



THE BULLETIN

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

DECEMBER 2020
CHRISTCHURCHCATHEDRAL.ORG

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



Making our homes for Advent and Christmas

With the approach of Advent and Christmas — during a most atypical year — clergy at Christ Church Cathedral are looking toward the unique blessings of the season.

“These are challenging times, but we have the opportunity to explore what the spirit is telling us to do and how best we can benefit,” says Canon **Simón Bautista**. “There is always some good thing you can take away from any circumstance.”

Regarding Advent, **Dean Barkley Thompson** offers that our current times really speak **HOME FOR XMAS**, page 10

Christmas Services

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR IN-PERSON SERVICES

Christmas Eve, Thursday, December 24

- 10 AM Holy Eucharist, Rite I, In-Person
- 2 PM Holy Eucharist Rite II, In-Person
- 4 PM Holy Eucharist Rite II, In-Person, Facebook/Vimeo
- 6 PM Holy Eucharist, in Spanish, Facebook/Vimeo
- 8 PM Holy Eucharist Rite II, In-Person, Facebook/Vimeo
- 11 PM Holy Eucharist Rite I, In-Person, Facebook/Vimeo

Christmas Day, Friday, December 25

- 10 AM Holy Eucharist Rite I, In-Person
- WE ARE WATCHING LOCAL COVID METRICS AND WILL ANNOUNCE BY DECEMBER 20 WHETHER CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICES WILL BE IN-PERSON.

Annunciations

We know the scene: the room, variously furnished, almost always a lectern, a book; always the tall lily.

Arrived on solemn grandeur of great wings, the angelic ambassador, standing or hovering, whom she acknowledges, a guest.

But we are told of meek obedience. No one mentions courage.

The engendering Spirit did not enter her without consent.

God waited.

She was free to accept or to refuse, choice integral to humanness.

— Denise Levertov

Mary is so utterly normal. She’s a poor young girl from Galilee, preparing for her upcoming marriage. And yet, to her, out of all people throughout all history, God’s angel makes the visit.

That angel, if we are to believe centuries of Christian art and **Levertov’s** poem itself, is as impressive as Mary is mundane. Like some mythic creature from **Tolkien’s** Middle Earth or **Lewis’s** Narnia, the winged angel enters into Mary’s abode, filling the space with light and promise.

If we were watching a Hollywood version of this scene, we’d expect Mary to stand transfixed and mesmerized, compelled to accept God’s offer of a Son. Yet to our astonishment, exactly the opposite occurs.

Two things are of stunning note in this story. First for whatever reason, God *needs* Mary. God relies upon her for God’s plan of salvation to move forward. And second, as Denise Levertov reminds us in her poem, God waits on an answer.



THE VERY REV. BARKLEY THOMPSON

Christmas at the Cathedral

One of the highlights of Advent each year is “Christmas at the Cathedral,” which is held in Reynolds Hall on a Saturday in mid-December. It offers a joyous Christmas celebration for young children and their families served by two of the Cathedral’s partners — Kids Hope and Small Steps. A Christmas meal, games, photo booth, snow in Houston, and gift cards have been highlights of the event in years past.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS, page 9



ANNUNCIATIONS, page 3

We celebrate with

☞ **Charles Werner Herz**, who was born November 1, 2020, to parents **Alice Puccio Hertz** and **Carl Richard Herz**. Grandparents are **Mike** and **Lisa Puccio**.

We extend heartfelt sympathy

- ☞ to the family of **Betty Jo Jones**, who passed away on October 11, 2020. Betty is mother to member **Susan McHenry**.
- ☞ to the family of **Mildred Diehl Christian**, who passed away on October 11, 2020. Mildred is mother to member **Nancy Christian**.
- ☞ to the family of member **Mary (Dolly) Virginia Bille**, who passed away on October 17, 2020. Dolly is mother to son **Kar Hlava Bille**.
- ☞ to the family of **Karen Ann Coates**, who passed away on October 17, 2020. Karen is sister to member **Kasey Berry**.
- ☞ to the family of member **Dolores Russell Goble**, who passed away on October 22, 2020. Dolores is mother to **Lydia LaGue**, **Nancy Goble**, **Russ Goble**, **Carolyn Smith**, and **Michael Goble**.
- ☞ to the family of **Joe Michael Hale**, who passed away on October 24, 2020. Joe is father to member **Michelle Hale**.

The flowers on the Cathedral Altar

- ☞ on Sunday, October 25, were given to the glory of God in loving memory of **John Dieter Ufer** by **Scott** and **Ann Actkinson** and family
- ☞ on Sunday, October 25, were also given to the glory of God in thanksgiving for their children, **Wick**, **Jackson**, **Milena**, and **Blake**, by **Carleta** and **Michael Sandeen**.
- ☞ on Sunday, November 15, were given to the glory of God in thanksgiving for the Cathedral's Youth Ministry.
- ☞ on Sunday, November 22, were given to the glory of God in loving memory of **Gene Manly** by his wife **Barbara**.
- ☞ on Sunday, November 29, were given to the Glory of God in thanksgiving for family, friends, faith, and fellowship by **Roy Nolen** on his birthday.
- ☞ on Sunday, December 5, 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 13, are given to the glory of God in loving memory of **Geraldine Campbell Nachske** and **John H. Nachske**.
- ☞ on Sunday, December 20, are given to the glory of God in celebration of the marriage of **Jack Hurt** and **Ann Neyland** on December 19.

The flowers on the floor vases

- ☞ on Sunday, November 22, were given to the glory of God in loving memory of her parents, **Nancy Peel** and **Burney Boyd McClurkan**, by **Elaine d'Lys McClurkan**.
- ☞ On Sunday, December 13, are given to the glory of God in loving memory of **Anne Randolph Bledsoe** and in thanksgiving for **Nancy Staub Wareing** by their children.

The flowers on the organ console

☞ on Sunday, October 25 were given to the glory of God in loving memory of their parents by **Norman** and **Frances Kittrell**.

