

The Messenger



DECEMBER 2009

THE LONG NIGHT AND THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Despite the continuing loop of Christmas carols on radio and television, and the sound of jingle bells all over, some of us do not look forward to Christmas. We may be grieving for someone we've loved and lost (and truth be told, often the second year without that person is often worse than the first.)

We may be struggling after a divorce or separation. We may have lost a job, or adjusting to retirement. Some of us struggle with on-going challenges of chronic pain, a chronic disease or Post Traumatic Stress syndrome from war or trauma. Some of us have "old tapes" of Christmas Past—tapes of alcoholic abuse, physical or emotional abuse, sexual abuse or rape. Such un-healed memories surface every holiday season.

Many churches of different denominations now offer a contemplative, healing service during the Advent season. Regardless of its name (many call it a "Blue Christmas" service), the offering is important.

For the third year, I would like to offer a service for parishioners, community



members and friends who do not feel like singing Christmas carols or celebrating, and for those who dread the upcoming holidays.

Please join us on Wednesday evening, December 16th at 7:00 p.m. in the St. Philip's worship space. Together, we will remember people we love who are no longer with us. Together, we will pray for all of us who are in pain, or who suffer from ongoing disease or the effects of trauma or depression. Together, we will reflect upon what it means for the Light of Christ to come to earth in human form.

The evening will be contemplative in nature, with candlelight and quiet, reflective music. It will include prayers as well as spaces of time for silent reflection. I will also offer the anointing and laying on of hands for healing.

If you would like the chance to enjoy a quiet, candle-lit,

contemplative healing service during Advent, please join us at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 16th. Together, we will walk through *your* Long Night. Together we will hope for, and await, the Light of the World who comes for all of us.

Faithfully, Sheila+

SPECIAL SERVICE ON DECEMBER 20!

On Advent IV, **Sunday, December 20th**, we will have only **one** special service, at **9:00 a.m.** Following the tradition of Kings College in Cambridge, England, we will worship with an Advent Lessons & Carols service. These special scripture readings, hymns and anthems finish out the liturgical season of Advent and get us ready for the Feast of the Nativity on Christmas Eve.

Following this service, we can all pitch in (in the basement of Wyatt Ministry Center) to make beautiful garlands out of the greenery provided. Then we'll do the annual **Greening of the Church** in the Nave (worship space) in preparation for Christmas Eve services.

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ORDER YOUR MEMORIAL POINSETTIA TODAY!

Each year St. Philip's orders poinsettia plants in memory of loved ones. These plants are used to adorn the Church and the altar for our Christmas services. The names of your loved one will be published in the Christmas bulletins.

If you would like to order a plant, please complete the form that is enclosed or a form that will be in the Church pews beginning next Sunday. Send your form (listing the names of those to be remembered) and your donation of \$25 to the Office, or drop it off at the Office between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. Monday to Thursday. Forms and donations must be received no later than Thursday, December 17th to insure that your names will be included in the Christmas bulletins.

Special Service ... continued from page 1

Bring some homemade soup, bread, cheese, or dessert to share—or just bring yourselves. We'll enjoy worship, fellowship and soup together, and those who want to help with the Greening of the Church can do so.

**PLEASE MARK YOUR SUNDAY
MORNING CALENDAR
FOR THIS SPECIAL ADVENT IV SERVICE**

HOLLY DAYS CURTAIN CALL

All good things don't necessarily come to an abrupt end, sometimes they are repeated. The Holly Days Bazaar is a good thing that needs to be repeated once more before the year ends. There will be a "mini rerun" on Sunday, December 6th in Wyatt Hall.

If you missed the big event on November 21st, this is your second chance to pick up those unique gifts and decorations. Be aware that if you don't buy now, you will have to wait until November 20, 2010. Now that is just too long to wait, so maybe it would be wise to visit Wyatt Hall between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. on the 6th of December. You will be glad you did!

SPECIAL PLATE COLLECTION

The Stewardship Committee is sponsoring a special second plate collection and canned food offering at worship services on Nov. 29, Dec. 6, and Dec. 13. These collections will then fill holiday food gift baskets for 40+ local families identified by Laurel Elementary School's teachers and staff as in need of food. Please bring a few extra dollars, an extra check (marked "food baskets" in the memo section), and/or some of the food items listed below so we can love our neighbors in need in both word and deed during the Christmas season.

