of the Jewish Law.

From Acts it is known that Paul was arrested in Jerusalem after riots incited by his Jewish opponents, and that he was finally taken to Rome; it is also in Acts that Paul speaks of the possibility of his own death (see Acts 20:24; see also Acts 20:38). He was probably executed in Rome in AD 62; Christian tradition from the 4th century fixes the day as February 22.