The greens in the Cathedral Advent Wreath

☞ on Sunday, November 29, were given to the glory of God in thanksgiving for the life and work of **Dr. James Reed Cox**.

The candles on the Cathedral Advent Wreath

☞ on Sunday, November 29, were given to the glory of God in thanksgiving for the life and work of **Ardell Ray Jr.**

The Mystery of the Christmas Star

Join us on Sunday, January 3, at 2 p.m. during the Dean's Hour for a presentation by the

SPECIAL DEAN'S HOUR Houston Museum of

January 3, 2 p.m. Natural Science exploring the science behind the mysterious Christmas star. What kind of star was it? What do we know about it? Explore these questions

and bring some of your own as there will be a Q&A session after the presentation. Registration is required. Email **Bethany Podgorny** at bpodgorny@christchurchcathedral.org for the Zoom link.



LATINO MINISTRY EVENT

Las Posadas (Spanish)

Posadas December 16-24, 7-9 p.m.

Each evening December 16-24, 7-9 p.m. the Latino congregation will be getting together through Zoom to commemorate the journey that Joseph and Mary made from Nazareth to Bethlehem in search of a safe refuge where Mary could give birth to baby Jesus. We will be reading the lectures, singing songs and the priest will give a small sermon over the lectures we had just read. When the service is over we will be singing Christmas songs and having a wonderful time with one another. Registration is required. Learn more about these events and how to register on the "Cathedral Events" page at christchurchcathedral.org/cathedral-events

Cathedral generosity enables ministry, blesses others

BY KAREN KRAYCIRIK, MINISTER FOR STEWARDSHIP

To our Cathedral Family — thank you to everyone who has made an Every Member Canvass pledge for 2021. It is through your gifts to Christ Church Cathedral that we are able to continue to worship together (both virtually and in-person), continue to maintain our beautiful, sacred space, stay connected to one another, serve those who live on the margins in this time of greatest need, and offer words and acts of care and support, all to ensure that God's love is felt through our ministry in Houston and beyond.

The Cathedral is indeed blessed by the generosity of our congregation, as well as their families and friends, and we are excited to share an update on our stewardship campaign. To date, we have received 414 pledges of financial support for the coming year. Of those, 37 are new and another 180 are increases over 2020. Pledges to date total \$2,834,206.

We recognize that 2020 has been a difficult year — emotionally, mentally, and financially. Your continued support has allowed the Cathedral to pivot this year and further the mission to offer an environment of comfort and hope to all. Know that all that we do here is designed and intended to take care of those within our congregation, our community, and the Kingdom of God. The same is true for the upcoming year, as leadership and staff continue to work hard putting together programming in new

EMC, page 8



The Five Senses of the Nativity

BY KARIANN LESSNER, MINISTER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

You and your family can enjoy a different sort of Christmas experience at the Cathedral during The Five Senses of the Nativity, Wednesday, December 23, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Experience some of the wonder of the Nativity through your five senses. Come smell the fresh hay and incense. Taste warm bread to remind you of Bethlehem — the House of Bread where the Bread of Life was born. See the light of the world shining like a candle in the darkness. Hear the music of the Middle East, along with the lowing of live animals, including a spotless lamb. Reach out to touch these things with the expectant joy of a heart that seeks Emmanuel, God with us.

Register for an appointment to experience The Five Senses of the Nativity by visiting the link found in your weekly e-newsletter or on the “Cathedral Events” page at christchurchcathedral.org/cathedral-events. There is no cost for this event, and it's a wonderful way for you to create a new Christmas memory with your children and/or grandchildren.



Ways to make your pledge:

Pledging is easy and can be done online. Visit christchurchcathedral.org/emc for more information.

- Return the pledge card you received by mail to 1117 Texas Ave, Houston, TX 77002.
- Make a pledge over the phone at 713-590-3338 or by email by contacting Karen Kraycirik, minister for stewardship.

ANNUNCIATIONS, from cover

The angel offers, and then God waits. Gabriel's master waits upon the decision of this poor, teenage child. The angel will not insist. God will not coerce.

Mary has her whole life ahead of her, a wedding and new household and all the unglamorous yet predictable and comforting years in Galilee. What the angel proposes is definitely not how Mary would have written the script. This is most definitely not the time to let the Spirit of God enter into her life and grow beyond her ability to control.

The Irish tell the story that the one night in all of history in which the stars stood still in the sky was when they held their very breath on the night of the Annunciation to see what Mary would say.

At the moment of decision, with the angel, and God himself, waiting anxiously for her

response, Mary breathes the last predictable breath of her life and says, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord.” As a result, in Mary's life she will know sorrows deeper than words. But she will also know God and play her part in his salvation of the world. And she will be blessed.

What does Mary's story mean for us? Annunciations happen! Sometimes, God shows up with a message, and we have no control. At sixteen, twenty-six, forty-six, or seventy-six, we may hear the rhythmic beat of angels' wings just outside the window. No matter where we are in our lives, God can meet us, overturn our expectations, and do something miraculous.

God needs us. It may be inexplicable to us, but God has created a world in which we are a necessary part of God's plan for salvation. Without us, the preparation for the kingdom

doesn't happen. That should be sobering. But it should also remind us of the immense favor and value God bestows on us. On us — *us* — God chooses to rely. And when we respond, though we may experience pain and challenge, we will also know God and be blessed. Second, though God's need for our participation is real, *God waits on our answer.* We can — and often do, moment by moment — say no to God. The angel does not insist. God will not coerce. It is our decision.

We are in the season of Advent. Even now, as we prepare for the Nativity, Gabriel may be hovering just outside, waiting to fill our souls with the beckoning of God. There is anticipation in the air. The stars themselves hold their breath, hoping we will be willing to give up predictability and control, to give ourselves over to our part in God's great story, and to say, “Here I am, the servant of the Lord.”

Music fills the air

In the absence of the Cathedral's customary array of live music for organ, choir, and instruments, our award winning music staff offers this list of favorites to help fill your Advent and Christmas with beautiful music.

