

# DECEMBER 2017

## St. Peter's Episcopal Church

*St. Peter's Church was organized in 1885 and the cornerstone was dedicated September 5th, 1886. This structure still stands on Brown Avenue in Norfolk. The first worship service at our present site was in the parish hall on Christmas Eve, 1959. All existing construction was completed in 1965.*

|      |       |   |
|------|-------|---|
| 1st  | ..... | Jingle Bell Run   |
| 2nd  | ..... | Choir Christmas Party   |
| 3rd  | ..... | St. Nicholas visits Sunday School   |
| 5th  | ..... | Prayer Shawl group meet, 7PM  |
| 10th | ..... | Vestry meeting, 11:30AM   |
| 11th | ..... | Ladies Lunch Bunch, Ruby Tuesdays, 12:30PM  |
| 15th | ..... | Staff/Vestry Christmas Party, 6:30PM  |
| 16th | ..... | Christmas Pageant rehearsal, 10AM-Noon<br>Carol singing in the neighborhood, 7PM                                  |
| 17th | ..... | Children's Christmas Pageant, 10AM  |
| 18th | ..... | Day School Christmas Program, 7:30PM  |
| 20th | ..... | Day School Christmas Party, 6:30PM  |
| 24th | ..... | <b>Choir Christmas Cantata, 10AM</b><br><b>Christmas for Children, 4PM</b><br><b>Christmas Eucharist, 10:30PM</b> |
| 31st | ..... | Cocoa & Cookies, 10:30PM<br>Holy Eucharist, 11PM  |

**“Celebrating and Proclaiming our Life in Jesus Christ!”**

## “THE CALL”

### St. Peter's Episcopal Church

224 S. Military Highway  
Norfolk, VA 23502  
Phone: 757-466-9392



## **BIBLE STUDY OPPORTUNITIES**

*Please keep these people in your prayers*

**Men's Bible Study**— Tuesday mornings at 7:30AM. The men are studying the Book of Psalms. They meet in the meeting room beside Children's Chapel. Bring your Bible and bring a friend!

**Women's Bible Study**—The Women's Bible Study group meet on Wednesdays at 1PM in the Diffenbaugh Library. The Rector leads the class. They are studying the Book of John. Bring a friend and your Bible.

**The Intercessory Prayer Group** Meet Sunday mornings at 9AM in the Diffenbaugh Library. If you are unable to attend any Sunday, you may request the group pray for you or your loved one by writing on a prayer card and placing it in the Prayer Box on the table in the parish hall or in the Narthex. All prayers are kept confidential within the group.

**Men's & Women's Cursillo Group** meet Wednesdays. The women's grouping begins at 6:15PM and the men meet at 6:30PM.

**Co-ed Bible Study Group** meet in the Diffenbaugh Library every Wednesday at 7:15PM. They are using the Forward Day by Day daily meditation and accompanying scripture readings. They read, reflect and respond to the scriptures. Copies of the Forward Day by Day are found in the narthex and parish hall.

|                    |             |         |
|--------------------|-------------|---------|
| June Faye          | Laurie      | Shirley |
| B.J.               | Sebastian   | Patsi   |
| Paul               | Fred        | Chelsea |
| Lois               | Joe         | Jacob   |
| Mary Lou           | Melissa     | Hannah  |
| Tom & Family       | Hazel       | Chris   |
| Xander & Family    | Joan        | David   |
| Johnny & Nancy     | Al & Millie | Mary    |
| Debbie & Kenny     | Cheryl      | Scott   |
| Angie & Peter      | Betty       | Kathy   |
| Alison             | Brenda      | Susie   |
| Susie              | Lynette     | Jillian |
| Jeannie            | Barbara     | James   |
| Clay & Wanda       | Joyce       | John    |
| The Baird Family   | Jessica     | Melissa |
| Ginny              | Niko        | Joyce   |
| Christine          | Betty       | Eva     |
| Bert & Ann         | Jan         | Linda   |
| Randy & Betty      | Dale        | Kara    |
| The Parsons Family | Emily       | June    |
| Tommy & Judy       | Corey       |         |

