



THE BULLETIN

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL
An Episcopal Community in the Heart of Houston, Texas

DECEMBER 2019
CHRISTCHURCHCATHEDRAL.ORG

AFTER-HOURS EMERGENCY CARE LINE | 713-826-5332



The trio Mendeliz, who perform during the 1 p.m. service, released a CD this fall and will be at Las Posadas.

Evangelism through music

At the 1 o'clock bilingual service on Sundays, a trio of musicians known as Mendeliz accompanies worship for the Spanish-speaking congregation, providing liturgical music that's joyful, soulful, and meditative.

Their musical presence at church has been instrumental, so to speak, with growing the community that attends the weekly worship, says the **Rev. Simón Bautista Betances**. They also play an important role in Episcopal evangelism, he says, by representing Christ Church Cathedral when performing in Latino and other neighborhoods around Houston.

Mendeliz is comprised of musicians

Alfredo Mendez Peimbert, the keyboardist/songwriter who leads the band; vocalist **Liliana Elizondo**, who also plays percussion; and vocalist **Manuel Noe**.

Each also performs professionally in both religious and secular settings and at events.

At the Cathedral, the musicians are known for honoring the lyrics but enlivening traditional hymns and music, Bautista says. The trio's versions tend to change up the tempo and tones (as in "louder and faster," he says), adapting the traditional music to the Cathedral's community. And they have expanded the

MUSIC, page 6

Love is born

*This is no time for a child to be born,
With the earth betrayed
by war and hate
And a nova lighting the sky to warn
That time runs out & the sun burns late.*

*That was no time for
a child to be born,
In a land in the crushing
grip of Rome;
Honor and Truth were
trampled
by scorn —
Yet here did the Savior
make his home.*



THE VERY REV.
BARKLEY
THOMPSON

*When is the time for Love to be born?
The inn is full on the planet earth,
And by greed and pride the sky is torn —
Yet Love still takes the risk of birth.*

— Madeline L'Engle, "The Risk of Birth"

Despite that so much in our experience tells us this is no world for children, on Christmas God chose to take the risk and be born among us. God took the risk to enter into the world that we have torn asunder, and God enters — miracle of miracles — as one of us. From that night forward, we are not alone. Any and every thing we face is faced alongside a God who walks and has walked this way with us, who enters in fullness into our lives, sharing our fears, our vulnerabilities, and most importantly, our hopes.

The birth of a child is always an act of hope, and in this case the reverberations ripple out cosmically. To the anxious parents shoved into the back corner of a barn to have their child among the grime and the animals, hope is born. To the shepherds fearful in the fields with wolves pacing round, hope is born. To us in the modern world huddled against the darkness outside, hope is born. And as **Madeline L'Engle** says so eloquently, *Love is born.*

BORN, page 8

Volunteers needed for Christmas at the Cathedral

BY GARY KRAUSE

Christmas at the Cathedral, sponsored by the Mission Outreach Council, has been a beloved tradition for many years. Its success depends on the nearly 200 volunteers who give of their time, talent, and treasure.

CHRISTMAS AT THE CATHEDRAL

Saturday, December 14

On Saturday, December 14, we are hosting students and families from Bruce Elementary (via Kids Hope) and Small Steps Nurturing Center. We need your help!

Volunteers can sign up for 2-hour slots anytime between 9 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. to help with simple tasks such as

VOLUNTEER, page 2



Take time to volunteer to help children have a merry Christmas celebration.

VOLUNTEER, from cover

checking in volunteers to picking up catering items to running Christmas games and crafts. Volunteers, youth included, can also hand out hot cocoa, decorate Reynolds Hall, supervise fake snowball throws, run a photo booth, be Frosty the Snowman, or even an elf!

The event itself starts at 4 p.m., with playtime, games, prizes, and crafts. Guests then are seated for a family-style meal, and at the end of the celebration, each family leaves with a gift.

Christmas is a great time to reflect on our good fortune and give back to the local community of the Cathedral. Sign-up sheets will be available in the Cloister on Sundays; watch for a link to the sign-up sheet in the church leaflet, weekly e-news, and on the Cathedral website (under "Registrations").

Cathedral Choir gives U.S. premiere

BY CANON FOR MUSIC ROBERT L. SIMPSON

In addition to the Cathedral Choir's annual service of Advent Lessons and Carols, which this year will be held on Sunday, December 8, at 5 p.m., there will be a new, special opportunity to hear Advent choral music this December at the Cathedral.