Daryl Robinson, Cathedral Organist



Toccata on Vom Himmel hoch da komm' ich her Garth Edmundson

British composer and friend James Whitbourn introduced me to this flashy toccata by Pennsylvania native Garth Edmundson as part of a recording project I was involved with during my time at Westminster Choir College. This work became my "go to" closing work for the annual Readings and Carols presented at Princeton University Chapel and has been heard each year since my arrival at Christ Church in 2017.

Variations sur un Noël, Op. 20 Marcel Dupré



Based on one of my favorite Christmas (and Easter!) tunes, this work is a pinnacle work for any organist and is always a crowd favorite. Allegedly composed while Dupré was traveling on train between U.S. cities during one of his concert tours,

I included this work on my "American Fantasia" disc recorded at Disney Hall as one of the few non-commissioned works on the disc, and as an "expected" tour of the tonal colors of the instrument.



I Wonder as I Wander arr. Thomas Coker

During my 13 or so years at South Main Baptist down the road from CCC, every Christmas Eve service featured Thomas Coker's (Minister of Music at South Main for 25 years) exquisite setting

of this haunting tune. This work always conjures up many happy memories, and in this season of solitude and distancing, this text frequently comes to mind during evening walks, particularly as our on'ry Houston weather finally cools off!



The Rune of Hospitality Alf Houkom

Composed for a cappella chorus and guitar, this magical work evokes peace and calm always so needed during the Christmas season. Gaelic text below:

*I saw a stranger yestreen
I put food in the eating place
drink in the drinking place
music in the listening place
And in the sacred name of the Triune
He blessed myself and my house
my cattle and my dear ones
And the lark said in her song
often often often
Goes the Christ in stranger's guise
often often often
Goes the Christ in stranger's guise'*

JJ Mitchell, Cathedral Organ Scholar



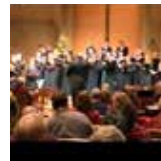
Festival First Nowell Dan Forrest

This work was written for Westminster Choir College's service of Readings and Carols, held each December in the Princeton University Chapel. It is typically sung by a choir of more than 100 singers and is a wonderful setting of a classic carol with organ and brass.



Viderunt Omnes Perotin

This piece is one of the oldest notated works of music in the world. It was written to be chanted in Notre Dame de Paris in the 13th century.



See Dat Babe arr. Stacey Gibbs

Often, musicians are looking for works by minority composers to perform at Christmastime. This jazzy setting of a classic spiritual is one of my all time favorite Christmas anthems. Listen for a fantastic walking bass line in the lower voices in the latter half of the piece.



In Dulci Jubilo Michael Praetorius

Michael Praetorius sometimes falls through the cracks of music history, often living in the shadow of other famous German composers of his era. His Christmas Mass is a thrilling work from start to finish with large choirs singing monophonically and dozens of instruments playing with vigor. "In Dulci Jubilo" is the big finish to this grand masterpiece.

Robert Simpson, Canon for Music



Shepherd's Pipe Carol John Rutter

Although British composer John Rutter has written a wide range of choral music, it is his Christmas carols that have made him most famous. Far from feeling typecast he says, "Christmas is still very dear in my heart. It's kind of the world as we all wish it could be, for just those precious few days each year. A time of stillness and yet of rejoicing. So, Christmas will always be very special in my heart and it's always been celebrated in music."



Gloria in excelsis Deo from **Cantata BWV 191 — J.S. Bach**

Bach was thrifty. He originally wrote this glorious music in 1733 as part of a Kyrie-Gloria Mass for the court in Dresden. He came back to it as the first movement of his 1742 Christmas Day Cantata 191. But its ultimate assignment was to open the Gloria section of his great Mass in B Minor, the summation of his life's work as a composer of sacred music.

MUSIC FILLS THE AIR, page 12

THE CATHEDRAL BOOKSTORE

2020 Advent Newsletter



Books are the most mannerly of companions, accessible at all times, in all moods, frankly declaring the author's mind, without offense.

— Amos Bronson Alcott

Books for Adults

The Feather Thief: Beauty, Obsession, and the Natural History Heist of the Century

Kirk Wallace Johnson

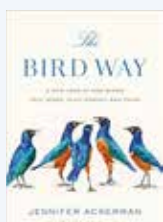
This engrossing true adventure takes readers into the underground world of fly-tiers and feather thieves. A heist from the British Museum of Natural History's ornithological collection catapults the author into a world-wide, years-long quest to understand how far the deeply obsessive pursuit of rare feathers can take fly-tiers.



The Bird Way: A New Look at How Birds Talk, Work, Play, Parent, and Think

Jennifer Ackerman

Not only do birds have more in common with us than previously thought, there is also no one way of being a bird. Drawing from recent scientific research that dramatically shifts our understanding of how birds live and think, it reveals that a remarkable intelligence gives them abilities, both positive and negative, that we once considered uniquely human.



The Lost Book of the Grail

Charlie Lovett

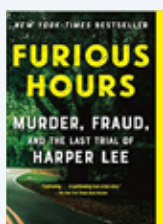
A technophobic bibliophile goes on a quest through time to discover a missing manuscript, the unknown history of an English Cathedral, and the secret of the Holy Grail. Combining literary and historical research with elements of cozy mysteries, classic love stories, and adventure tales, this genre-blending tale will delight both book lovers and church history buffs.



Furious Hours: Murder, Fraud, and the Last Trial of Harper Lee

Casey Cep

Though Harper Lee never wrote another book after *To Kill a Mockingbird*, she tried to write the story of Willie Maxwell, a rural Alabama preacher accused of murder. Cep's masterful research brings every aspect of this remarkable story to life: Maxwell's crimes, courtroom drama, racial politics of the Deep South, and a deeply moving portrait of a revered writer.



This Time Next Year We'll Be Laughing: A Memoir

Jacqueline Winspear

The author of the beloved Maisie Dobbs mysteries shares her post-War English childhood in a memoir rich in history and humanity. Revealing nuances of working-class strengths and family secrets, she includes her grandfather's shellshock; her mother's evacuation from London during the Blitz; her father's work on a WWII explosives team; her parents' years living with Romany Gypsies; and her own experiences picking crops in rural Kent.



