

St. Christopher's News Summary

December 2018

“Come unto me, all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you.” – Matthew 11:28



A Message from Canon Jeremy

It's no mistake that Advent comes at the darkest time of the year. Don't let all the premature Christmas lights and feasting overshadow the truth of the season: Short, cold, and often cloudy days and long dark nights symbolize a world in desperate need of light and warmth. Who wants to think about darkness? Life is already hard enough. Yet as Christians we care more about the truth than comfort. Besides what good does it do to pretend the darkness isn't there? No, only by wrestling with the darkness of the world (most especially the darkness that lurks in our own hearts) do we become honest and honorable. This world is dark and ambiguous. And only by coming to grips with our own desperation do we learn to long for the light.

The Christian life doesn't shy away from a challenge, and it doesn't medicate its pain seeking a false equilibrium. It embraces both the gritty realities and the glory, the ups and downs, the sorrow and the joy. It's difficult, but it's real. And it's never boring!

As I urge you to embrace the full spectrum of the human experience, isn't there a danger in getting stuck in the downward? Perhaps. But as I see it, the greater danger is failing to experience the fullness of the light. The light shines brightest where its need is more keenly felt. The greater the danger, the more dramatic the rescue. And I don't mind leading you down the dark road of repentance, because no matter how deep you might be in sin and darkness, the light of Christ shines ever brighter. No matter how deep you dig, no matter how much sin you might find, if you dig deep enough you'll find that grace underlies it all. There's nothing the blood of Christ has not covered, and nowhere his light does not reach.

In this Advent season I urge you to dig deep and reckon with the darkness. Friends, family, even our priests will disappoint us. But "there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother" (Prov 18:24). Christ has promised to be with you always, even to the end of the age (Mt 28:20). And when we dare to go into the night we find that King David was right

when he discovered God there: “the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you” (Ps 139:12). May the light of Christ shine brightly in your hearts as you prepare to receive your King.

Yours in Christ Jesus,
Jeremy+

Dates and Activities to Remember

Saturday, Dec. 1 Hanging of the Greens
10 a.m.

Saturday, Dec. 8 Breakfast with Santa and Christmas Bazaar
9 a.m. to noon

Sunday, Dec. 9 Christmas Caroling
After coffee hour

Sunday, Dec. 16 Last day for donations for Christmas poinsettias

Monday, Dec. 24 Lessons and Carols
4 p.m.

Monday, Dec. 24 Christmas Eve Service
7 p.m.

A Great Time at Thanks+Giving Celebration

After the 10:00 am service on Sunday, November 18, we held our annual Thanks+Giving celebration, a time to fete and give thanks for all the blessings we enjoy. Many of our parishioners helped organize and brought food and drink for the festivities. With two turkeys, two hams and an abundance of other dishes, there was no shortage of great food!

Father Jeremy made a few comments on the event and the season. We are in the midst of our Stewardship campaign and we were encouraged to fill out the pledge cards we were sent so our parish can continue to cover its expenses, provide the services that define St. Christopher's and plan for the coming year. Unless we provide for St. Christopher's, St. Christopher's can't provide for us.

We are also at a time when we are identifying and recruiting new vestry members. With the limited number of people available and willing to serve on the vestry, it's been difficult to get nine volunteers to fill out that important group. To not overburden the people we have, thought is being given to reduce the vestry to six volunteer members giving those members more time off before being asked to serve again.

Also, we're in need of a treasurer to help the parish keep abreast of financial matters. With Lydia Goebel's decision to move closer to her family, we've been without someone in this important position. Someone with just a little experience or training in finance could step in and provide that very valuable service to St. Christopher's. Please consider being that person for our parish.

Donations for Christmas Poinsettias

Donations for Christmas poinsettias are now being accepted through Sunday, Dec. 16. Envelopes are available in your weekly service bulletin and in the Narthex. Please include your contribution (flowers are \$10 each) and the name(s) of those you would like to honor. You can drop your envelope in the collection plate or give it to an usher.

Reaching out to a Family in Need

For our Christmas outreach project this year, our parish family will join together to provide clothing and other gifts for an area family that needs our help. This family includes parents Jorge and Angelica and their three children ages 9, 11 and 14. The children attend school where our own Sheri Harris teaches.

The children, Ramon, Nathan and Joy, need jackets, shirts and pants. Angelica and Jorge each need a pair of tennis shoes. In addition to providing for these needs, we hope to give family members gift cards from Target or Walmart so they can buy something extra for themselves.

Details on items needed and sizes, as well as a sign up sheet, will be coming soon.