CHRISTMAS ORATORIO

Friday, December 6

On Friday, December 6, at 7:30 p.m., the Cathedral Choir and instrumentalists present the United States premiere of "Christmas Oratorio" by renowned British composer **Bob Chilcott**. This work was introduced in England at The Three Choirs Festival, one of the oldest choral festivals in the world. In the United States, the Cathedral Choir will be the first to perform this enchanting work.

"Christmas Oratorio" intertwines words from the gospels of Luke and Matthew with 16th–19th century poetry to create a compelling retelling of the Christmas story. Chilcott's gift for tuneful invention is on full display.

In the great tradition of **Bach**, the congregation is asked to join in the singing of five hymns during the course of the 45-minute work. Admission is free. Plan to gather your family and friends to join you for the special occasion.



The Cathedral Choir also sings at Christmas Eve.

OUR CATHEDRAL FAMILY

We celebrate with

- ☞ new members **Ryan, Molly, and Caleb Carnes, Isaac, Cris, and Isaiah Tristan**, and returning members **Glenn Turner Jr. and Joan Eidman**.
- ☞ **Charles Gillman and Eduardo Torres**, who were married in the Cathedral October 12.
- ☞ **Monica Gonzales and Daniel Torres**, who were married in the Cathedral October 19.
- ☞ the families of **Bo Ellis Bagheri, Lucas Philip Barba, Bryce Laine Fiorini, Emma Kathryn Freiburger, Luella Christine Hamlin, Ruth Jerauld Saour, and Michael "Miggy" Lee Wong II**, who were baptized Sunday, November 3.

We extend heartfelt sympathy to

- ☞ the family of member **Richard Cook**, who passed away on September 22, 2019. Richard is husband to member **Dr. Susan Cook**.
- ☞ the family of **Bernard Anthony Lynn**, who passed away. Bernard is father to member **Anne Lynn**.
- ☞ the family of **John Dieter Ufer**, who passed away on October 23, 2019. John is son to members **Dieter and Amy Ufer**.
- ☞ the family of **Michael Galbreth**, who passed away on October 19, 2019. Mike is husband to **Rainey Knudson** and father to **Tennessee Galbreth**.

The flowers on the Cathedral Altar

- ☞ on Sunday, December 2, are given to the glory of God in loving memory of **Linda Anne Baldwin and Dorothy Geiselman Baldwin** by the family of **Robert B. Baldwin III**.
- ☞ on Sunday, December 8, are given to the glory of God in loving memory of **Geraldine Campbell Nachske and John H. Naschske**.
- ☞ on Sunday, December 15, are given to the glory of God in loving memory of **Anne Randolph Bledsoe** and in thanksgiving for **Nancy Staub Wareing** by their children.
- ☞ on Sunday, December 22, are given to the glory of God in loving memory of **Robert C. and Madie M. Richter** by **Bob Richter Jr.**

The flowers in the floor vases

- ☞ on Sunday, November 24, were given to the glory of God in loving memory of **Jack Marrin Crook** by his wife, **Barbara**.

The flowers at the Book of Remembrance

- ☞ on Sunday, November 3, were given to the glory of God in loving memory of **Jerry Dale McNiece** by **Enid McNiece**.

The flowers at the World War I Memorial

- ☞ on Sunday, November 3, were given to the glory of God in loving memory of **John Dieter Ufer** in honor of **Amy and Dieter Ufer** by **Vicki Cawley**.

The greens in both Advent Wreaths

- ☞ on Sunday, December 1, are given to the glory of God in thanksgiving for the life and work of **Jane Brown, Judy Drury, Mary Clarke Mackenzie, Cindy Dickson, and Mimi Ford**.

The candles on the Advent Wreaths

- ☞ on Sunday, December 1, in the Cathedral are given to the glory of God in thanksgiving for the life and work of **Helen Ann Fisher, Norma Jane Hagan, Ella Mae Hayslip, and Norma Jones**.
- ☞ on Sunday, December 1, in Golding Chapel are given to the glory of God in thanksgiving for the life and work of **Ardell Ray Jr.**

In Search of Saint Patrick: A Celtic Pilgrimage in 2021



Armagh Market Square and Saint Patrick's Church

Dean Thompson will host an information session on a Celtic pilgrimage on Sunday, December 8, at 1 p.m. in Sanders Hall. Instructions on how to secure a place on the pilgrimage will be distributed at that time. It is likely the pilgrimage will fill quickly, and prospective participants are strongly encouraged to attend the information session.