Every Moment Holy Pocket Edition, volume 1

Douglas McKelvey and Dan Bustard

This beautiful illustrated book of liturgies for the ordinary events of daily life — such as “A Liturgy for Feasting with Friends” or “A Liturgy for Laundering” or “A Liturgy for the First Hearthfire of the Season,” remind us that our lives are filled with sacred purpose even when we are too busy to notice.



CONTINUED, page 7



Longest Night — services to share the tender light of the Advent season

BY JODY GILLIT, MINISTER FOR PASTORAL CARE

What a year this has been! Here we are making plans for the Longest Night service for what feels like the longest year. The holidays are upon us and nothing feels like it did last year, or the year before ... or any year for that matter. In the past we have offered the Longest Night service and I often hear this is the service to come to if you have had someone die that year. It can be that, but there are many other folks who might find this service touching.

THE LONGEST NIGHT
December 21

The holidays can be hard for many and sometimes being around all the “joy” can make one feel more isolated and less in the holiday spirit. Some of you might even think about skipping the holidays altogether this year thinking that will make it less painful.

Please accept this invitation to join others this year. Even when you feel like being alone, it can be reassuring to know you are not alone. Rev. **Becky Zartman** will lead us in worship and a time of reflection and contemplation.

We will be offering two forms of this service on December 21. There will be an interactive, online Zoom worship service at 5:30 p.m. and a more traditional, in-person service at 6:30 p.m. in the Cathedral. (Registration will be required for both and childcare will not be available.)

You can find registration information on the “Cathedral Events” page at christchurchcathedral.org/cathedral-events.

Youth Sunday, Youth Fall Retreat, and more

IN PICTURES

Right: Eliza Thompson sings the offertory hymn, accompanied by her father, The Very Rev. Barkley Thompson.

Below: Youth hang out in the Bishop's Courtyard between services on Youth Sunday.



Right: Justin Shen sings the closing voluntary during Youth Sunday.

Below: Youth Fall Retreat.



Below: The Wallace family say





Books for Children



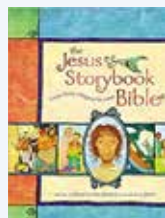
ing Compline for the Making Our Home for Faith podcast.



Love Can Come in Many Ways

Terry Pierce

Lift a swan's felt wing to discover a baby cuddled underneath, then lift a felt speech bubble to discover the words "You are loved!" Beneath each flap, little ones will find a wealth of loving engagement, from the songs a mama frog sings to a warm hug from a papa elephant's trunk. Grade: Birth-Pre-K.



The Jesus Storybook Bible Christmas Collection: Stories, songs, and reflections for the Advent season — *Sally Lloyd-Jones*

This interactive story, sound, and song experience prepares families for Christmas. In addition to the timeless story, the book features recordings of classic Christmas music, a map that traces Jesus through the Old Testament, and devotional readings. Rather than ending on Christmas morning with Jesus's birth, it provides a complete celebration of the holiday season. Grades: PreK-2



Birdsong — *Julie Flett*

A young girl moves from the country to a small town, and she feels lonely until she meets an elderly woman who shares her love of arts and crafts. Can the girl navigate the changing seasons and failing health of her new friend? Textured images of birds, flowers, art, and landscapes bring vibrancy and warmth to this story that features Cree traditions and highlights the fulfillment of intergenerational relationships and shared passions. Grades: PreK-3



Dinosaur Feathers — *Dennis Nolan*

Poetic nonfiction with glorious illustrations explains how dinosaurs evolved into birds. Millions of years ago, dinosaurs roamed the shores of Mesozoic seas. Large and fearsome, they ruled the earth, until gradually, there were no dinosaurs left. But they didn't disappear completely. Some dinosaurs had feathers, which grew and grew ... until all through the skies were hundreds of species of birds, which flew and flew. Grades: 1-4



The Pig War: How a Porcine Tragedy Taught England and America to Share

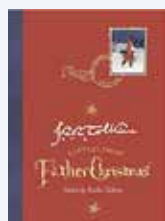
Emma Bland Smith and Alison Jay

This true story tells how America and England almost went to war in 1859 over a pig. On the small island in the Pacific Northwest, the British and the Americans are on fairly good terms until an innocent British hog eats some American potatoes. Tensions flare, armies gather, cannons are rolled out ... all because of a pig! With folksy illustrations and humor, the story models peaceful conflict resolution. Grades: 2-4



Astrid the Unstoppable — *Maria Parr*

Astrid spends her days racing down the hillside on her sled, singing loudly, and visiting Gunnvald, her grumpy, septuagenarian best friend. Two startling arrivals to the village reveal that Gunnvald has been keeping a big secret that will test their friendship. Astrid — Pippi Longstocking meets Heidi meets Anne Shirley — navigates the changes with warmth and humor. Grades: 2-5



Letters from Father Christmas

J.R.R. Tolkien

Every December from 1920 to 1943, an envelope would arrive at the Tolkien household bearing a stamp from the North Pole. Inside would be a letter in a strange, spidery handwriting, along with a beautiful colored drawing or painting. These fanciful, heartwarming stories of Father Christmas are now reissued in a centenary edition. Grades: 3-6

CONTINUED, page 9

EMC, from page 3

and creative ways, always looking toward the future to bridge Cathedral traditions with new technology in ways that are meaningful and intentional.

We have come a long way in our EMC campaign, but we still have some distance to go. In order to fund our mission and ministry fully in 2021, our goal is 615 pledges for a total of \$3,400,000. Your Cathedral vestry is in the process of preparing the budget for 2021, and hopes to finalize it at the vestry meeting on December 16. If you have not yet made a pledge for 2021, please join us in making a financial commitment to the work of the parish for the coming year.