Food items to donate:

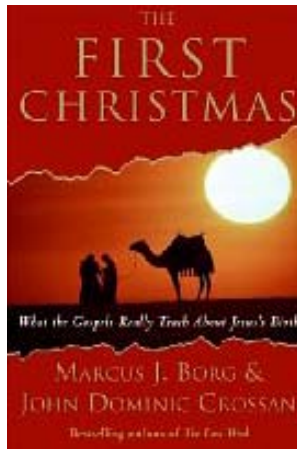
frozen turkey/turkey breast
(label and put in Wyatt kitchen freezer)
seasonal fruits and vegetables that do not need refrigeration
bread and stuffing/cornbread mix
healthy cereals, granola bars and crackers
nuts, seeds, and trail mix
canned fruits and vegetables
dried pastas and rice
canned beans
canned soups/powdered soup mixes
canned meats
peanut butter and jelly

We also invite you to join us when we assemble the baskets on Friday, Dec. 18 in Wyatt from 6-9 PM. (so they'll be ready for families to pick-up on Saturday).

Libby Lamancusa, Stewardship Chairperson

SUNDAY MORNING ADVENT BOOK STUDY

Advent is a very short season—one that is almost overshadowed by Christmas. I thought that it would be interesting to do a short book study during Advent during the 9:00 Christian Education hour.



to

So for three Sundays—
November 29,
December 6
December 13

we'll have some coffee and conversation together (in the Wyatt Hall Conference Room) about Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan's book **The First Christmas: What the Gospels Really Teach about Jesus' Birth.** It is available on www.amazon.com and if you access that website through www.iGive.com, St. Philip's will get a donation. The book is \$10.07.

Please start reading! Our discussions will be as follows:

- Sunday, November 29:** Part I: Parable, Overture and Context
Sunday, December 6: Part II: Genealogy, Conception and Birth
Sunday, December 13: Part III: Light, Fulfillment and Joy

If you would like to participate in the book study, but can't afford the book, please see me and I'll take care of getting you a book. Join us for a lively discussion!
~Sheila+

CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

The Women of St. Philip's (Afternoon Guild) Christmas Luncheon will be held at the Laurel Olive Garden Restaurant at the corner of Rt. 1 and Cherry Lane on Tuesday, December 8th, at 12 noon. Everyone is invited! Call Betty Thiele, 301-490-2672, for more information or to reserve a seat.

WINTERFEST SILENT AUCTION FEBRUARY 20TH

As many of you know plans are under way for a Silent Auction to help raise money for our roof and nave fund. The "Winterfest" Silent Auction will be held on Saturday evening, February 20, 2010.

For our auction to be successful we need donations from both inside and outside the St. Philips' community. If you have something you would be willing to donate, for example: tickets to a sporting event or concert, a time share, sports memorabilia, etc, please contact Amanda Colindres at amandacolindres@yahoo.com.

GREENING SUNDAY

Take part in decorating our sanctuary for Christmas! Everyone is warmly invited to gather on Sunday, December 20, in the basement of Wyatt Hall to weave garlands of pine and laurel, and then to "hang them from the rafters."

Since we have only one service (Lessons and Carols) on Greening Sunday garland-making can begin right after the 9:00 a.m. service. Wear work clothes and bring gloves and clippers. There will be a lunch break upstairs with soup, chili, and bread (please provide some to help feed the multitudes). On December 13 there will be sign-up sheets for food-providers, garland workers, and cleanup elves. The new morning service schedule will make participation much more convenient for many more people, and will make the work go faster.



Many willing hands (of all ages!) make light and speedy work. You will be delighted once again by the beauty of Christmas that you help create at St. Philip's.

Be An Angel

Each year at Christmas time St Philip's sponsors an "Angel Tree". The purpose of the Angel Tree is to provide gifts for children in our community who might, otherwise, go without them. This year the spring Confirmation Class is organizing this project.

This year's Angel Tree gifts will be given to the clients of "Reality House" to share with their children. Reality House, located on Main Street in Laurel, works with clients who are recovering from addictions. Clients are in a "quarter way" program (28 days) or "half -way" program (6 months).

The Angel tree will be set up in Wyatt Hall on November 29 with "boy " and "girl" tags and an age on each. Please take an angel with the tag, buy ONE gift and put the tag on the wrapped gift. Place the angel on your own tree. Bring the gift no later than December 20. There will be more tags available on December 6. If you have a question contact Betsy Welsh at 301-490-8187.

St. Philip's Ornament

Don't miss this opportunity to purchase a St. Philip's Episcopal Church ornament from the Laurel Historical Society. The cost is only \$16.00. This ornament honors the historic presence of St. Philip's in the communities of Prince George, Anne Arundel, Montgomery and Howard counties since its founding in 1848. This beautiful ornament can be purchased at the Laurel Historical Society or online at www.laurelhistory.org. Click on the link to the Museum Shop.



