

**December 2008  
GoodNewsLetter**

# Christmas Schedule

## December 21, Sunday

8:00 Holy Eucharist Rite I

9:00 Holy Eucharist Rite II & **Christmas Pageant**

10:10 St. Nicholas Guild Reception

11:00 Holy Eucharist Rite I & **Christmas Pageant**

5:00 Evensong – Music for the Longest Night of the Year

## Christmas Eve, December 24, Wednesday

6:45 Festive Music with organ, choir, trumpets and timpani

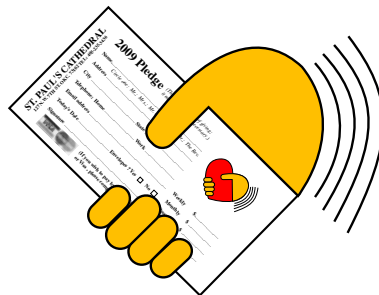
7:00 Holy Eucharist Rite II

10:30 Festive Music with organ, choir, trumpets and timpani

11:00 Holy Eucharist Rite I

## Christmas Day, December 25, Thursday

11:00 Holy Eucharist Rite I with flute and choir



**Our Goal: \$850,000**

We have received:

**216 Pledges for \$672,264**

**We need you!**

# Music

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## **Evensong with Musica Sacra The Longest Night of the Year**



Winter Solstice

December 21 at 5:00 PM

Music for the Winter Solstice, with Anthems and Motets by Britten, Paulus, Roth, Hovland, Thompson

# Fellowship

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## **Young Adult Fellowship**

**Lunch at Café do Brasil**

Sunday, December 14 after 11 AM Service

Café do Brasil, 440 NW 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 100

Singles and couples in the 20s and 30s – and their children – are welcome to join us for lunch at Café do Brasil, a great restaurant only a few blocks from the Cathedral.

Interested in hosting a Young Adult Fellowship event? Please email [mvogt@stpaulsokc.org](mailto:mvogt@stpaulsokc.org) or call 235-3436.

## **Senior Ministries Fellowship**

Announcing the creation of a new Senior Ministries Fellowship group. The purpose of this new group is to provide social and religious support for members of St. Paul's ages 55 and older (younger ones are also welcome). Co-chairs of Senior Ministries Fellowship are Meredith Cunningham, Lucy Smith and Carole Owen. If you are interested in receiving an e-mail or phone call about upcoming events, please contact Carole Owen at [owen.c@sbcglobal.net](mailto:owen.c@sbcglobal.net)

# Formation

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## **Archive and History of the Diocese of Oklahoma**

Sunday, December 14 at 10:10 AM

Dean Willey Hall

The Reverend Stan Upchurch, Archivist of the Diocese of Oklahoma and a Deacon at St. John's in Norman, will give a presentation on the archives and share stories about the history of the Diocese of Oklahoma. Learn how Deacon Stan maintains old wire recordings made by a previous bishop, the challenges archivists face in a world of email, and how he organizes and tracks the multitude of items entrusted to his care.

# Worship

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## **Pet Memorial**

Sunday, December 7 at 10:10 AM

St. Nicholas Chapel

Each year, St. Paul's offers a time for us to remember our pet companions who have died in the current year. You are invited to come to the chapel on Sunday, December 7, at the 10:10 AM time to be part of a beautiful and poignant time of prayer in which we remember each pet by name. Bulbs will be provided by the St. Francis Garden Guild and available for \$1. It is our tradition to place a bulb on the altar for each pet. The bulbs will be planted in the East Garden in the dark cold of winter and will spring to new life when the sunshine and warmth returns in Eastertide.



# An Active Advent and Christmas

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## **Advent Event**

**Gift Project has been repackaged!**

*10:10 AM Sunday, Nov. 30, Dean Willey Hall*

Gift Bags are replacing Shoeboxes for the children of Santa Maria and Watonga.