Every day at the corner of Texas and Fannin, a difference is made in countless lives through all the ways that Christ Church Cathedral shares the gospel. As we move through this season of Advent, preparing our hearts for the coming of Jesus, we hope you'll join us as we share in the blessings that God has given, trusting in him for he has done great things and it is known in all the world.

Yours ever faithfully, Karen Kraycirik, minister for stewardship.

Justice & Peace Council screen film “Just Mercy” as lead-up to symposium on race

January 20, the Justice & Peace Council will host a film discussion of the award-winning movie “Just Mercy.” The movie is a true story about the redeeming power of mercy. **Bryan Stevenson** was a young attorney with a legal practice dedicated to defending the poor, the wrongly condemned, and those trapped by racism in the criminal justice system. His first case was defending **Walter McMillan**, a man sentenced to death for a notorious crime he didn't commit. The case drew Stevenson into a tangle of conspiracy, political corruption, and legal brinkmanship — and transformed his understanding of mercy and justice forever.

“JUST MERCY”

January 20, 6:30 p.m.

Parishioners are asked to watch “Just Mercy” in advance on their own. It is available for online rental and on Netflix. The film discussion will be on Zoom, and parishioners can register in advance at christchurchcathedral.org/cathedral-events. The film discussion will be facilitated by *Wall Street Journal* reporter and Cathedral parishioner **Christopher Matthews**.

The January 20 event will take place 6:30–8 p.m. and act as a prelude to the Justice & Peace Council's Racial Reconciliation Conference to be held February 19–21. The conference will include panel discussions and keynote addresses by Rice University's **Caleb McDaniel** and The Absalom Jones Center's **Catherine Meeks**. Parishioners are encouraged to mark their calendars for this illuminating and enlightening three-day conference.

The angel watching over us

As the richly colored stained-glass windows in the Cathedral reflect and animate light, they tell the story of God among us. Depending on which pew we prefer, we grow attached to different windows — east transept people might be partial to Mary and Martha's different takes on hospitality or to Joseph patiently teaching the young Jesus the nuances of woodworking. West transept people might prefer the Greatest Commandment window. Some are drawn to the soothing blues and greens of the Charity window, while others love details like the poppies in the World War I Memorial window. Each combines lead and glass, color and light, to bring a chapter in the bigger story to life.

Whatever our favorite, the window that consistently touches each of us is the Resurrection story over the altar. In brilliant jewel tones, the window illustrates Matthew's gospel account of the angel outside Jesus' tomb on Easter morning. “After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled back the stone . . .” As we approach the altar — to receive the Eucharist, process in the choir, serve as an acolyte, present a baby for baptism, or be confirmed — whether we are mourning or rejoicing, this angel, with the light of God emanating from wings, visage, and robe, watches over us.

The Resurrection window became part of the church after a fire devastated the 1893 building. As part of the restoration, the window was donated to honor the memory of **George Alfred**

Taylor. It must have provided solace and gratitude to congregants, a memory of resilience and the strength of community after the fire. But over time, as the church became the Cathedral and Houston grew up around it, a parking garage at the corner of Fannin and Prairie blocked the light. The glory of the Resurrection angel was dimmed and eventually forgotten.

In 1989, just before the Cathedral celebrated its 150th year, the parking garage was torn down in order to build the Jones Building. Once again, light streamed through the Resurrection window. The angel appeared again, bearing witness that God had remained present despite the shadows that temporarily blocked the congregation's ability to see the light.

The angel proclaims, “He is not here!” In the tomb no longer, God is among us. Whatever shadows have recently dimmed our lives, when we behold this angel, we are reminded that God is as constant with us as God was with the Marys, Martha, Joseph, the nurses of World War I, and all the other individuals depicted in the Cathedral windows.

No doubt 2020 will be recalled as a challenging one in the history of the Cathedral. But during our services, filmed, livestreamed, or socially-distanced, we have continually been able to look above the altar to see the light shine through the Resurrection Window. “He is not here,” says the angel. “God walks among us.”



The Resurrection Angel

Hand-glazed stained glass, 5.5" x 14.5"

Includes text of “Clipped Wings” by The Very Rev. Barkley S. Thompson and small chain for hanging, \$38

Available through the Bookstore at thecathedralbookstore.com

To remind us of the constancy of God and the historic beauty of the Cathedral, wherever we find ourselves, the Bookstore has commissioned a stained-glass replica of the Resurrection angel. Created by artisans who hand-apply translucent enamels to cathedral glass in a traditional one-color-at-a-time process, the image is taken from parishioner and photographer **Mark Johnson's** beautiful image of the window. Each color is fired into the glass at temperatures above 1000°F to ensure its durability.

The piece comes packaged with a copy of **Dean Thompson's** sermon “Clipped Wings,” a contemplation of this angel, in which the dean reminds us “[W]hen we recognize that God is not up there, or over there, or absent altogether, but right here, always, surrounding us and permeating us with love, then the old

ANGEL, page 10

CHRISTMAS GIFTS, from cover

With the Cathedral's top priority this year being safety in the face of the unrelenting pandemic, the Mission Outreach Council has worked together with Kids Hope and Small Steps leadership teams to develop an alternative approach for Christmas at the Cathedral. Of special concern is that these severely disadvantaged families are at heightened risk of contracting Covid-19 and may not have the resources to be properly treated if they do get sick. As a result, an in-person event is simply not possible this year.

Instead of inviting families to the Cathedral in mid-December, we will be delivering Christmas gift packages to 50 families involved with Kids Hope and Small Steps. Each package will include a wonderful Christmas Family meal, a gift card, and a blessing from our clergy. The meals will be prepared by Epicurean Group under the guidance of Cathedral parishioner Patti Ramsey. Mission Outreach Council and Youth Council members have volunteered to help wrap the boxes, and volunteers will deliver the packages to the families on December 12 and 13.

Many Cathedral members volunteer and donate to this event, and many of you will be disappointed that there will not be an opportunity to personally serve our neighbors in need this year. The Mission Outreach Council is always truly grateful for this support, and we are looking forward to the return of the event to Reynolds Hall in 2021. In the meantime, please keep these families and our non-profit partners in your prayers as the Christmas season approaches.