Saint Patrick is associated with shamrocks and green beer, but the historical Patrick was the apostle of Christianity to Ireland. In the early A.D. 400s, Patrick was kidnapped at age 16 and taken to Ireland as a slave, where he served for six years before escaping. Patrick ultimately became a bishop, and he requested a commission to return to the land of his enslavement to share the Gospel there. Famously, Patrick lit the Easter flame on the Hill of Slane in defiance of the Irish high king and his druid priests. That flame shines still, and Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland. Patrick's life and legacy are both fascinating and inspiring.

From June 13–25, 2021, **Dean Barkley Thompson** will lead a Cathedral Celtic pilgrimage to Ireland and France, tracing the life of Saint Patrick. Dean Thompson will be assisted by the **Rev. Marcus Losack**, a priest of the Church of Ireland. The pilgrimage will begin in Dublin and go to Northern Ireland to visit Downpatrick and Armagh before traveling across the English Channel to Brittany. In Brittany, pilgrims will visit Cherbourg and Bayeux, where they will see the famous Bayeux Tapestry chronicling the Norman invasion of England in 1066. Next,

PILGRIMAGE, page 6

Quarterly Vestry Report

Six years ago, our parish designed a plan launched in 2014 that yielded five years of accomplishment driven by the vision action plan "A Future Filled with Hope." A new Visioning Task Force has begun the effort to design our next steps forward. This process was kicked off with a full morning of work on October 19, primarily relying on the councils to drive its development. In addition, a survey of our entire membership has been requested — available on the Cathedral website — to gather your input to guide the councils with your thoughts about our future focus.



SENIOR WARDEN
FREDRICKA
BRECHT

The council system has a strong history here. **Frances Kittrell** reminded us that it was originally proposed by **Dean McGehee** in 1981 as "a shared leadership model for parish decision making and administration." The councils have flourished and expanded over the 30 years since and are now also serving as the vehicle to consider the path in front of us. The final action plan from the visioning process will be presented to the vestry for consideration at its retreat in February 2020.

To keep us regularly informed, vestry liaisons are assigned to each council, and they make monthly reports on their activities.

Here's what we heard over the last three months:

The Justice and Peace Council reported on its upcoming projects, including an observance of National Coming Out Day, a tour of civil rights sites in Houston, and a "Go Green" project for the Cathedral. The Young Adults Council reported on the Cathedral 20s & 30s group's activities along with Cathedral Urban Service Experience (CUSE), which delivers support (housing, meals, etc.) and activities for mission groups coming to do social service in Houston. Welcome & Evangelism reported its progress to reinvigorate the Welcome Team, to learn best practices from other churches in our diocese, to add a social media component to promote Cathedral awareness, and to add support for the Tour Guide team. In addition, they celebrated the addition of the **Rev. Becky Zartman** to their team.

To expand council awareness, a new "Ministry of the Week" program has been added to the cloister tables, where each council and ministry will be available on various Sundays to explain its purpose, publicize events and projects, and sign up

VESTRY REPORT, page 5

Can You Hear Footsteps? Advent offerings at the Cathedral

BY BOOKSTORE MANAGER LUCY CHAMBERS

For some, the Christmas season starts at Halloween: lights go up, shelves groan with merchandise, and pop carols fill the airwaves. Grandma gets incessantly run over by reindeer, Santa Claus won't stop kissing Mommy, and too many people are acting nuttin' but bad. The Elf on the Shelf is exhausted, and it's not feeling much like the most wonderful time of the year.

Thank goodness for Advent, the time-honored antidote to all this frenetic activity. Since the fifth century, the church has recognized the importance of a mindful approach to the Nativity. Back then, it lasted forty days and was known as the Lent of St. Martin, because the main activity was fasting. By the eleventh century, it had become the four-week season we experience today, but penitence and fasting remained the focus.

Although most of us probably lean more towards playing reindeer games and eating roast beast than fasting as we prepare for Christmas, we can still create an Advent practice that prepares our hearts for the birth of the Christ child in our lives. How do we do it? As author and environmentalist **Bill McKibben** says, "Advent is 'the time to listen for footsteps.' You can't hear



Wreath-making is one of many Advent traditions at the Cathedral.

FOOTSTEPS, page 5

IN PICTURES

Below: Choristers from across the diocese came together to sing at the Cathedral in October.