### ***"The Acolyte Corner"***

The term "acolyte" first appeared in the 3rd century as "assistants" and "helpers". Since the earliest of recorded history, the acolyte has aided in worship. The Acolytes at St. Peter's continue in this tradition, to minister as followers and attendants, assistants and helpers in many ways. We continue, as those before us, the role of serving worship leaders. We strive as the patron saint, St. Vincent, to remember our purpose, which is rooted in our love of God. Our faithfulness is seen in our willingness to serve responsibly, and our loyalty is demonstrated in how carefully we carry out our duties. Love, faithfulness and loyalty are the virtues we seek to perfect.

*Nancy Comfort*



## **THE PRAYER SHAWL**

### **GROUP**

The Prayer Shawl Group meet on the first Tuesday of the month. This month they meet December 5th at 7PM in the Diffenbaugh Library. The ladies make prayer shawls, that are given to our sick and shut in members, hats and scarves for the homeless, baby hats, and sweaters for World Vision.



For more info. contact  
Millie Coward at  
455-5887.

## DECEMBER 2017

Join us for Birthday and Anniversary Blessings on the first Sunday of the month

### *Happy Birthday*

|                     |      |
|---------------------|------|
| Diane Wicker        | 1st  |
| Ron Monte           | 3rd  |
| Michael Galford     | 3rd  |
| Ellie Heindl        | 3rd  |
| Michael Kallestad   | 7th  |
| Todd Eidam          | 9th  |
| Howard Belote       | 11th |
| Megan Whitehorne    | 12th |
| Brandy Gibson       | 12th |
| Jimmy Eller         | 12th |
| Steve Belote        | 13th |
| Patsi Walton        | 13th |
| Scott Walton        | 14th |
| Isabel Nowland      | 15th |
| Ella Spruill        | 18th |
| Buddy Spruill       | 22nd |
| Vel Shreve          | 23rd |
| Jessica Fry         | 23rd |
| Steve Galford       | 25th |
| Carole Price        | 25th |
| Sebastian Plucinski | 26th |
| Yvette Cline        | 28th |
| Justin Pickurel     | 28th |
| Charles Bolding     | 31st |

### *Happy Anniversary*

|                         |          |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Charlie & Peggy Pfeifer | 12/19/71 |
| Tom & Diane Wicker      | 12/07/   |
| Al & Millie Coward      | 12/29/88 |
| Bob & Kathy Vanderslice | 12/30/92 |

### ST.PETER'S CHURCH STAFF

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <b>Bishop</b>         | <b>The Rt. Rev. Herman Hollerith, IV</b> |
| <b>Rector</b>         | <b>The Rev. John M. Eidam</b>            |
| <b>Secretary</b>      | <b>Vel Shreve</b>                        |
| <b>Music Director</b> | <b>Joyce Baker</b>                       |
| <b>Treasurer</b>      | <b>Carolyn King</b>                      |
| <b>Sexton</b>         | <b>Kevin Bates</b>                       |

### VESTRY MEMBERS

|                      |        |                   |               |
|----------------------|--------|-------------------|---------------|
| <b>Ana Nowland</b>   | -      | <b>Sr. Warden</b> | <b>( '17)</b> |
| <b>Bruce Comfort</b> | -      | <b>Jr. Warden</b> | <b>( '18)</b> |
| Nancy Comfort        | ( '18) | Kimberly Truxell  | ( '19)        |
| Isaac Weisiger       | ( '18) | Rob Truxell       | ( '19)        |
| Bonnie Rennick       | ( '19) |                   |               |

### DECEMBER LADIES LUNCH BUNCH

This month, the group will meet for lunch Monday, December 11th, at 12:30PM. They meet at "Ruby Tuesdays" on Military Highway in Norfolk.. Please sign the list in the parish hall if you plan on attending. For more information contact Millie Coward at 455-5887



### ALTAR FLOWERS

If you would like to give altar flowers any Sunday through the year, please sign the flower chart in the vestibule. Sign your name beside the Sunday you wish to give. You may also call the church office at 466-9392.