If you have any questions or feel compelled to contribute, please feel free to contact Guy Hagstette or Chris McKeown, this year's event co-chairs. Their emails are guyhagstette@sbcglobal.net and cmckeownhead@gmail.com.

Annual Parish Retreat Saturday, January 23

You're invited to the annual Parish Retreat at Camp Allen on Saturday, January 23. If you've been on this retreat in the past, this year will look a little different. But the beauty and regenerative nature of Camp Allen as well as opportunities to spend time together will remain the same. We hope you'll save the date and join us in January for this special day away! More details including how to register will be available on the Cathedral website at christchurchcathedral.org/cathedral-events and in the January Bulletin.

PARISH RETREAT

Saturday January 23

THE CATHEDRAL BOOKSTORE 2020 ADVENT NEWSLETTER

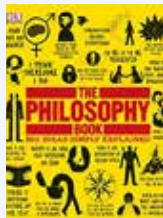
Books for Children cont.



Show Me a Sign

Ann Clare LeZotte

This well-researched historical fiction by a deaf librarian is set in a thriving deaf community on Martha's Vineyard in the early 19th century. Mary Lambert has always felt safe and protected, but now she faces family turmoil and rising tensions between English settlers and the Wampanoag people. A cunning young scientist arrives hoping to discover the origin of the island's prevalent deafness, and she must struggle to save herself from his experiment. Her story asks readers to reconsider what normal means. Grades: 3-7



Philosophy

DK

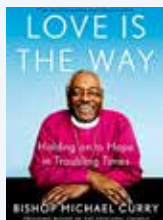
For thousands of years, philosophers have asked questions like "What is right and what is wrong?", "Am I real?", or "What is the point of existence?" These questions have sparked passionate debates about how we understand the world around us. This engaging book introduces philosophy through the teachings of Plato, Confucius, Simone de Beauvoir, and more. It explores questions that have been fundamental to the development of scientific study, logical thinking, religious beliefs, laws, and governance. Grades: 5 and up

From the Cathedral

Love Is the Way: Holding on to Hope in Troubling Times

Bishop Michael Curry

Bishop Curry expands his message of hope in this inspirational road map for living the way of love, illuminated with moving lessons from his own life. Through the prism of his faith, ancestry, and personal journey, he shows how America came this far and, more important, how we can discover the gifts we need to live the way of love: deep reservoirs of hope and resilience, simple wisdom, the discipline of nonviolence, and unshakable regard for human dignity.

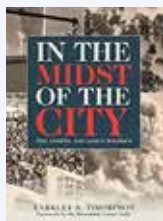


In the Midst of the City: The Gospel and God's Politics

Barkley S. Thompson

Foreword by the Honorable Linnet Deily

Dean Thompson makes an elegant, profound connection between religion and politics. He argues that Christian faith and politics are inseparable, and though the Gospel is inherently political, it is not partisan. To embody God's politics, we must first steep ourselves in God's vision for the world embodied in the Gospels, and only then can we act politically. This collection of essays and sermons addresses hot-button social issues by putting this principle into practice, challenging the reader to live God's politics and to be the vanguard of God's kingdom in the world.



Belovedness: Finding God (and Self) on Campus

edited by Becky Zartman and James Franklin

Thought-provoking essays by Canon Zartman and college chaplains from several denominations address issues of faith, identity, making choices, success and failure, relationships, sexuality, partying, and mental health through the concept of belovedness. Belovedness gives students a framework for living their lives set free by the love of God and teaches them how to find the strengthening love that individuals in community can provide for one another — even, and especially, in college.



CONTINUED, page 12

HOME FOR XMAS, from cover

to the season.

“Advent is a time of watchful waiting,” he says. “It is almost like the last eight months have been Advent. We are watchful and tentative and hopeful for relief from the coronavirus. And, our faith tells us that God waits with us. We don’t wait alone.”

Canon **Becky Zartman** adds that the waiting is also accepting the invitation for a deeper and more intentional relationship with God.

“Even though the year looks different, it is a time of joy, and a chance to stop and let the word dwell with you in a more intentional way,” she says.

One tangible way that people can mark that anticipation is through having an Advent calendar or an Advent wreath.

“All ages can participate,” says Dean Thompson. “Even a toddler can open the Advent calendar, with growing daily anticipation of the Nativity.”

Canon Zartman talks about the peace that the Advent wreath can bring.

“You can sit in the silence or say prayers,” she says. “It is a sacred space.”

And as Canon Bautista notes, using the Advent wreath is not something you have to improvise.

“It doesn’t require you to be in church,” he says. “You can act on making faith the foundation of home.”

Canon **Kathy Rock Pfister** says that the one Advent wreath she had as a child was one of her most significant memories.

“My mom [was experiencing] a really long illness,” she says. “I remember the quiet of the living room and lighting the candle. It was the most holy of encounters with my family. During a very dark time, it was a really bright light.”

KariAnn Lessner, Minister for Children and Families, says that this year, Advent wreath kits were distributed first come, first serve on November 29 for a suggested \$25 donation. The kits included recipes for the coffee cake and spiced cider that are traditionally served.

“I think it is important to show kids resiliency,” Lessner says. “Even when life is not normal, we can still do the things that make the season meaningful and joyful.”

As the calendar turns towards Christmas, Dean Thompson notes that the incarnation of Christ — God’s decision to be born into our world and to experience all our joys and sorrows — is the culmination. Because the holidays will be less commercialized this year, he says there is the prospect for a true “Charlie Brown Christmas.”

“In the rush of a usual Christmas season, Jesus in the manger might not be the first,

LATINO MINISTRY EVENT

Pastorela

Christmas Play, December 27, 6–8 p.m.

