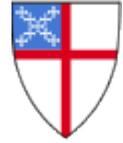


# The Elizabethan



The Newsletter of St. Elizabeth Episcopal Church      Burien, Washington

December 2014

Issue 2014-12

## Why we do what we do in Advent

Advent is the first season of the new liturgical year. For the church, the new year is not January 1<sup>st</sup>, but this year begins on November 30<sup>th</sup>! Advent is the Anglicized version of the Latin word, *adventus*, that simply means "coming." Our attention is drawn to preparation and expectation, which is especially poignant at this point in St. Elizabeth's life. The original theme of Advent was preparation for the coming of Christ the King at the end of all time for the final judgment and the final victorious establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven. Centuries later, it's no coincidence that we celebrate the Feast of Christ the King before Advent because our expectations and preparations have evolved. We have learned to prepare for and expect the coming of the infant King, born in a stable in Bethlehem, into our hearts and lives as they are right now.

In the Middle Ages, the emphasis on preparation and expectation moved people to greatly over-emphasize the penitential aspects of Advent. Anglicans have reframed the season as a celebration observed as a quiet and reflective time, including taking stock of our spiritual state, our behaviors and motivations. Consequently, the impulse to make a confession is natural. I am available by appointment to anyone who wishes to explore the possibility of partaking in the sacramental ritual of the Reconciliation of a Penitent. The ritual is not a requirement by any means, but I am one of many people who has found it to be quite profoundly healing and refreshing.

Our liturgies in Advent reflect the themes of watching, waiting, preparing and expecting. You may notice some subtle changes in the sanctuary intended to evoke a greater sense of mystery in the state of "unknowing" that Advent invites. For the first time at St. Elizabeth, the vestments are a deep royal blue. The color symbolizes the darkness and uncertainty of the season, but it also symbolizes expectation and hope—the blue of a new day and the coming of a Royal One. Blue is adapted from the Orthodox traditional association with Mary, the Theotokos, or God-bearer, and the fleur-de-lys decorating the stole, chasuble, altar frontal and tabernacle veil are symbols of both the Blessed Virgin Mary and of Mary Magdalene, whom Jesus loved deeply.

*(continued on pg. 2)*

*(continued from pg. 1)*

We will also use incense at the altar through Lent and on Christmas as we watch and wait for the coming of the light, overcoming the darkness with hope and joy, in solemn wonder at the mystery of God at work in creation to birth Christ anew in us. As the secular world harries itself with shopping, take this season—especially these four precious Sundays—to reflect, prepare, celebrate and rejoice!

Fr. John

## KIDZ KORNER

December 2014

St. Elizabeth's children have continued the study of the parables. One of the most enjoyed highlights of November was the lesson of the foolish and wise builders. Within their individual containers, each child selected rocks for a foundation and also formed a foundation of sand for which they placed a house on the rocks and one on the sand. Soon, the rains came tumbling down, and the floods came up. They were fascinated by the story and the results of making wise or foolish choices. They also enjoyed learning the song about the "foolish" man and the "wise" man as well as acting out the story. Yel and Ari joined us from the nursery at the end of our lesson, and got in on a little of the fun.

To focus on the things for which we are thankful at Thanksgiving time, we decided that the grownups in our church were very important to us.

They are the ones who help plant the seeds that make our church a wonderful place for which we can come and worship God.

The Sunday school invited the parish to their classroom, (their little corner of St. Elizabeth), to host coffee hour. The children were very excited. Abur and Amiir came to the church kitchen and learned what muffins were and helped in the baking of them. This was in itself a wonderful experience for two young South Sudanese girls. Preparing for the event was exciting for everyone.

The adults were given an opportunity to select the names of our Sunday school children, for whom they will become personal "Prayer Partners". The children will in turn, be praying for the adults of St. Elizabeth. Each child will get to personally know the adult(s) who is praying for them with the goal of bonding the generations and establishing new relationships.