Above: Parents, kids, and Sunday School teachers got to meet up together in October.

Left: The joy and wonder of the holy sacrament of baptism.



Above: A great crowd of 20s & 30s convened for the Buffalo Bayou boat tour.

Creating Home

They say that home is where the heart is. Is it possible to have two, three, four homes?

My first home is Pennsylvania, the rolling mountains of the Susquehanna River Valley. Four beautiful seasons, a crisp fall, snowy winters, muddy springs, and lightning bug summers. My second home is D.C., nerds and politicos, movers and shakers. My third home is now big-hearted Houston, a warm (very warm, actually) Texas welcome with big skies and tall buildings that reflect the sunsets.



THE REV. BECKY ZARTMAN

And yet, the place that was my real home in all these places wasn't where I was living. My real home is, and has been as long as I can remember, the churches of these wonderful places. St. Matthew's, Sunbury, where I ran around like I owned the place and peppered my long-suffering rector with questions. Virginia Seminary's Chapel, where I fell even more in love with God. St. Thomas' Dupont Circle, where I learned how to preach and be a priest, and even the Jesuit Crypt at Georgetown University, where I learned how to fiercely love my students. And now my home is here, at the Cathedral. And even though I sometimes get homesick for my other homes, it's clear to me that God has called me to make my home here, with you.

This Advent, we'll be looking at the concept of "creating home" in a three-part series, happening right after The Well service at 5 p.m. On Sunday, December 1, at 6:15 p.m., we'll welcome **Margaret Wilson Reckling** as she presents her book of photographs and more entitled *Woody Creek: Views from a Homestead*. On December 8, artist **Ariane Roesch** will present *How to Build: A House, A Life, A Future*. On December 15, I'll be leading a discussion about home, how we find it, how we make it, and how we can learn to find our home in God.

Please join us for an opening into the idea of home during these three Sundays at 6:15 p.m. in the Mellinger Room.

VESTRY REPORT, from page 3

volunteers. We hope you will stop by on your way to Sunday services to learn about all the meaningful ways they contribute to the Cathedral and how you can be a part of it.

Our Junior Warden, **Andre Jackson**, leads the substantial task of maintaining these buildings and grounds in good working order. He reports on these needs and their solutions, which can be substantial given the size of this church and its many facilities. His committee

is also completing the Sowing the Seed projects, and vestry members were pleased by his report that all this work will be completed by year's end. Wow!

And lastly, I want to express appreciation for your contributions to the Every Member Canvass (EMC) this fall. Your Cathedral has bucked the trend of membership decline that exists in every diocese in the U.S. We have consistently been growing membership overall and in all demographic groups. The vestry encouraged

Dean Thompson in his decision to use the Dean's Hour to describe the need to accelerate our giving trends and to encourage broadening it beyond the over-65 crowd. As senior warden, I have learned so much about the depth of our inspired service to our congregation and to the greater community where we reside and serve. I am impressed to have learned what all our councils and ministries do, and I am honored that my contribution is part of this inspiration. What will your gift inspire?

FOOTSTEPS, from page 3

footsteps when you're running yourself."

The Cathedral provides many opportunities to slow down and listen during Advent. On Advent Sunday, December 1, at the 10 o'clock hour, Advent Wreath Making takes place in Reynolds Hall.

After The Well and Tea & Toast on December 1, 8, and 15, **Canon Becky Zartman** hosts Creating Home conversations: December 1, she will talk with **Margaret Wilson Reckling** about her book *Woody Creek: Views from a Homestead*. December 8, she visits with **Ariane Roesch**, author of *How to Build: a House, a Life, a Future*. And on December 15, she delves further into the spiritual side of the concept of home and what it means for us at Christmas.

As the footsteps get closer, Las Posadas begin. Each night from December 16 to December 24, Cathedral members participate in the re-enactment of **Mary and Joseph's** walk from house to house looking for a place for the baby to be born. Fabulous food and a warm welcome are the hallmarks of this wonderful Cathedral tradition. The Grand Posada at the Cathedral is Saturday, December 21. To learn more about how to attend any of the Posadas or to participate in being a host, please contact **Sylvia Garcia** at sgarcia@christchurch-cathedral.org or 713-590-3329.

To help your preparations, The Cathedral Bookstore has Advent calendars and devotionals for you, and our Advent Newsletter is in the service leaflet each Sunday with suggestions for everyone on your list. Select your gifts on Sunday before the service, and we'll wrap them before you've had time to finish a cup of the great new Cathedral coffee. Or come down during the week for a merry little lunch hour: do your shopping, attend the noon service, enjoy lunch at Treebeards, then pick up your wrapped gifts. It's the perfect way to check off your list and slow down at the same time.