The Latino Ministry will be gathering on Zoom December 27, 6–8 p.m., to watch a Pastorela/Christmas Play. A Pastorela is a play that recreates the passage when the shepherds follow the Star of Bethlehem to find the Christ child. In order to reach the birth place of the Redeemer, they have to experience several changes in fortune and confront the Devil, who will do everything possible to prevent them from completing their mission to see the Christ child. It is at that moment that the Archangel Michael intervenes to defend the shepherds on their journey. Registration is required. Learn more about these events and how to register on the “Cathedral Events” page at christchurchcathedral.org/cathedral-events.



ANGEL, from page 8

world of distance, and loss, and disappointment begins to evaporate as the illusion it has always been. And with the illusion, our despair evaporates, too.”

When we see the light flow through the Resurrection angel, at the Cathedral and now in our homes, we can imagine how the Marys must have felt on that first miraculous Easter morning. We hope that this new stained-glass piece will add a bit of the beauty of the Cathedral to your home and serve as a small reassurance that the love of God shines on us in all places and all circumstances and a powerful angel watches over us, whatever shadows may currently dim our ability to see it.

second, or even tenth thought that many have,” he says. “But this Christmas can be different. This year we can especially relate to the anxiety and uncertainty experienced by the Holy Family as they made their way to Bethlehem. For us as it was for them, we have the comforting promise that God will be born among us.”

“It is all that is broken being restored,” adds Canon Pfister.

From doing several intimate weddings this year, Canon Zartman has learned more about what it means to value sacrament over spectacle.

“The biggest one I did was 20 people,” she says. “People wanted to get married because it was about love. Christmas can be like that this year, super close and meaningful.”

As the Christmas season in the Episcopal Church lasts 12 days, there is ample time to layer in other practices and traditions.

Canon Zartman says that she and her husband, and 5-year-old daughter, make giving to others a priority, and carry on family traditions, like reading Christmas stories and getting their tree on the third or fourth Sunday of Advent.

Canon Pfister says it takes discipline to claim the joy for all 12 days with friends and family, but it is worth it.

“Decide what each day is going to look like,”

she says.

Canon Pfister, who mails her Christmas cards out on the 26th, also likes the Epiphany practice of marking a home’s door with chalk to bless it for the coming year.

“It is practicing joy and leaning into that light,” she says.

Canon Bautista says that the Las Posadas celebration which commemorates the journey that Joseph and Mary made from Nazareth to Bethlehem, normally a festive walk between houses, will be merry on Zoom this year.

“We will still assign families a specific role,” he says. “There will be singing and the piñata. And the small bags of candy. These things are essential.”

In his own home, he says they are big on The Three Kings celebration where children leave water and grass for the camels to sustain them on their way to the manger.

They also follow the Dominican Republic tradition of staying up as late as possible on Christmas Eve and giving gifts then.

“We don’t do a lot on the 25th,” he says.

Canon Zartman says that some grief is natural because of the disruption to people’s canceled plans to see loved ones in-person or gather en masse.

“The thing that is so comforting is that Jesus is coming,” she says. “Be gentle with yourself.”

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 🧑 Bring a friend!

DECEMBER

DECEMBER 1 TUE

The Body & the New Testament (Men & Women) ▲
7-8 a.m., Zoom

Youth Seed Group ▲
6:30-8 p.m., Zoom

DECEMBER 2 WED

Men's Morning Bible Study
7-8 a.m., Zoom

Cathedral 20s & 30s Wednesday Night: Attending Dean's Book Club ▲ 🧑
6:30-8 p.m., Zoom

Dean's Book Club: Living into God's Dream: Dismantling Racism in America edited by Catherine Meeks
6:30-8 p.m., Zoom

Buscando La Luz ▲
7 p.m., Zoom

DECEMBER 3 THU

The Body & the New Testament (Men & Women) ▲
12-1 p.m., Zoom

Amazing Women of Faith ▲
6:30-7:30 p.m., Zoom

DECEMBER 4 FRI

Cathedral 20s & 30s First Friday Fellowship ▲ 🧑
7:30-8:30 p.m., Zoom

Bridge Night
6:30 p.m., Zoom

DECEMBER 6 SUN

Incarnational Faith in Advent and Beyond – Dean's Hour ▲
2-3 p.m., Zoom

Advent Lessons & Carols ▲
5 p.m., In-Person, Facebook/Vimeo

DECEMBER 8 TUE

The Body & the New Testament (Men & Women) ▲
7-8 a.m., Zoom

Community of Hope International Monthly Gathering – "Circle of Care" ▲
6-8 p.m., Zoom

DECEMBER 9 WED

Men's Morning Bible Study ▲
7-8 a.m., Zoom

Cathedral 20s & 30s Wednesday Night: Meet a Monastic Community ▲
6:30-7:30 p.m., Zoom

Buscando La Luz ▲
7 p.m., Zoom

DECEMBER 10 THU

Alzheimer's Association/Dementia Support Group ▲
11:30 a.m., Zoom

The Body & the New Testament (Men & Women) ▲
12-1 p.m., Zoom

DECEMBER 13 SUN

Confirmation Sunday with Bishop Monteroso ▲
9 a.m., In-Person

Virtual Coffee Hour ▲
10 a.m., Zoom

Kathy Culmer Storytelling Event – Dean's Hour ▲
2 p.m., Zoom

DECEMBER 15 TUE

Youth Seed Group ▲
6:30-8 p.m., Zoom

DECEMBER 16 WED

Men's Morning Bible Study
7-8 a.m., Zoom

Cathedral 20s & 30s Christmas Party! ▲
6:30-7:30 p.m., Zoom

Buscando La Luz ▲
7 p.m., Zoom

Las Posadas ▲
7-9 p.m., Zoom

DECEMBER 17 THU

Las Posadas ▲
7-9 p.m., Zoom

DECEMBER 18 FRI

Las Posadas ▲
7-9 p.m., Zoom

DECEMBER 19 SAT

Las Posadas ▲
7-9 p.m., Zoom

Cathedral Youth Christmas Brunch at Nancy's Garden ▲
11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

DECEMBER 20 SUN

Christmas Carol Hymn Sing – Dean's Hour ▲
2-2:30 p.m., Pre-recorded Facebook Premiere