CHRISTMAS SERVICES SCHEDULE

Christmas Eve

- 5:00 p.m. Festive Holy Eucharist Rite II with Christmas Pageant (Note: if your child wants to participate in the pageant, please have him/her in Wyatt Hall by 4:30 p.m.!)
7:30 p.m. Special Music and Christmas Carols
8:00 p.m. Festive Holy Eucharist Rite II
10:30 p.m. Special Music and Christmas Carols
11:00 p.m. Festive Holy Eucharist Rite II

NO CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICES.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Winterhaven

St Phillip's will host Winterhaven for both men and women the week of December 27th. Winterhaven is a cold-weather shelter for homeless people that moves from congregation to congregation during the coldest weeks of the year, from the first week of December to mid-March. Sign-up sheets will be posted in Wyatt Hall after Thanksgiving.



During our week, volunteers will be needed to sign in the guests each night, escort the guests to the shower, stay overnight, stock the pantry with milk, juice, and cereal, provide bag lunches, and cook and serve the evening meals. On moving-out day, volunteers will be needed to load the truck and launder sheets and towels.

**There will be something for everybody,
and it's more fun when we all join in!**

NUTS AND BOLTS

ALTAR GUILD ORIENTATION JANUARY 23, 2010

The Altar Guild of St. Philip's is one of the quiet ministries of the parish. When talking of altar guilds you might say where, when, why. Altar Guilds, is a relatively new ministry in the church. It dates from the last half of the nineteenth century. In the early church the duty of caring for the altar and sanctuary was the concern of the priest and minor orders of monks and laymen called sacristans. Over time in the Church of England these duties were performed by male parish clerks. Then by the mid 1800's the parish clerks' duties were assumed by a group of volunteers who became known as the Altar Guild.

Initially the altar guilds were composed of women because they could "spare sufficient time" to polish brasswork, to trim candles, to wash and repair the altar linens and prepare the sanctuary for the various church services. By the end of the 20th century men began to take part in this ministry in increasing numbers. Men have been used to climb ladders, lift heavy items, and move, make, and hang wreaths for various services at Christmas.

Altar guild work is a "behind the scenes" work. Quite often it goes unnoticed because the average worshiper does not think about a familiar scene in front of

him as long as it IS familiar. The guild prepares for all worship services including the Eucharist, marriages, baptisms, and funerals. Special preparations are accomplished for the Christmas and Easter services.

St Philip's altar guild has 16 active volunteers. Members serve on teams. Each team is responsible for a week during the month. For Christmas and Easter all teams work together to prepare the church for the services.

If you think this is a ministry in which you would be interested please call Betsy Brothers (301)604-1981 or the parish office. There will be an orientation session on Saturday, January 23, 2010 at 9:00 a.m. in the church. Just bring yourself and your curiosity and learn what an altar guild does.

BREAD BAKERS MINISTRY

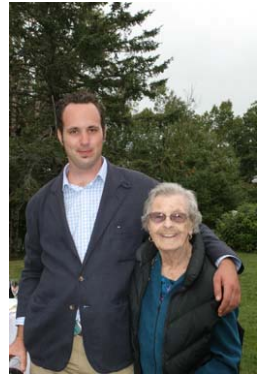
The Bread Bakers ministry, provides bread for Sunday Eucharists and works closely with the altar guild. At present there are 9 active volunteers. They would love to have more people share in this important ministry. For information about joining Bread Bakers call Joan Rattigen at (301)498-01546.



Thank You From The Welsh Family

Our family is grateful for the abundant help given by this parish on November 1 when we celebrated Mother's life. Every detail was considered and acted upon. There were receptions before and after the service, with overflowing food, drink and the good cheer of the Kitchen Angels. There was a profoundly meaningful service, made possible by an army of clergy and lay folk. And there were people filling every pew, spilling over into the McKee room. What a tribute to a quiet woman who touched so many lives, who adapted to changing times, and who never lost interest in others. We rejoice that so many of you share fond memories of Mother. And we are grateful for your help and witness.

Betsy, Jim , & Nancy Welsh,
and our sons, daughters and grandchildren.



REMEMBER TO BUY YOUR GROCERY CARD

Don't forget to use your grocery cards when purchasing those holiday goodies. Don't have a card? No problem!!! Weis, Shopper and Giant cards, in denominations of \$10-\$100, can be purchased in Wyatt Hall after both Sunday services.