What will Advent look like for you this year? Will you carve out time for Advent devotions or journaling? Will you light another candle on the wreath each Sunday evening? Walk a posada? Or stroll through your neighborhood looking at lights? There are so many ways we can put practices into place to prepare our hearts to receive the light of Christmas, no matter how loud the world around us becomes.

St. Augustine said, "Christmas is fast approaching. And now that Christ has aroused our seasonal expectations, he'll soon fulfill them all!" In the meantime, the best way for us to manage our expectations is Advent. Your friends at the Cathedral are here to support your journey to Christmas with a wide array of offerings that promise to help this December actually be the most wonderful time of the year.

Deepening the level of services for our homeless neighbors

BY CHIEF ADVANCEMENT OFFICER AT THE BEACON **JULIE FALCON**

In April of this year, COMPASS formally merged with The Beacon, joining its array of services offered within the John S. Dunn Outreach Center and out in the community. The Ardell Ray Day Center remains the hub and central intake point for homemade hot meals, full-service laundry, and showers to an average of 300 individuals experiencing homelessness each operating day. From there, clients are directed to next-step services to help them resolve from their situation.

These next-step services are key to our mission. Whether it's solving a civil legal matter, providing spiritual support, offering mailbox privileges, or connecting individuals with a housing assessor, the availability of these is crucial to our work. Together, they also make The Beacon unique in the landscape of homeless service providers.

While The Beacon has made great strides in assisting the efforts of the community-wide homeless response system known as The Way Home, we recognize there are many individuals who come through our doors whom we haven't had the opportunity yet to fully reach.

With this in mind and with the newly added COMPASS program folded into The Beacon, we see an opportunity to deepen the relationships with these individuals by expanding our case management services.

At present, we are able to serve 10 individuals four days a week utilizing



social work interns. With the addition of trained case management staff, we will be able to double the number of individuals we currently see.

The addition of this intensive case management component means that we will be able to better understand the needs of individuals, help redirect them where needed, and plug them into services inside and outside the walls of the John S. Dunn Outreach Center.

The Beacon has been so fortunate to receive continued support from the Cathedral, other area churches, as well as foundations and individuals who believe in our mission. Previous COMPASS supporters also sustained their commitment to our work this year and we are so grateful.

As we move into the new year and seek to expand our case management efforts, we would greatly appreciate your consideration of a year-end gift.

As always, we welcome you to The Beacon for a visit any time to see the impact of your generosity!

When the holidays feel less than merry

BY MINISTER FOR PASTORAL CARE JODY GILLIT

The holidays can be filled with beautiful sights, sounds, smells, and memories. However, for many, this is not true. It could be that this year you are facing something hard in life. There might be an empty chair at the table that has been filled by someone your whole life. It could be that you had hoped to have a new bundle of joy and yet that dream hasn't been fulfilled. Maybe you can't make it "home" to be with family and you're longing to be in a place where you are known. As some count down the days until Christmas celebrations, others count down the days until Christmas is over, and life can go back to "normal," whatever that is.

Christ Church Cathedral works to be a church for all people at all stages and places in life. The holidays can add a layer of "cheer" that can make it even harder to feel a sense of belonging. If this resonates with you or someone you know, please join us in worship just as you are in this holiday season and consider attending these two events.

On Sunday, December 15, at 10 a.m. in Reynolds Hall, there will be a conversation entitled, "When the Holidays Hurt," discussing how to cope with the pain of grief, loss, and trauma during the holiday season.

"The Longest Night" service, happening at 6 p.m. on Friday, December 20, 2019, in the Cathedral, is a somber, candlelit, reassuring service of hope that might bring comfort in the dim and dark times of life.

If you would like to learn more about pastoral care at Christ Church Cathedral, please contact Minister for Pastoral Care **Jody Gillit** at 713-590-3319.

LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE

December 20

MUSIC, from cover

tried-and-true collection with original works.

Earlier this year, for example, Mendeliz launched its first CD, "Cristo: Vive en Ti" (Christ Lives in You). Elizondo calls the compilation of nine original songs "positive in their spiritual expression" and in styles ranging from ballad to cumbia.

Bautista says the CD was produced with support from the Cathedral "in acknowledgement and appreciation of their talent and their contribution to this ministry."