Cathedral Night | Zoo Lights ▲
5:30-10 p.m., Houston Zoo, cost, \$20.50

Theology Roundtable ▲
6:30-8 p.m., Zoom

Las Posadas ▲
7-9 p.m., Zoom

DECEMBER 21 MON

Las Posadas ▲
7-9 p.m., Zoom

Longest Night Service ▲
5:30-6 p.m., Zoom/Interactive

Longest Night Service ▲
6:30-8 p.m., In-Person

DECEMBER 22 TUE

Las Posadas ▲
7-9 p.m., Zoom

DECEMBER 23 WED

Las Posadas ▲
7-9 p.m., Zoom

The 5 Senses of the Nativity ▲
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Buscando La Luz ▲
7 p.m., Zoom

DECEMBER 24 THU

Picture Perfect Christmas Pageant
6 p.m., Facebook Premiere

Las Posadas ▲
7-9 p.m., Zoom



DECEMBER 24 THU

Christmas Eve Services ▲
10 a.m., Holy Eucharist, Rite I
2 p.m., Holy Eucharist, Rite II
4 p.m., Holy Eucharist, Rite II
6 p.m., Holy Eucharist, (Spanish),
8 p.m., Holy Eucharist, Rite II
11 p.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I
We will livestream 4, 6, 8, and 11.
(Registration required for in-person worship)

DECEMBER 25 FRI

Christmas Day Service ▲
10 a.m., In-Person Only

DECEMBER 27 SUN

Christmas Carol Hymn Sing reprise – Dean's Hour
2-2:30 p.m., Pre-recorded Facebook Premiere

Pastorela / Christmas Play ▲
6-8 p.m., Zoom

DECEMBER 30 WED

Buscando La Luz ▲
7 p.m., Zoom

JANUARY

JANUARY 3 SUN

The Mystery of the Christmas Star – Dean's Hour ▲
2-3:30 p.m., Zoom

JANUARY 5 TUE

Women's Evening Bible Study: The Psalms ▲
6:30-7:30 p.m., Zoom

JANUARY 6 WED

Epiphany
Buscando La Luz ▲
7 p.m., Zoom

JANUARY 7 THU

Amazing Women of Faith ▲
6:30-7:30 p.m., Zoom

JANUARY 8 FRI

20s & 30s Bridge Night
6:30 p.m., Zoom

Bridge Night
6:30 p.m., Zoom

JANUARY 10 SUN

Reading Mark: (2-part) An Introduction to the First Gospel – Deans Hour ▲
2-3 p.m., Zoom Webinar

JANUARY 17 SUN

Reading Mark: (2-part) An Introduction to the First Gospel – Deans Hour ▲
2-3 p.m., Zoom Webinar

JANUARY 20 WED

Justice & Peace Council Film Discussion of "Just Mercy" ▲
6:30-8 p.m., Zoom

Buscando La Luz ▲
7 p.m., Zoom

JANUARY 23 SAT

Parish Retreat ▲
9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Camp Allen



CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL

ESTABLISHED MARCH 16, 1839

1117 Texas Avenue
Houston, Texas 77002-3183

Non-Profit Organization

U.S. POSTAGE PAID

Houston, Texas

PERMIT No. 6404



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 713-590-3301.

BOOKSTORE NEWSLETTER, starting on page 5



WOODEN CHRISTMAS TREES — Dieter Ufer

Each year, Dieter Ufer creates exquisite wooden Christmas Trees for sale in the Bookstore. A Cathedral parishioner since 1960, he has provided such extraordinary service to the Cathedral that he received the Dean's Cross in 2016. His father, a talented metalsmith, crafted the cover of the baptismal font and many other pieces integral to the

worship experience at the Cathedral, but Dieter has always been drawn to working with wood. His heirloom-quality trees, available in three sizes — tiny, small, and tall — consist of two interlocking pieces designed to be easily packed away for many Christmases to come. A beautiful Cathedral tradition, the trees can be displayed singly or in groves on your table, mantel, or shelf.

Though we are currently closed for browsing, we are here to help you with your holiday book and gift needs. Books may be ordered by email, phone, or website for Cathedral pickup Monday – Friday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. or we can mail them to you for a small fee. The Bookstore will close for orders on Tuesday, December 22, at 2 p.m. and reopen on Sunday, January 3, 2020.

Website: thecathedralbookstore.com; Email: bookstore@christchurchcathedral.org; Phone: 713-222-0286; Please follow us on Facebook: [@christchurchcathedralbookstore](https://www.facebook.com/christchurchcathedralbookstore) and Instagram: [cathedralbookstore](https://www.instagram.com/cathedralbookstore) for book news and ideas.

Wishing you a peaceful Advent, a joyous Christmas, good health, and happy reading!

MUSIC FILLS THE AIR, from page 4



The Shepherd's Carol — Bob Chilcott

Written by British composer Bob Chilcott for the renowned choir of Kings College, Cambridge, this carol has become a favorite of many. John Rutter declares, "For my money, this is the most beautiful modern carol there is. It brings cascades of tears every time." The Christ Church Cathedral Choir had the distinction of giving the American premiere of Mr. Chilcott's Christmas Oratorio in December 2019.



The Music of Christmas

Carmen Dragon conducting The Hollywood Bowl Symphony Orchestra

For my last selection I want to share with you a part of my childhood. A reel-to-reel recording of this music found its way into our home when I was 9 or 10 and I played it endless from the start of the Christmas season (which for us Presbyterians was the day after Thanksgiving) through New Year's Day. I fell in love with its rich and unexpected harmonic shifts and lush orchestral colors. I play it during the holidays to this day. I hope you find it a good mood-setter as you write cards, wrap presents or trim your tree. Trivia for you Baby Boomers — Conductor Carmen Dragon's son grew up to be The Captain of "Captain and Tennille."

Find links to listen to these arrangements and learn more about what's going on through the Christmas season by visiting christchurchcathedral.org/christmas.