The altar flowers are \$70 weekly or \$35 when two families give on the same Sunday.



The deadline for articles for the January issue of The Call is:  
December 15th  
Send articles to [vel@stpeters-norfolk.org](mailto:vel@stpeters-norfolk.org)

## GOD BLESS OUR SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN

“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes.”  
(Ephesians 6:10-11)

Joey  
David  
Kyle  
Christopher  
Jared

Bucky  
Bob  
Mike  
Jennifer  
Courtney



## SUPPORT OUR VETERANS

The Veteran’s Administration in Hampton is accepting the following items for the veterans: **Toiletries, Clothing, Candy, Games, etc.** Please bring your donations to church and Bill Weissner will deliver them to the hospital. **Toiletries are needed the most.** Donated items may be placed in the container in the parish hall. Thank you!



**We are now receiving nominations to serve on the Vestry in 2018.**

If you are interested in serving, please complete a Nomination Form and return it to the office as soon as possible.

Nomination forms can be found on the tables in the narthex and parish hall. Please be sure to read the Nomination Form carefully.

The election of new Vestry members will take place at our annual parish meeting in January.

### All types of clothing is needed at the Veteran’s Hospital

Please donate your gently used clothing to the VET’s. Bring them to church and place in the container provided in the parish hall. Thank you!



## The “Feed The Hungry” Ministry

We work with “Blankets for the Homeless” supplying lunches, sweets, water, fruit and drinks. If you would like to join our ministry, or make a meal or monetary donation, please contact Ricki Wright at (757) 724-0594 or email [rickiwright@cox.net](mailto:rickiwright@cox.net)

The homeless are always in need of socks. NOW THAT the weather IS Colder they need hats, scarves, and gloves. Thank you for your continued support!

Please bring your donated items to church and place in the container provided in the parish hall.

Our **6th Annual Stocking Drive** is in progress.

Our Youth Group will be assembling Christmas Stockings again for “Blankets For The Homeless”. We need items for the stockings like candy, and small toys. A good source for buying these is the Dollar Store. The youth are supplying the stockings.

Please bring your donations to church by December 3rd. Thankyou!



## ASSIGNMENTS

### December 3—1st Sunday in Advent

|                    |                              |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Acolytes           | Corrin King, Judy Eller      |
| Ushers             | Jim Jimeno, Vicky Martin     |
| Lector at 8AM      | Drew Midgette                |
| LEM at 8AM         | Charlie Pfeifer              |
| Lector at 10AM     | Larry Shreve                 |
| LEMS at 10AM       | Ed Klaus, Charlie Pfeifer    |
| Altar Guild Duty   | Millie Coward, Bobbi Bowery  |
| Nursery Attendants | Karen Kakol, Amanda Weisiger |

### December 10—2nd Sunday in Advent

|                    |                                |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| Acolytes           | Valerie Sasser, Nancy Comfort  |
| Ushers             | Sean McGinty, Larry Shreve     |
| Lector/LEM at 8AM  | Maurice Caldwell               |
| Lector at 10AM     | Bonnie Rennick                 |
| LEMS at 10AM       | Charlie Pfeifer, Bruce Comfort |
| Altar Guild Duty   | Bonnie Rennick, Lisa Kieser    |
| Nursery Attendants | Wendy Glaeser, Amanda Keller   |

### December 17—3rd Sunday in Advent

|                    |                                 |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Acolytes           | Nancy Comfort, Judy Eller       |
| Ushers             | Steve Galford, Isaa Weisiger    |
| Lector at 8AM      | Vivien Valentine                |
| LEM at 8AM         | Ed Klaus                        |
| Lector at 10AM     | Lynne Monette                   |
| LEMS at 10AM       | Roger Rennick, Jason Nowland    |
| Altar Guild Duty   | Lynne Monette, Judy Eller       |
| Nursery Attendants | Yvonne Authement, Wendy Glaeser |

