

The Parish Paper

OF

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

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Third Sunday in Advent

December 14, 2014

THE ADVENT OF THE WORD OF GOD

From a sermon by the late Robert Crouse

The Advent which we celebrate is the Advent of the Word of God: the coming forth into the world of God's eternal Word, his Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ - God from God, Light from Light, Very God from Very God, eternally begotten from the Father, before all worlds. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." So says St. John's Gospel: "The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.... He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.... And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (1:1-14).

The Word of God is God the Son, the eternal offspring of the Father. As our words are the offspring, the children of our minds, temporally conceived and uttered, so the Word of God is the Divine thinking, conceived and uttered eternally, the very life of God himself. In that Divine thinking, all things are created. "All things were made by him", says St. John: that is to say, all things have their existence in and through God's thinking them. Without that thought, without that Word, "was not anything made that was made".

And, therefore, the Word of God is always in the world; or, perhaps better to say, the world is always in the Word of God. The world exists in God's thinking of it, and without that Word, it could not exist for the

least fraction of a second. The Word of God is present in all creation, in every moment of it. "by the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the hosts of them by the breath of his mouth" (Psalm 33:6). And not only the world of nature, but also we ourselves have our existence in the Word of God. As St. Augustine remarks, "Men go out and gaze in astonishment at high mountains, the mighty waves of the sea, the long courses of great rivers, the vastness of the ocean, and the motions of the stars, while they overlook the greater wonder of the inner life of their own souls". The innermost life of our very souls - that too is the Word of God, for he is "the light that lighteneth every man that cometh into the world". The Word of God is there in every judgment of truth and every desire of good.

The Word of God is present to the whole of nature, and present to the very essence of our souls. How then shall we speak of the Advent, the coming, of the Word of God? How can he come who was never for a moment absent? We do not speak of the advent of an absent God, we speak rather of the appearing, the manifestation of an ever-present God. "He was in the world, and the world knew him not", says St. John. Though the Word of God is ever-present, closer indeed to us than we are to ourselves, closer than "soul and spirit", closer than "joints and marrow", yet we lose sight of him in our slavish subjection to his creatures. And therefore the Word of

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STANDING NOTICES

The occasional Sacraments of Baptism, Matrimony, Penance, Communion and Unction of the Sick, and the Office of Burial of the Dead are always available by appointment, at announced times, or as necessary.

HOSPITAL VISITATIONS

Please call the Church Office to inform the clergy if you or a loved one is in the hospital.

ST. JOHN'S WEB SITE

Parish Paper essays and recordings of Services and Sermons are to be found on our web site:
www.stjohnssav.org

VESTRY OFFERING CHAIRMEN

8:00 Mr. Arthur D. Weed
10:30 Mr. E. Brian Culver

USHER CHAIRMAN

Mr. Robert J. Merritt and Mr. Robert J. Merritt Jr.

The flowers at the altar on are given to the glory of God and in living memory of Mahla Kent Wilson by Mr. and Mrs. Randolph K. Wilson.

And in loving memory of Marshall F. Campbell, Jr. and Alexander Mueller Archie by Dr. and Mrs. H. Emerson Thomas.

And in joyful and loving celebration of the birthday of Rence Schmidt by her loving husband, Peter Schmidt.

And on the occasion of the celebration of Max Cooper Hamilton by Ms. Patti Cooper.

And in loving memory of Susan Schirm by David, Mena, Parks and Alex Gardiner.

And in loving memory of Josephine Kennedy Osborne by her family.

And in memory of loved ones by Mrs. William E. Hutchinson, Jr.

CHANCEL SOCIETY

Ms. Jayne G. Holland, Mrs. Carter C. Hubbard, Jr.
Ms. Anne H. Mingleдорff, Mrs. John G. Bradshaw, Jr.
Mrs. Timothy E. Coy, Mrs. T. Herbert Guerry III
Mrs. L. Dale Hendrix, Jr., Mrs. Marie Simmons.
Mrs. I. D. Futrell, Jr., Mrs. William T. Moore, Jr.

DAILY SERVICES

Mrs. David A. Young, Mrs. Timothy E. Coy
Mrs. Jonathan D. Sprague, Mrs. Wm. Howard Helmken II
Ms. Anne H. Mingleдорff, Mrs. Neil H. Victor

ACOLYTES

8:00 volunteer needed
10:30 John Osborne, Jamie McClellan
Patrick Perrie, Finn Repella
Edwin Shepherd, Jackson Repella

COFFEE HOUR CHAIRMAN

Mrs. Robert J. Merritt, Jr.

ADULT EDUCATION SUNDAYS 9:30 A.M.

Men's Discussion Group Third Floor, Cranmer Hall.
Led by Rick Wright, Walter Strong, and Charles Ezelle.

Women's Discussion Group Reading Room,
Cranmer Hall. Led by Carol Hewson, Susan Donahue,
Linda Sheahan, and Laura Wimbish

Harlotry, Compassion, Shepherding, and Jesus - 3rd
floor, Cranmer Hall. Led by Jack Wray.

Sin and Judgment in Shakespeare's History Plays 3rd
Floor East. Not meeting til Jan.

Middle and High School Youth. Third Floor. Led by
Mrs. Skip Jennings and Fr. Bergstrom.

St. John's Gospel Chapel. Led by Fr. Dunbar.

MEN'S WEEKDAY STUDY & DISCUSSION

Tuesday 6:45 a.m. Breakfast and Discussion on the Holy
Spirit, with Fr. O'Brien, Parish House.

Thursday 7 a.m., 2 Samuel, Fr. Dunbar, Reading Room,
Cranmer Hall.