Children's Ministries

## MINISTRY-TO-CHILDREN

**Kids matter to God and they should matter to us.**

**Continued from**

### **Ways Children's Ministry Benefits Our Children**

8. It helps kids want to come to church. There is nothing wrong with having a program that appeals to the interests of children, especially when it hopefully brings more children to hear the Gospel.
9. It helps them make new friends. Some of the best ones children will ever make are in the church.
10. It helps them discover and intervene in abusive home situations. This is something we rarely address. But the church is often one of the few safe places on Earth for abused children.
11. It helps children get to know their pastors. One of the best ways for ministers to connect with younger families is by working in the children's programs.
12. It gives kids meaningful keepsakes. Those Sunday school crafts often become prized possessions. The Bible verses on their keepsakes will remind them of what they have learned for years to come.
13. It gives children special memories. Think back to when you were a child in Sunday school. Can you remember a special teacher or event?
14. It allows children to make friends with adult volunteers in safe context. In our culture, child safety is a constant concern, and rightly so. But there is still great value in kids finding adult mentors in the church.

The *Elizabethan*

*The Elizabethan* is published monthly by St. Elizabeth Episcopal Church. The deadline for articles is the fourth Friday of each month.

Articles, calendar items and ideas may be mailed or emailed to the addresses below or left in *The Elizabethan* box in the Parish Office.

#### **St. Elizabeth Episcopal Church**

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#### **Questions during this time of transition for our church?**

**Priest in Charge:** Father John Forman

**Sr. Warden:** Tony Hettler

**Jr. Warden:** Barbara Treen

**Treasurer:** Linda Knutson

**Office Administrator:** Christine Ramirez



The Annual Bazaar will be, Saturday, December 6th from 9 am to 3 pm. The entire event will be held upstairs on the main floor with the “Attic”, Crafts, Collectables, Book sale, Bake sale, Christmas décor & a coffee bar. We still need contributions for all of the above and thank those that have already brought things in. If you have any questions, please call Mary Katherine @206-915-7971

### ***News from Hospitality House***

The Soroptimist International Seattle South Club are selling holiday wreaths and garlands to support Hospitality House among other South King County nonprofits. These make perfect gifts for family, friends, clients or employees.

This 24 inch wreath is freshly made, hand-crafted with mixed evergreens of Western cedar, blue-berried juniper, noble and silver fir, cones and includes a festive metallic outdoor bow. Comes in easy to handle plastic holiday bag.

Your orders can be shipped to any lower 48 states for only an additional \$15 and we will include your personalized greeting if you provide it.

Garlands will be available November 25<sup>th</sup> for Businesses wanting to decorate for the Thanksgiving Weekend. Your wreaths will be delivered no later than December 4<sup>th</sup>.

#### **To order please contact:**

**Debby Latham-Skagen:** 206-431-9354 [debbylathamSkagen@comcast.net](mailto:debbylathamSkagen@comcast.net)

Wreaths are \$25 each

Cedar Garland

25 feet \$28

50 feet \$52

75 feet \$75

Hospitality House is also saying good-bye to two members of the HH Board after years of service. A big thank you to Jan Lentz and Maria Balsiger for your service.

**News of Ted and Thelma Parks....**

As you know they are living with daughter, Elizabeth and son-in-law, John in the north end. They are now in their late 80's and don't have "the pep and ginger" they once had. They are thankful indeed that they are well cared for and are very happy to have greetings from their old friends at St. Elizabeth's.



I pray O Lord, that you will use me that through my fumbling efforts you will touch some soul with healing and love.

Faith is remembering I am God's priceless treasure when I feel utterly worthless

Worry is a cycle of inefficient thoughts whirling around a center of fear. (And we know what casts out fear!!)

Sow a thought, reap an act;  
Sow an act, reap a habit;  
Sow a habit, reap a character;  
Sow a character, reap a destiny

"There are always people who will do better than you. But your job is not to be the best. If you simply strive to be YOUR best, you will have succeeded."  
From the Christopher's 3 Minutes a Day

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## **Questions Kids Ask About God**

**Q:** If we're discouraged and it seems like God doesn't answer our prayers, what should we do?

**A:** We should keep on praying. If we are discouraged, we should tell him that we are discouraged. Then we should tell him that we know he is good and has not given up on us.

We should not blame God for our problems or for not answering our prayers. Sometimes bad things happen to test our faith or to make our faith stronger. We should remember that God is teaching us. God will give us strength to keep praying and to keep trusting that he is working things out for good.

Sometimes, we are expecting things to work out a certain way. Often God answers in a way we are not expecting. We need to keep looking for his answers.

**Key Verses:** One day, Jesus told his disciples a story to illustrate their need for constant prayer and to show them that they must never give up. The Lord said, "Learn a lesson from this evil judge. Even he rendered a just decision in the end, so don't you think God will surely give justice to his chosen people who plead with him day and night? Will he keep putting them off?"

(Luke 18: 1, 6-7)