### December 24 —4th Sunday in Advent

|                    |                                       |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Acolytes           | Jeffrey Pfeifer, Bronwyn Shreve       |
| Ushers             | Steve Kakol, Jim Jimeno               |
| Lector /LEM at 8AM | Maurice Caldwell                      |
| Lector at 10AM     | Judy Eller                            |
| LEMS at 10AM       | Charlie Pfeifer, Kimberly Truxell     |
| Altar Guild Duty   | Dot Pierce, Nancy Comfort, Vel Shreve |
| Nursery Attendants | Wendy Glaeser, Yvonne Authement       |

Continued

## ASSIGNMENTS continued

### December 24—Christmas Eve

Acolytes

Ushers

Lector

LEMS

Altar Guild Duty

Christine Truxell, Bonnie Rennick, Nancy Comfort, Kim Truxell

Larry Shreve, Vicky Martin, Steve Galford, Isaac Weisiger

Kimberly Truxell

Jason Nowland, Charlie Pfeifer

Dot Pierce, Nancy Comfort, Vel Shreve

### December 31st—1st Sunday after Christmas

Acolytes

Ushers

Lector at 8AM

LEM at 8AM

Altar Guild Duty

Nursery Attendants

Sarah Weisiger, Judy Eller

Sean McGinty, Larry Shreve

Tony Antonik

Ed Klaus

Bobbi Bowery, Millie Coward

Wendy Glaeser, Yvonne Authement

**The 2017 Flower Chart-** If you would like to give flowers any Sunday throughout the year, please sign the Flower Chart in the vestibule (between the church and the parish hall). Put your name beside the Sunday you wish to give. The flowers are \$70, or \$35 when two or more people give on the same Sunday.



### Something special:

For many years, Jeffrey Pfeifer has assisted with bringing our acolytes back into church following Sunday School. This does not happen if Jeff is away. It is the little things that often means so much. So a big **THANK YOU** Jeffrey for all you do for our acolytes!

*Nancy Comfort*



**Bruce & Nancy Comfort would like to thank everyone for their thoughts and prayers during the illness and loss of their niece, Donna. Knowing so many of their St. Peter's friends were lifting them up in prayer, meant a lot to them. May God bless each of you.**



**A REMINDER...** St. Peter's Youth Group is collecting spare change to help support the Homeless in Norfolk. Please use the jar located in the parish hall to make your donations. Thank you for being faithful and generous.

Our Day School is collecting Box Tops for Education. Please bring your box tops to church and place them in the box provided in the parish hall. A reminder to pick up a 1.2.3.4 Community Farm Fresh key tag. Every time you use your key tag our school receives points which enable us to buy educational equipment for the school. Thank you for your support!

**Christmas Plants** If you would like to give one of the poinsettia plants in memory of a loved one or in thanksgiving, please sign the list in the parish hall. The plants will adorn the church on Christmas Eve