Gifts should be wrapped with individual names on each package. You can place them under the Christmas tree in the Parish Hall. We will deliver the gifts to the family on Sunday, Dec. 23, after the 10 a.m. service. Everyone is welcome to join us as we drop off the presents and meet the family.

Jorge and Angelica are very grateful for our efforts. "My family and I thank you from the bottom of our hearts."

A Time for Joy and Fellowship

Hanging of the Greens

Help us set up and decorate our Christmas tree in the Parish Hall on Saturday, Dec 1 at 10 a.m. Lots of helpers are needed, and everyone is invited to join the fun!

Breakfast with Santa and Christmas Bazaar

Kids (of all ages) can have their picture taken with Santa on Saturday, Dec. 8, from 9 a.m. to noon in the Parish Hall. In addition, you can enjoy a little shopping as area vendors display a variety of items (many homemade) for sale. We hope to see you there!

Christmas Caroling

Brighten someone's day with the gift of music. The St. Christopher's choir invites everyone to bring your jingle bells and go Christmas caroling on Sunday, Dec. 9, after

coffee hour. We will visit nearby healthcare facilities and spend about two hours caroling. Families with children are encouraged to participate. And remember, everyone sounds great when you're singing Christmas carols.

Lessons and Carols

Bring the entire family and join us for Lessons and Carols on Christmas Eve, Monday, Dec 24, at 4 p.m. This is a service of worship and music and is a wonderful time to bring your younger children to church.

Millie Norman and Skylar at the Fair

Millie is in the 4H Club at her school and they have seven chickens. The 4Hers have learned about farming and chickens. Millie's chicken was Skylar because "she thinks she can fly. She flaps everywhere." Skylar is a Rhode Island Red which is the best egg layer in the American class of chickens.

Before the Fair, Millie and the other 4Hers gave their chickens a spa day.

They gave them a bath, cleaned their feet, sprayed them with chicken hair spray to

make their feathers glossy, put lotion on their dry spots and clipped their toe nails. They also practiced showing and handling their chickens plus reciting all the facts about them and poultry farming.

Millie was very happy with her presentation. Skylar did great and the whole experience was very good. Millie got one of the highest scores in her division but did not place. It was a tough year because they were competing with 6th and 7th graders.

What she learned from this experience was that, "It is really important to know the facts, but it is more important to have a bond with your chicken and know how to handle it."

Millie says she is planning on showing chickens again next year at The Fair.

Way to go, Millie!!!



Remembering Mary Drayer and Jack Wells

St. Christopher's has lost two of its joyous souls with the passing of Mary Drayer and Jack Wells.

Mary went to her Lord on Wednesday, November 7. For those who didn't know her during her earlier years, she was an accomplished singer and dancer who displayed her considerable talents abroad during USO tours and on Broadway before returning to perform in Dallas. She possessed a joy for life, a love of music and was always funny and in good spirits. She loved her St. Christopher's family where she long served as the church secretary and continued to attend services.

Jack was called away two weeks later on Wednesday, November 21. Jack too had a passion for dancing and was an accomplished ballroom dancer. He also loved singing and sang in Episcopal church choirs for some 70 years, and during that time, coached some of our current choir members. Jack was a dedicated fitness buff from his teenage years until fairly recently. He was quite a gentleman, but with a great sense of humor. Jack also had an abiding love for Dallas and his country.

Jack's memorial service will be held at St. Christopher's at 11:00 am on Wednesday, December 5. He will be buried at DFW National Cemetery.

Mary and Jack will be greatly missed and should be remembered in our prayers.

Schedule of Services

Sundays

- 8 a.m. Holy Eucharist: Rite I

- 9 a.m. Sunday School Lessons and Discussion

- 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist: Rite II – Rite I on fourth Sunday

- 10 a.m. Children's Chapel – Ages 3 through 10

Wednesdays

- 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist: Rite I - with discussion afterwards

Weekly Readings

Date	First Reading	Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel
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2-Dec	Jeremiah 33:14-16	25:1-9	1 Thessalonians 3:9-13	Luke 21:25-36
9-Dec	Malachi 3:1-4	Canticle 4: Song of Zechariah	Philippians 1:3-11	Luke 3:1-6
16-Dec	Zephaniah 3:14-20	Canticle 9: First Song of Isaiah	Philippians 4:4-7	Luke 3:7-18
23-Dec	Micah 5:2-5a	80:1-7	Hebrews 10:5-10	Luke 1:39-45, [46-55]
30-Dec	Isaiah 61:10-62:3	147:13-21	Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7	John 1:1-18