Recently, all nine songs were accepted for use in a new hymnal under development by the Latino Ministries of the Episcopal Church, Bautista says. "This means a lot because it indicates how the group is contributing not only to the Cathedral but to the Episcopal Church in general."

The new works also reflect how the musicians have been growing in their understanding of Episcopal liturgy and sacred music since beginning their affiliation with the Cathedral, he says. And also in their faith; they have been received into the Episcopal Church at-large and the Cathedral.

Mendez-Peimbert wrote most of the pieces, with his colleagues weighing in on structure and melody, Elizondo explains. Other compositions are in the works for a second CD now under development.

He says God gave him the opportunity to make music and that he draw inspiration everywhere, "from a bird that feeds, to flowers, a new dawn, the moon, the stars, the sun, to children who devoutly learn the word of God."

Banding Together

Mendez-Piembert grew up in a family of musicians and began his formal music studies at age 8. "I had the opportunity to choose between several instruments and fell in love with the piano," he recalls.

He composes a range of music but says "music dedicated to God fills my soul."

The band's participation in Cathedral services has greatly affected and moved him: "It has made me more aware of the needs of others," he says. "It has sensitized my soul and my values; I believe that today I am a much better person than

five years ago. I arrived at the Cathedral on the recommendation of a very dear friend who told me that if I liked going to church, there was need for someone to play every Sunday in the bilingual service."

So he has.

Elizondo had performed with him as part of the duo Lili and Freddie when he invited her to join him on Sundays at the service. The band name is a combination of their surnames.

A teacher and mother of three, Elizondo says her songwriting is inspired by what she observes in those around her. Many people have touched her heart with what they are experiencing, she says. "I feel a responsibility to write what is positive for the soul and mind.

"Sometimes the melody comes first, sometimes it's the lyrics," she says of her process, which includes keeping a notebook for ideas and snippets that come to her. "I love touching people's hearts with something that makes them think about God."

Noe, who has performed since he was five, was invited to join the duo at the service after he filled in for a previous band member. He says he really enjoyed the environment. "The way the congregation welcomed me really made me feel at peace," he says.

Although the musicians accompany services, they also readily mingle at the receptions that follow worship. "They have become part of the community," Bautista says.

Music's Many Purposes

Religious music is more than a worship accompaniment, Bautista says. "It's a powerful tool that elevates the spirit and connects worshippers."

What — and how — Mendeliz plays, however, also connects worshippers to the music traditions of their communities, he says.

"We make music for the world," Elizondo says. "Music breaks barriers."

The Cathedral's congregation has an opportunity to hear Mendeliz every Sunday at the 1 o'clock service. In December, the musicians will accompany Las Posadas, held December 16–24 in a variety of parishioner neighborhoods.

Each of the nine evening processions dramatize the journey to Bethlehem by **Mary** and **Joseph**. The Advent tradition is hosted by the Cathedral's Spanish-speaking congregation and shared with all who'd like to experience the spiritual, cultural, and community observance.

Elizondo says the group will vary the songs each evening but likely will include their most popular piece, a ballad entitled "Llévanos de tu Mano," (Take Us by the Hand).

For the Cathedral's 2019 Las Posadas locations for each night, please contact **Sylvia García** at sgarcia@christchurchcathedral.org or 713-590-3329.

PILGRIMAGE, from page 3

pilgrims will spend time in villages connected to the tradition that believes Patrick to have been kidnapped and taken into slavery from Brittany rather than Britain. The ultimate stop in Brittany will be the stunning Mont St. Michel. Finally, the pilgrimage will travel to Omaha Beach and the American cemetery in Normandy, to pay homage to Allied soldiers who stormed the beaches on June 6, 1944. The pilgrimage will return across the English Channel to Dublin for a farewell dinner before heading home.

Of the pilgrimage, Dean Thompson says, "Studying Celtic Christianity in Ireland is like no other experience, and Celtic Christianity begins with Saint Patrick. I so look forward to exploring, praying, and lifting a pint in fellowship with Cathedral parishioners as we dive deeply into Patrick's life and the Celtic tradition that is so central to Anglicanism."

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Visit christchurchcathedral.org or call **713-222-2593** to learn more about these and other events at the Cathedral.

● Registration recommended ▲ Registration required ✕ Registration closed ★ Childcare available (3 mo. to 12 yrs.) 👥 Bring a friend!