WOMEN'S WEEKDAY STUDY & DISCUSSION

Monday Noon, led by Fr. Bergstrom, on John Jewell's
Apology and Defence.

Thursday 9:15 a.m., led by Fr. O'Brien.
on Plato's Euthyphro - What is Piety? What is Religion?

PLEASE REMEMBER YOUR CHURCH IN YOUR WILL

God has spoken through the Law and the Prophets, and "in the fullness of time", "in these last days", he has spoken by the word made flesh in Jesus Christ.

The Word of God, the eternal offspring of the Father, was made audible to bodily ears, and visible to bodily eyes, so that we who were sunk in bodily and temporal things might be recalled to his eternal kingdom of the spirit: "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." "We have touched and handled of the Word of life". That is what Advent is about; that is the sense of Bethlehem.

(...)The Advent of the Word of God is inevitably a judgment, and that is a dominant note of the Advent season. The Infant of Bethlehem judges our pretensions, the truthful Word of God is judge of all our lies, the crucified Word of God judges all our expectations. But his coming is also ... the ground of our living hope, and thus the Advent season also has a note of rejoicing.... The coming of that light is a crisis and a judgment for each one of us; our hope and confidence is that he himself provides the grace whereby we see and serve that light. RDC

CHRISTMAS GREENS FOR THE CHURCH

To give a Poinsettia, Wreath or Garland for the decoration of the Church, please send a check to the Church Office, made out to **St. John's Chancel Society**. Please include a note of *how the memorial or other intention should read and by whom it is given*. **Poinsettia--\$30, Wreath/Garland \$80.**

VESTRY OFFICERS 2015

These persons were elected to serve as Vestry Officers in 2015: Mr. William. C. Rodgers, Sr. Warden; Mrs. Richard C. E. (Stacy) Jennings, Jr Warden; Mr. Richard Wright, Treasurer; Mr. E. Brian Culver, Clerk; M. Tyus Butler, Jr., Esq., Chancellor; Mrs. Stuart (Susan) Clifford, Assistant Treasurer.

ADVENT PROSE

Refrain: Drop down, ye heavens, from above, * and let the skies pour down righteousness. *Cantor:* Be not wroth very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever: thy holy cities are a wilderness, Sion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation: our holy and beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee. *Repeat Refrain.* We have sinned, and are as an unclean thing, and we all do fade as a leaf: and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away; thou hast hid thy face from us: and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities. *Repeat Refrain.* Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know me and believe me: I, even I, am the Lord, and beside me there is no Saviour: and there is none that can deliver out of my hand. *Repeat Refrain.* Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, my salvation shall not tarry. I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions: Fear not, for I will save thee: for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Redeemer. *Repeat Refrain.*

PARISH KALENDAR THIS WEEK

Monday to Friday

8:15 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.

*Morning/Evening Prayer
& Holy Communion*

In addition, on Wednesday

9:45 a.m. *Litany*

10 a.m. *Sung Eucharist*

Saturday

10:30 a.m. *Holy Communion*

WEEKDAYS OF ADVENT IV

Monday December 22: ST. THOMAS A & M

Monday and Tuesday

8:15 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.

*Morning or Evening Prayer
with Holy Communion*

Wednesday 24th

8:15 a.m. *Morning Prayer & Holy Communion*

No Service at 10 a.m.

OFFERING ENVELOPES

were mailed to those who requested them on December 3rd.

8:00 A.M. - HOLY COMMUNION

Collect, Epistle, and Gospel Prayer Book page 93 (90)
A continental breakfast is available in the Cranmer Hall following this service.

9:30a.m.-12:00 (Noon)—Nursery (*Cranmer Hall*)

9:30-10:15 A.M.: ALL AGES CHRISTIAN EDUCATION (*Cranmer Hall*)

10:30 A.M.-END OF SERVICE: PRE-SCHOOL & PRE-KINDERGARTEN
(Activities in Cranmer Hall for children during the 9:30 education and/or 10:30 service times)

10:30 A.M.—MORNING PRAYER AND SERMON

HYMN #10 <i>On Jordan's Bank</i>	Winchester New
Sentences, Confession, Absolution and Lord's Prayer	Prayer Book, pages 3-7
Versicles and Responses	7-8
VENITE EXULTEMUS DOMINO (<i>with antiphon</i>) #606.....	9
Psalm #85.....	446
First Lesson: Isaiah 35 <i>The flourishing of Christ's kingdom foretold by Isaiah.</i>	
ADVENT PROSE: (<i>Choir - the congregation may remain seated</i>).....	text on page 3
Second Lesson: 1 Corinthians 4:1 and St. Matthew 11:2.....	94
BENEDICTUS #638	14
<i>Children may exit following the cross for JOYFUL NOISE (5's and 6's) and PSALM PSINGERS (Gr 2-5)</i>	
Apostles' Creed	15
Collects for the Day	93, 90
Fixed Collects	17
HYMN #9 <i>Hark! A Thrilling Voice is Sounding</i>	Merton
THE SERMON.....	Fr. O'Brien

OFFERING

Sentences

Anthem: *On Jordan's Bank The Baptist's Cry* Claudio Monteverdi
 Annelise Nelson, Cello

Presentation of Alms: Doxology #139

Prayer and Blessing.

HYMN #440 *Watchman, Tell Us of the Night*..... Aberystwyth

VOLUNTARY *Kyrie Eleison* arr. Charles Callahan

*Everyone is invited to the Coffee Hour in the Parish House immediately following the 10:30 service.
 If you are visiting, please make yourself known.*

12 Noon—HOLY COMMUNION (CHAPEL) Collect, Epistle, Gospel p. 93 (90)