### **How you can help**

- *Shoppers*, go to your local Dollar Store and buy items for boys and girls from infants through teens; shopping lists are available in the reception area. Return your unwrapped gifts to the Christmas Box in the reception area by Sunday, November 23. Monetary gifts are welcome, too.
- *Crafters*, come to decorate 165 gift bags at the November 30 Advent Event, 10:10 AM in Dean Willey Hall.
- *Everyone*, come to the Advent Event to fill the bags with the items the shoppers have provided.

Everyone is then invited to help distribute the gift bags to our neighbors at these events:

### **Celebration at Santa Maria Virgen**

*6:00 PM, Monday, December 1*

This year, our Christmas celebration with Santa Maria will include an Advent Lessons and Carols with Mary Reynolds and members of the Cathedral choir. Following this brief service, we will go into the parish hall and enjoy a reception with members of Santa Maria as the children open their Christmas gifts from all of us. Our Christmas fellowship with Santa Maria is one of the most meaningful of all our Outreach projects. Come and join us at Santa Maria Virgen, 2141 S.W. 25<sup>th</sup> Street!

## **Christmas in Watonga**

**Christmas is coming!**

*Noon, Sunday, December 7*

Christmas in Watonga is scheduled for Sunday afternoon, December 7, with lunch, Holy Eucharist and a visit from the Three Kings. Plan to meet in St. Paul's south parking lot about 11:00 AM to caravan with the kings to the Whirlwind Mission of the St. Oakerhater Center. Bring family and friends to share Christmas with our partners in Watonga. Advent is here so Christmas cannot be far!

Mark your calendars now and share the gifts of the season!

# Advent Wednesday Evenings

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## **Advent Wednesday Evenings with Dinner and Programs**

*Wednesdays, December 3, 10 and 17*

*Dinner starting at 6:00 PM*

*Programs starting at 6:45 PM*

### **Children's Choir**

Rehearsal for Christmas Pageant. All children are welcome to come join in the Christmas fun. Led by Karen Jarvis and Mary Reynolds in the Undercroft.

### **Adult Programs**

We're offering three adult Advent programs in addition to the Children's Choir rehearsal in the Undercroft after the 6 PM dinner. They include the following.

#### ***Begin Living Wisely in Advent***

In the Living Wisely series you will learn key principles of managing personal finances, basic budgeting principles, and how to create financial goals. You will also assess your current financial situation and learn how to build a better financial future for you and your family. This is a wonderful class to evaluate your finances and gain knowledge on how to start the new year on the right foot! Please join Melissa & Byron Church in the Garden Gallery Wednesday nights in Advent. We'll be using Three Simple Rules for our text, which is available in the Cathedral Bookstore.

#### ***Stories of Christmas Joy***

Dean Back will lead off this program with stories from his book Christmas Joy. Enjoy the opportunity to share your own stories of Christmas joy during our time of table fellowship.

Led by Dean Back in Dean Willey Hall.

#### ***The Screwtape Letters Book Study***

Come to the Parlor and join in a study of this classic. Led by Senior Ministries Fellowship members – Jerry Ballentine and Gale Smith in the Parlor.

# Outreach

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## **United Thank Offering**

*Sunday, December 7, 2008*

The Episcopal Church supports a mission that is known as the United Thank Offering. All monies collected from the UTO offerings provide grants for global projects such as building an agricultural center in the Congo or local works such as purchasing a vehicle for senior transportation in Grove, Oklahoma.

It is easy to be a part of this mission. Just pick up your UTO blue box in the narthex. Then when you think about a blessing or something for which you are grateful, give a prayer and drop a coin or bill in the box. On December 7th, bring this to the UTO Ingathering that will take place at all services. Share your blessings with other and help to make a difference.