DECEMBER

DECEMBER 1 SUN

Advent Wreath Making ★ 👥

10 a.m., Reynolds Hall. An intentional time set aside to "prepare his room" and make an Advent wreath to mark the coming of Christ.

DECEMBER 4 WED

Dean's Book Club ★

6:30 p.m., McGehee Conference Room. Monthly book discussion group.

DECEMBER 6 FRI

"Christmas Oratorio" U.S. Premiere

7:30 p.m., Cathedral. The U.S. premiere of a new work by well-known English composer Bob Chilcott.

Bridge and Rummikub Night 👥

6:30–9:30 p.m., McGehee Conference Room. Enjoy a few hands of bridge or rounds of Rummikub with Cathedral friends. Bring a dish to share.

DECEMBER 8 SUN

Bishop's Visit and Confirmation

Cathedral. Bishop Kai Ryan will confirm at the 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. services, speak at the Dean's Hour at 10 a.m., and will be with us through the day.

St. Patrick Information Session

1 p.m., Sanders Hall. Dean Thompson will give a presentation on the St. Patrick pilgrimage.

Advent Lessons and Carols ★

5–6:15 p.m., Cathedral. Traditional Episcopal music celebration of Advent, with a reception to follow.

DECEMBER 14 SAT

Christmas Camp ★

9:30–11:30 a.m., Cathedral. Crafts, costumes, carols, and Pageant practice.

Christmas at the Cathedral

3–7 p.m., Reynolds Hall. The Cathedral family opens its doors to those in need, serving hundreds of hot meals.

DECEMBER 15 SUN

Eucharist Instruction ★

10–11 a.m., Cathedral. Learning about communion for children.

When the Holidays Hurt ★

10 a.m., Reynolds Hall. Join our special guest for a candid conversation on how we can cope with the pain of grief, loss and trauma during the holiday season.



DECEMBER 16–24

Las Posadas

7–9 p.m. Celebration with singing, prayers, and traditional refreshments. In Reynolds Hall on Dec. 21.

DECEMBER 20 FRI

Youth Progressive Dinner ▲ 👥

6–10 p.m. High-school students visit three different homes for a spectacular holiday meal. (\$)

The Longest Night ★

6 p.m., Golding Chapel. Service on the solstice for those grieving a loss.

DECEMBER 22 SUN

Lord of the Streets ▲

6:15–8:45, Trinity Episcopal Church, 1012 Holman. Volunteers cook breakfast for the guests at the Lord of the Streets.

Charlie Brown Christmas

10 a.m., Reynolds Hall. View the Christmas classic with your church family. Popcorn, cider, and cheer for everyone.

"A Christmas Memory"

6:30 p.m., Reynolds Hall. Revisit a Cathedral tradition with the screening of an adaptation of Truman Capote's "A Christmas Memory."

DECEMBER 24–25 TUE–WED

Christmas Holidays

Cathedral offices will be closed.

DECEMBER 26–28 THU–SAT

Midwinter ▲

Camp Allen. Diocesan high-school retreat. (\$)

DECEMBER 29 SUN

Annual Gingerbread Contest

10 a.m., Reynolds Hall. Join us for the third annual Cathedral Gingerbread Contest.

Pastorela

1 p.m., Cathedral. Christmas Pageant in Spanish.



DECEMBER 24 TUE

Christmas Eve

4 p.m. Family Service, Holy Eucharist, Rite II, and a Christmas Play. ★

6 p.m. Festival Eucharist, Rite II, in Spanish. ★

7:30 p.m. Organ prelude. ★

8 p.m. Choral Eucharist, Rite II, with the Parish Choir. ★

10:30 p.m. Cathedral Choir prelude.

11 p.m. Festival Eucharist, Rite I, with the Cathedral Choir.

DECEMBER 25 WED

Christmas Day

10 a.m. Eucharist and carols.

DECEMBER 31 TUE

Last Day for 2019 Donations

Donations must be received or post-marked by 12/31/2019 to be credited for 2019.

WEEKLY

SUNDAYS

Dean's Hour, Adult, Youth, and Children's Sunday School Classes ★

10–11 a.m., various locations. (ends Dec. 15)

Celtic Eucharist, "The Well" ★ 👥

5 p.m., Cathedral. Drawing inspiration and music from the Celtic tradition, this service focuses on prayer, silence, meditation, and grace.

Tea and Toast ★

5:45 p.m., Latham Hall. Refreshments and fellowship for worshippers after The Well.