Buy a grocery card from Vi Turley and her crew after the 8:00 service and see Joan Rattigan, Kama Hamilton or Terry Betzer after the 10:15 service. It's easy, you get food and St. Philip's gets a \$\$\$ boost! All good!

DECEMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 7:00 PM Quilters 7:00 PM Vestry Ex Committee	2 10:00 AM Bible Study - WHCR 7:00 PM Yoga	3 7:00 PM Absalom Jones Committee-PHCF 7:30 PM Adult Choir	4	5 7:00 AM (T) Post Holly Days Bazaar Set-up - WH 9:30 AM Smart Recovery-PHDCF
6 8:30 AM (T) Post Holly Days Bazaar - WH 9:00 AM Sunday School 11:30 AM Youth Choir 12:00 PM Stewardship Meeting-WHCR 1:00 PM Christmas Play Practice 2 Advent Collection Food Basket Drive for Laurel ES	7 7:30 PM Bell Choir	8 12:00 PM Afternoon Guild Luncheon 5:00 PM LARS & PNC Bank Activity-WH 7:00 PM Quilters	9 10:00 AM Bible Study - WHCR 7:00 PM Girl Scout Meeting-PAB 7:00 PM Yoga	10 7:00 PM Absalom Jones Committee-PHCF 7:30 PM Adult Choir	11	12 9:30 AM Smart Recovery-PHDCF 2:00 PM Historic Society's Holiday Housetour
13 9:00 AM Sunday School 11:30 AM Youth Choir 12:00 PM Enhanced Coffee Hour 1:00 PM Ctr. for Infant & Child Loss Prevention - Worship Space & WH 1:30 PM Christmas Play Rehearsal - Sunday School Area 3 Advent Collection Food Basket Drive for Laurel ES	14 7:00 PM Toastmaster's - WHCR 7:00 PM Worship Committee 7:30 PM Bell Choir	15 7:00 PM Quilters 7:00 PM Vestry Mtg <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;">Messenger Deadline</div>	16 10:00 AM Bible Study - WHCR 7:00 PM Long Night Service 7:00 PM Yoga	17 7:00 PM Absalom Jones Committee-PHCF 7:30 PM Adult Choir	18 Assembly of Food Baskets - WH	19 9:00 AM Families Pick-Up Food Baskets in WH 9:00 AM Men's Breakfast 9:30 AM Smart Recovery-PHDCF
20 9:00 AM Lessons and Carols 11:30 AM Youth Choir 11:45 AM PCT-PH CR 4 Advent Greening of the Church	21 7:30 PM Bell Choir	22 7:00 PM Quilters	23 9:00 AM Altar Guild Decorate Church for Christmas 10:00 AM Bible Study - WHCR 7:00 PM Girl Scout Meeting-PAB 7:00 PM Yoga	24 5:00 PM Eucharist-Rite I 7:30 PM Christmas Chorale 8:00 PM Eucharist- Rite II 10:30 PM Christmas Chorale <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; text-align: center;">11:00 PM Eucharist-Rite II</div>	25 Christmas Day	26 9:30 AM Smart Recovery-PHDCF
27 9:00 AM Sunday School 11:30 AM Youth Choir 6:30 PM Winter Haven - WH Christmas 1	28 7:00 AM Winter Haven-WH 6:30 PM Winter Haven - WH 7:30 PM Bell Choir	29 7:00 AM Winter Haven 6:30 PM Winter Haven - WH 7:00 PM Quilters Winter Haven	30 7:00 AM Winter Haven 10:00 AM Bible Study - WHCR 6:30 PM Winter Haven - WH 7:00 PM Finance Committee 7:00 PM Yoga	31 7:00 AM Winter Haven 6:30 PM Winter Haven - WH 7:30 PM Adult Choir New Year's Eve		

The Messenger
St. Philip's Episcopal Church
522 Main St
Laurel, MD 20707-4118
www.stphilipslaurel.org

FIRST CLASS POSTAGE

ADVENT IV SUNDAY

9:00 A.M. Lessons and Carols

Followed by

GREENING OF THE CHURCH

**CHRISTMAS SERVICES
SCHEDULE**

Christmas Eve

- 5:00 p.m. Festive Holy Eucharist Rite II
with Christmas Pageant (Note: if
your child wants to participate in
the pageant, please have him/her
in Wyatt Hall by 4:30 p.m.!)

7:30 p.m. Special Music and Christmas
Carols

8:00 p.m. Festive Holy Eucharist Rite II

10:30 p.m. Special Music and Christmas
Carols

11:00 p.m. Festive Holy Eucharist Rite II

NO CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICES.