



ST. JOHN'S NORWOOD
Chevy Chase-Bethesda

SAINT JOHN'S AT THE CROSSROADS

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December 21, 2014

www.stjohnsnorwood.org

Christmas "Presence"

It's crunch time. Last minute runs to the store or online surfing for presents, food, holiday attire and whatever else is still outstanding that will make this Christmas holiday complete. Soon the countdown will be over, the last Advent candle lit and calendar-chocolate consumed. Soon we will be singing Silent Night together to the flickering of the altar candles surrounded by the warmth of friends, family, and our church community.

As we go down our checklists, I wanted to offer us one more item this Christmas season (if your checklist is anything like mine, it's most likely not already on there) - one that is arguably the most significant, valuable, and central to the season:

Christmas is about incarnation. Incarnation is when one steps into the reality of another and is present to them in *their world, their time, their experience*. God's greatest gift to humankind is the gift of presence. Emmanuel: God with us. Of all the gifts that have ever been given, it is this one - God's presence to us, and our presence to God and to one another - that makes the greatest and longest lasting impact.

This Christmas Season, I am adding the words "be present" to my Christmas checklist. A reminder not to miss the opportunity to give and receive the most valuable gift.

Whether you are anticipating this Christmas with excitement and joy or with sadness and feelings of loss, may your heart be filled with the peace of God's nearness. And as you savor those precious moments to slow down and be present to yourself, to others, and to the divine in you, may you both give and experience the wonder of Emmanuel.

Merry Christmas.

Sari+



Introducing Our New Parish Administrator

Karen Berry joins St. John's as Parish Administrator after serving as Office Manager, Print Production Manager, and Purchasing Director for several advertising agencies and non-profit organizations, including private Christian preparatory schools in Minnesota and Massachusetts. Karen most recently served as Office Manager in the Boston and Washington DC offices of Environmental Resources Management, a global consultancy with over 5,000 employees in 40 countries. Karen and her husband Brook hail from Minnesota, where Karen earned a degree in Music and Psychology from Bethel University. Over the past 30 years, she has served as organist in a number of churches, including St. Luke's of the Mountains Episcopal Church in La Crescenta, CA, where she first met Sari and Tanory Ateek. Most recently, she has had the opportunity to play at St. John's, substituting for Anne Timpane over the course of the summer. Karen and Brook have been married for 26 years and have raised three children: Calvin, 23, Bailey, 22, and Madison, 19, who is a sophomore at Seattle Pacific University. Karen and Brook have been attending St. John's for the past year and a half, and are excited to become more involved in the church community.

Building Community at the Crossroads of Faith and Life

Our members represent a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds, nationalities, family configurations, sexual orientations, abilities, and religious traditions. Indeed, chances are that there's someone like you at St. John's. We are single, married, partnered, divorced, widowed, remarried, gay and lesbian, with and without children, empty nesters, old and young, and differently-abled; you name it - we are here.

Women's Book Group

The next meeting of the Women's Book Group will be on Monday, January 5, 2015 at 7:30 p.m. at the home of Nancy Wiecking. Please call Nancy ([301-320-3388](tel:301-320-3388)) for directions or any other questions you may have.

We will be discussing "The Gallery of Vanished Husbands" by Natasha Solomons. The cover of this book may look like one of our typical British mysteries, but it is much more than that. In a London conservative Jewish community where only husbands can divorce their spouses, a young widow (or is she?) finds a new life in an artists' world. Lots of twists and turns here. It promises to bring on some interesting discussions.

As a general matter, our book club selections are fiction by women authors, but we do also choose non-fiction and the occasional male author, so please join us and bring your own suggestions for future readings.

Following are the next 3 selections for anyone who wants to read ahead:

- 2/1/15 Soldier Girls: The Battles of Three Women at Home and at War by Helen Thorpe
- 3/2/15 The Golem and The Jinni: A Novel by Helene Wecker
- 4/6/15 The Summer Without Men by Siri Husvedt

Mary Chyun

Men's Book Club Living With Mortality

The Men's Book Club will meet on January 14, 2015 to discuss two works that confront the difficult topic of our own mortality. The first is Leo Tolstoy's classic, "The Death of Ivan Ilyich." Written shortly after Tolstoy's profound religious conversion, it studies the professionally successful but personally barren life of Ilyich as he confronts a painful death and ultimately, the realization about life that obliterates its fearful hold on him. The second is a modern work by a surgeon, Atul Gawande, titled, "Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End." Together they will allow us the opportunity to discuss the role that fear of death, whether implicit or explicit, plays in our lives, to search for a path constructively to integrate that reality into the actions and goals that shape our lives, and the options we and our loved ones have to bring peace at the end. We meet on the 14th at Joe Winder's house beginning at 7:30 pm.

Earle O'Donnell

Eighth Annual Bethlehem Prayer Service
Saturday, December 20, 2014
10:00 AM EST
If you are unable to join us at the Cathedral, we encourage you to watch the service live at www.nationalcathedral.org



Open House
Potluck Supper
&
Carol Sing

Sunday, December 21
5:45 pm in the Parish Hall

Bring a savory or sweet dish to share
and join in the caroling!

Passages

*"If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it."
1 Cor. 12:26*

Please contact the Office if you have a celebration, thanksgiving, sorrow, or other news to share with the Parish.

If you or someone you know would appreciate any form of pastoral care, please call Penny Winder [[301-938-1193](tel:301-938-1193) or winderph@verizon.net] or Anne Derse [[301-401-5717](tel:301-401-5717) and derseae@hotmail.com] or the church office.

Music Notes

Can't wait to sing Christmas carols? You'll get your first chance at our Parish Open House on Sunday, December 21. Following the pot-luck dinner, we'll gather around the piano and celebrate Jesus' birth (a little early) by singing some of the best known Christmas carols. I'll share some background information about each carol and together, we'll sing "Good King Wenceslas," "The first Nowell," "Hark the herald angels sing," "O little town of Bethlehem," and as many others as we can squeeze in.

The Oxford Book of Carols states that carols should have a number of different verses, a simple spirit, and texts that are narrative, celebratory, or contemplative. Today, we literally have hundreds of Christmas songs, each holding a special place in our hearts as they remind us of family, tradition, and the special time of year when we celebrate our Savior's birth.

Anne Timpane

Christmas Eve, Wednesday December 24

5 pm—Pageant Service with Communion

8 pm—Holy Eucharist with music led by the Alleluia Choir; musical preludes begin at 7:30 pm

10:30 pm—Holy Eucharist with music led by the St. John's Choir; musical preludes begin at 10:00 pm

Christmas Day, Thursday, December 25 10 am—Holy Eucharist

Sunday, December 28

8 am Lessons and Carols/Holy Eucharist in the Chapel

10 am combined service

Lessons and Carols/Holy Eucharist in the Nave (Church School resumes on January 11 at 10 am)

5 pm Come as You Are Lessons and Carols/Communion in the Nave

Sunday, January 4

8 am Holy Eucharist in the Chapel

10 am combined service of Holy Eucharist in the Nave (Church School resumes on January 11 at 10 am)

5 pm Come as You Are Communion in the Nave

Sunday, January 11 – regular schedule of services at 8 am, 9 am, 11:15 am and 5 pm resumes

with Education Hour at 10 am, including Church school and Adult forum

SAINT JOHN'S AT THE CROSSROADS

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Calendar

Sunday December 21, 2014

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

- 8:00 am Holy Eucharist with sermon
- St. Mary's Chapel
- 9:00-12:00 Parish Library Open
- 9:00 am Children's Chapel – Hines Hall
- 9:00 am Holy Eucharist with sermon
and music led by the Alleluia Choir - Nave
- 10:00 am Christmas Pageant Presentation - Nave
Bible Study – Library
- 11:15 am Holy Eucharist with sermon
and music led by the St. John's Choir
– Nave
- 5:00 pm Come As You Are communion service–
Nave
- 5:30 pm Youth Group – Youth Room
- 5:45 pm Parish Open House – Parish Hall
Potluck with Caroling

Monday – Tuesday December 22-23, 2014

Parish Office open 9 am – 2 pm

Tuesday December 23, 2014

- 12 - 1:30 pm Church Staff – Rector's Office
- 4:00 pm Primary Choir – Choir Room
- 5:00 pm Children's Choir – Choir Room
- 7:00 pm Alleluia Choir – Choir Room

Wednesday December 24– Friday December 26, 2014

Parish Office Closed

Sunday December 28, 2014

The First Sunday after Christmas

- 8:00 am Lessons and Carols/Holy Eucharist
- St. Mary's Chapel
- 10:00 am Combined service of Lessons and Carols
with Holy Eucharist - Nave
- 11:00 am Bible Study – Library
- 5:00 pm Come As You Are Lessons and Carols and
communion service– Nave

Monday December 29, 2014 – Thursday January 1, 2015

Parish Office Closed

Friday, January 2, 2015

Parish Office open 9am – 2 pm

If you wish to be removed from the Saint John's mailing list, or no longer wish to receive the *Saint John's at the Crossroads* newsletter, please let the office know.

The next issue of *Crossroads* will be dated Jan. 11, 2015.

Final article drafts must be submitted to the Parish Office by the *Sunday* prior to publication. One may e-mail articles to newsletter@stjohnsnorwood.org (with "Crossroads" in the subject line). Sending text in the body of the e-mail is preferred.

Note: The church staff reserves the right to determine the content of *Crossroads* and edit for grammar or length requirements.



Sunday, January 4, 2015

Celebration of Epiphany

- 8:00 am Holy Eucharist with sermon
- St. Mary's Chapel
- 10:00 am Children's Chapel – Hines Hall
- 10:00 am Combined service of Holy Eucharist with
sermon and music led by the Alleluia
Choir and the St. John's Choir- Nave
- 11:00 am Parish Hall reception
- 5:00 pm Come As You Are communion service–
Nave