Creating Home ★

6:15 p.m., Mellinger Room. This three-part series meets Dec. 1, 8, and 15 and features writers talking about how to build home.

MONDAYS

Healing Service

12:05 p.m., Golding Chapel.

Bible "By the Glass" 👥

6:30–8 p.m., OKRA, 924 Congress. Fellowship and Bible study.

Cathedral Road Show:

Prayer Ladder ▲

6:30–8 p.m., meets monthly at a choice of locations. Canon Callahan takes a close look at the meaning and practice of prayer.

Tue., Dec. 10, in Montrose

Thu., Dec. 5, in Town & Country

The Corinthians

A weekly, co-ed Bible study on St. Paul's letters to the Corinthians.

Tue., 7–8 a.m., Mellinger Room

Wed., noon–1 p.m., online via Zoom

Thu., noon–1 p.m., Mellinger Room

TUESDAYS

Seed Group – Central and West 👥

6:30–8 p.m., off campus. Middle school youth group in a parishioner's home.

Bible by the Glass North 👥

7 p.m., Brixology in the Vintage; 110 Vintage Park. An extension of our popular downtown bible study, hosted in Spring Cypress.

WEDNESDAYS

Men's Morning Bible Study

7–8 a.m., Jeffers Conference Room.

Women's Morning Bible Study

9:30–11 a.m., Mellinger Room.

Bilingual Eucharist

6–6:30 p.m., Golding Chapel.

Cathedral 20s & 30s ★ 👥

6:30–8 p.m., BYC (Treehouse). Weekly discussion group and social gathering of young adults. (ends Dec. 18 with a Potluck party)

Buscando la Luz ▲

6:30–8 p.m., Mellinger Room. Spanish-language discussion group.

Women's Evening Bible Study ★ 👥

6:30 p.m., McGehee Conference Room. This new group will study the parables of Jesus this fall. (ends Dec. 18)

Root Group – Central 👥

6:30 p.m., off campus. High school youth group in a parishioner's home.

THURSDAYS

Branch Out

11 a.m. to 2 p.m., various locations. Minister for Youth Marcia Quintanilla visits youth in their schools.



Did you know you can read **The Bulletin** on our website? If you'd like to go "online-only," contact Ramona Sikes at rsikes@christchurchcathedral.org or call her at 713-217-1347.

BORN, from cover

Why does this matter? It matters because we walk through a world in which God walks with us, in which as **John the Evangelist** tells us, "the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot overcome it." The light that shines is not like the taunting light of a fleeting comet or the fragile light of a candle. It is, rather, the eruption into the night sky of the heavenly chorus, driving back all darkness and singing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!"

This matters because each and every time we who have received *this* news respond to *that* light, every time we face down the darkness and express that love and live through that hope, then the heavenly host sings yet again, and the light of Christ is spread, driving back the darkness in another's life. Merry Christmas, friends. Love is born!

The Parish Retreat: How casual fellowship developed into a family tradition

BY NEIL GILES

This December, **Mandy** and I will celebrate our 20th anniversary of being married in the Cathedral. In that time, we have experienced every important Episcopal Rite in the Cathedral, from baptism to burial. However, some of the greatest memories of our life at the Cathedral happened sixty miles from 1117 Texas Ave., in the piney woods of Camp Allen.

Seeking an opportunity to connect with other Cathedral

families in a casual setting, we overcame our initial trepidation of venturing into the wilderness with five-year-old twins and a toddler. What we found far exceeded any reasonable expectations.

The Parish Retreat did and continues to offer an amazing opportunity for fellowship with families, but also with folks from every generation, walk of life, and even (gasp) from different service times. The surroundings and ethos promote communal



Don't miss Neil's brisket at the Parish Retreat.

kid-watching, affording parents less stressful enjoyment of "grownup time" and providing the kids with the safety to freely explore.

It is the perfect balance of family, grownup, and kid time that quickly grew into a family tradition inviolable next to almost any opportunity or obligation. There are few dates on the Giles Family calendar that are sacred — one of them is the annual Parish Retreat.

This year, I will finally realize my dream of smoking brisk-

ets at the Retreat. Sure you hope you join us.

This year's annual parish retreat is Friday, January 17, to Sunday, January 19. Registration is available on the Cathedral website (under "Registrations"). To learn more, contact Minister for Community Life **Karen Kraycirik** at kkraycirik@christchurchcathedral.org.

PARISH RETREAT
January 17-19