## **St. George's Guild Benefit, Sisters of Swing**

*December 20, 2:00 or 7:00 PM*

*St. John's Episcopal Church*

Join in the fun, an annual musical extravaganza for the whole family, at St. John's Episcopal Church, 5201 N. Brookline, at 2:00 PM or 7:00 PM, Saturday, December 20. Refreshments are available, too. Bring your friends; share your good fortune with the Guild; and support continuing outreach to our downtown neighbors.

# Youth

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## **Angel Choir & Christmas Pageant**

***Wednesday Rehearsals***

*Wednesday Evenings, December 3, 10 and 17 at 6:40 PM in the Undercroft*

All youth are invited to participate in this year's Pageant, to be presented at 9:00 and 11:00 on Sunday, December 21. Join us for choir rehearsals on Wednesday evenings, December 3, 10 and 17 at 6:40 in the undercroft, after the 6:00 family supper in Dean Willey Hall. Parents are welcome to help with rehearsals and assigning costumes, or join one of the three classes described elsewhere. Childcare is available; please call the church office to reserve your spot(s), 235-3436.

***Dress Rehearsal***

*December 20 at 9:30 AM in the Cathedral*

The full Pageant rehearsal is at 9:30 AM, Saturday, December 20 in the Cathedral. (Instrumentalists and cast principals/leads, please arrive at 9:00 AM.) Hearty thanks to Mary Reynolds for directing the choir and to all the parents and helping hands that make this wondrous event possible!

# Leadership and Staff

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## **The Episcopal Church, U.S.A.**

The Most Reverend Katharine Jefferts Schori,  
*Presiding Bishop*

## **The Episcopal Diocese of Oklahoma**

The Right Reverend Edward J. Konieczny

## **St. Paul's Cathedral**

The Very Reverend George H. Back  
The Reverend Canon Susan Colley Joplin  
The Reverend Canon Carol M. Hampton  
The Reverend Canon Nathaniel Luke Back  
The Reverend Canon Margôt L. Nesbitt  
The Reverend Marilyn Robertson

## **The Cathedral Officers**

Stephen H. Parker, *Senior Warden*  
Tom Steiner, *Junior Warden*  
Rick Hill, *Treasurer*  
Rachel Pringle, *Clerk*

## **The Cathedral Staff**

H. Scott Raab, *Canon Musician*  
Allen Christ, *Parish Administrator*  
Michael Vogt, *Information Technology Coordinator*  
Jack Wise, *Communications Coordinator*  
Marilyn Robertson, *Parish Nurse*  
Ann Bonsteel, *Bookkeeper*  
Anne Kueteman, *Cathedral Ministries Coordinator*  
Karen Jarvis, *Christian Education*  
Marilyn Rogez, *Childcare*  
Tommy Shoemake, *Sexton*  
Eric Ashong, *Assistant Sexton*  
Gail Dyer, *Kitchen Staff*

## **Vestry**

### **2008**

Robert Dennis, Meredith Cunningham,  
John Koons, Fran Derrick

### **2009**

Dian Everett, Hank Bowen, Patti Morgan,  
Sherry Sullivan

### **2010**

Kent Eldridge, Michael Henrickson,  
Gypsy Hogan, Todd Olberding

# Memorials & Contributions

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## **Carillon**

In memory: **Bill Hinkle**  
Donors: Ms. Nira Smith

# A Vestry Review

by Gypsy Hogan

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Big news was an update on the annual St. Paul's Stewardship Campaign. Bottom line, vestry is most grateful to all who have pledged and hopes that anyone who hasn't will please consider doing so soon. The annual pledges make it possible for vestry to develop a church budget for the coming year's church operations.

Sorry to report the early resignation of vestry member Meredith Cunningham. Earlier this year, she took the place of Kimberly Suiters when she and family moved to Washington, D.C. Meredith and husband Bill are off to New Zealand for three months to visit their daughter and her family who live there. (How fun is that?) The Cunningham/Suiters term on the vestry ends in January.

In addition, St. Paul's Junior Warden Tom Steiner communicated that he is looking forward to being relieved of his post when his term ends in January. So, prayers are going out that we have someone else interested in keeping this wonderful, but old, building in good shape.

On the plus side, vestry member Kent Eldridge was back at the table after being in recovery from back-related surgeries. He gave a touching thanks for the many prayers, notes and visits during his bed-ridden ordeal.

St. Paul's has started having requests from outside groups interested in using our facilities for meetings and events. Staff is now putting together a policy to use in booking outside groups, with the idea that it is a good way for St. Paul's to share outreach ministry.

Plans for the St. Paul's Columbarium continue to come together, with color sketches of the proposal presented to vestry. It still has a long way

to go, including finding funding, but the project appears very promising.

The Kitchen Guild has a new approach with each event now destined to have an event coordinator, someone who will know and coordinate what everyone else will do. And there will be four teams of volunteers to help with various events. So, let the cooking begin!

Deacon Marilyn Robertson reported that nine more members of St. Paul's are prepared to save lives, having just completed her CPR training. More classes are being planned.

St. Paul's member Melissa Church has been certified as a presenter for the program, "Living Wisely," which will be offered as part of the St. Paul's Advent programs. She's active in St. Paul's Young Adult Fellowship.

Vestry approved a plan by the Outreach Commission to disburse \$900 for Christmas projects with \$300 going to Watonga for the Whirlwind Mission event, \$300 to Santa Maria and \$300 to Camp New Hope.

Vestry appointed Kent Eldridge, Hank Bowen and Steve Parker to an Audit Planning Committee to look at recommendations included in a recent Auditor's Certificate Report, presented by St. Paul's to the Diocesan office. The group also will consider how to organize church records for a more complete audit in the future, in keeping with Diocesan policy implemented by Bishop Ed.

# Back Talk

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Dear Friends,

We are a purple church in a red state. We are an Advent church, vesting in royal purple as earthly subjects looking toward the presence of the King of Heaven. We are an old church bearing the purple markings of the Lord's scourged and bruised body.

It was a Saturday, March 4<sup>th</sup>, 1865. Abraham Lincoln stood in front of the newly completed Capital Dome and a very battered and bruised nation. The new construction work had left Pennsylvania Avenue a muddy mess. Lincoln gave his brief 2<sup>nd</sup> Inaugural address. God and Bible were at the heart of his stirring message.

To understand Lincoln's words one must also know the words of Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States. "[Slavery] was established by decree of Almighty God...it is sanctioned in the Bible, in both Testaments, from Genesis to Revelation..." Slavery was justified by Biblical arguments that went like this, "There is not one verse in the Bible inhibiting slavery, but many regulating it. The right of holding slaves is clearly established in the Holy Scriptures, both by precept and example. Slavery is therefore not immoral."

The division at the center of the Civil War was as religious as it was political. In speaking of the North and the South Lincoln says, "Both read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other." Lincoln then argues, "It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces."

Old Testament law forbids the perpetual enslavement of a Jew by another Jew. It regulates

the enslavement of gentiles who were not considered children of God. Lincoln quotes Jesus words about children, "Woe unto the world because of offenses; for it must needs be that offenses come, but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh."

Enslavement, abuse, exploitation or intimidation of a child of God defaces the divine image. The tactical use of biblical literalism to combat Biblical justice for all of God's children continues to this day. The mission of Jesus to deliver all humanity from bondage to sin and death could not be more imperative, "He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, ...to set at liberty those who are oppressed." Luke 4:18 RSV

As we look forward to the inauguration of our first African-American president let us pray for a nation set free from an uncivil conflict between red and blue ideologies. May we take care for our veterans who have borne our nation's battles, for families broken by poverty, for bodies impaired from lack of health care, and for freedom for all God's children to fulfill their God-given potential. Let us embrace the Advent of a purple nation, one that manifests Lincoln's hope of 'malice toward none, charity for all.'

Faithfully yours,

*Gene H. Back*