# December 2017

| Sun  | Mon  | Tue  | Wed   | Thu                                   | Fri  | Sat   |
|--|--|--|---|---------------------------------------|--|---|
|  |  |  |   |                                       | 1  | 2 CHOIR<br>PARTY 6PM<br><br>JINGLE BELL<br>RUN 9AM            |
| 3 <b>ADVENT I</b><br>8am Holy Eucharist Rite I<br>9am Intercessory Prayer<br>10am Holy Eucharist Rite II<br>Children's Chapel/Christian Ed.  | 4  | 5 7:30AM Men's<br>Bible Study<br><b>PRAYER SHAWL</b><br><b>7PM</b><br>8PM AA meeting | 6 1PM Women's Bible Study<br>6:15PM Women's<br>Cursillo Group<br>6:30PM Men's Cursillo<br>7:15PM Co-Ed Bible Study  | 7 Finance<br>Committee<br>Meeting 7PM | 8  | 9   |
| 10 <b>ADVENT II</b><br>8am Holy Eucharist Rite I<br>9am Intercessory Prayer<br>10am Holy Eucharist Rite II<br>Children's Chapel/Christian Ed.<br><b>11:30 Vestry Meeting</b>   | 11 <b>LADIES<br/>LUNCH BUNCH</b><br><b>12:30PM at<br/>Ruby Tuesday on<br/>Military Hwy</b> | 12 7:30AM Men's<br>Bible Study<br><br>8PM AA meeting                                 | 13 1PM Women's Bible Study<br>6:15PM Women's<br>Cursillo Group<br>6:30PM Men's Cursillo<br>7:15PM Co-Ed Bible Study | 14                                    | 15 STAFF/VESTRY<br>CHRISTMAS<br>PARTY 6:30PM | 16 COMMUNITY<br>CAROL<br>SINGING IN THE<br>NEIGHBOHOOD<br>7PM |
| 17 <b>ADVENT III</b><br>8am Holy Eucharist Rite I<br>9am Intercessory Prayer<br>10am Holy Eucharist Rite II<br><b>Christmas Pageant</b>  | 18 DAY SCHOOL<br>CHRISTMAS<br>PROGRAM 7:30PM   | 19 7:30AM Men's<br>Bible Study<br><br>8PM AA meeting                                 | 20 1PM Women's Bible Study<br>6:15PM Women's<br>Cursillo Group<br>6:30PM Men's Cursillo<br>7:15PM Co-Ed Bible Study | 21                                    | 22   | 23  |
| 24 <b>ADVENT IV/CHRISTMAS EVE</b><br>8am Holy Eucharist Rite I<br>9am Intercessory Prayer<br>10am Holy Eucharist Rite II<br>Choir Cantata<br>Children's Chapel/Christian Ed.<br><b>4PM Children's Service</b><br><b>10:30 PM Christmas Worship</b> | 25   | 26   | 27  | 28                                    | 29   | 30  |
| 31 8am Holy Eucharist Rite I<br>10AM Lessons & Carols<br>10:30PM Cocoa & Cookies<br>11PM Holy Eucharist  |  |  |   |                                       |  |   |



# St. Peter's Children's Ministry

December 2017

## Advent Colors

**PURPLE:** Penitence - Watching and preparing

**PINK:** Mary - Rejoice in the Lord always

**White:** The Light of Jesus - Purity and Joy



**Wishing you all a Merry Christmas filled with Christ and a New Year of hope, joy, love and peace! From the Children's Ministry Team at St. Peters.**

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## Special Note:

This year the kids will make Christmas Stockings for the 34 residents at the Senior Home in the memory unit. The stockings and candy have been purchased. We are asking for the following donations:

*Crackers (cheese or peanut butter), chips, cookies all packed separately and small stuffed animals.*

*Thank you all for helping us bring a sparkle of light into their lives!*

\*\*\*\*\*

## Corny Humor

Who brings Christmas presents to cats?

**Santa Paws**

Why did the silly family wear Christmas trees to church?

**They wanted to look sharp**

What's red and white and red and white and red and white and white?

**A candy cane wearing sneakers.**



What does Noah say to his kids at Christmas?

**Look there's rain, dear**

## Dates to Remember

- ❖ Dec 3<sup>rd</sup> - Advent 1: A message of HOPE - grounds for believing that something good may happen

**St. Nicholas Visits the Children**

Advent Activity to be handed out during Sunday School.

### BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS!

- ❖ Dec 10<sup>th</sup> - Advent 2: A message of JOY – a feeling of great pleasure and happiness.
- ❖ Dec 16<sup>th</sup> - **Community Caroling 7:00 pm**
- ❖ Dec 17<sup>th</sup> - Advent 3: A message of LOVE – a strong affection for another arising out of kinship or personal ties.
- ❖ Dec 24<sup>th</sup> - Advent 4: A message of PEACE - freedom from disturbance; quiet and tranquility. Mental calm; serenity.

**CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS SERVICE 4:00PM**

**THE CHRIST CHILD FOR CHILDREN**

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## Happy Birthday!

Isabel Nowland (December 15<sup>th</sup>)

Jasmine Price (December 27<sup>th</sup>)

Ellie Heindl (December 3<sup>rd</sup>)





# St. Peter's Children's Ministry

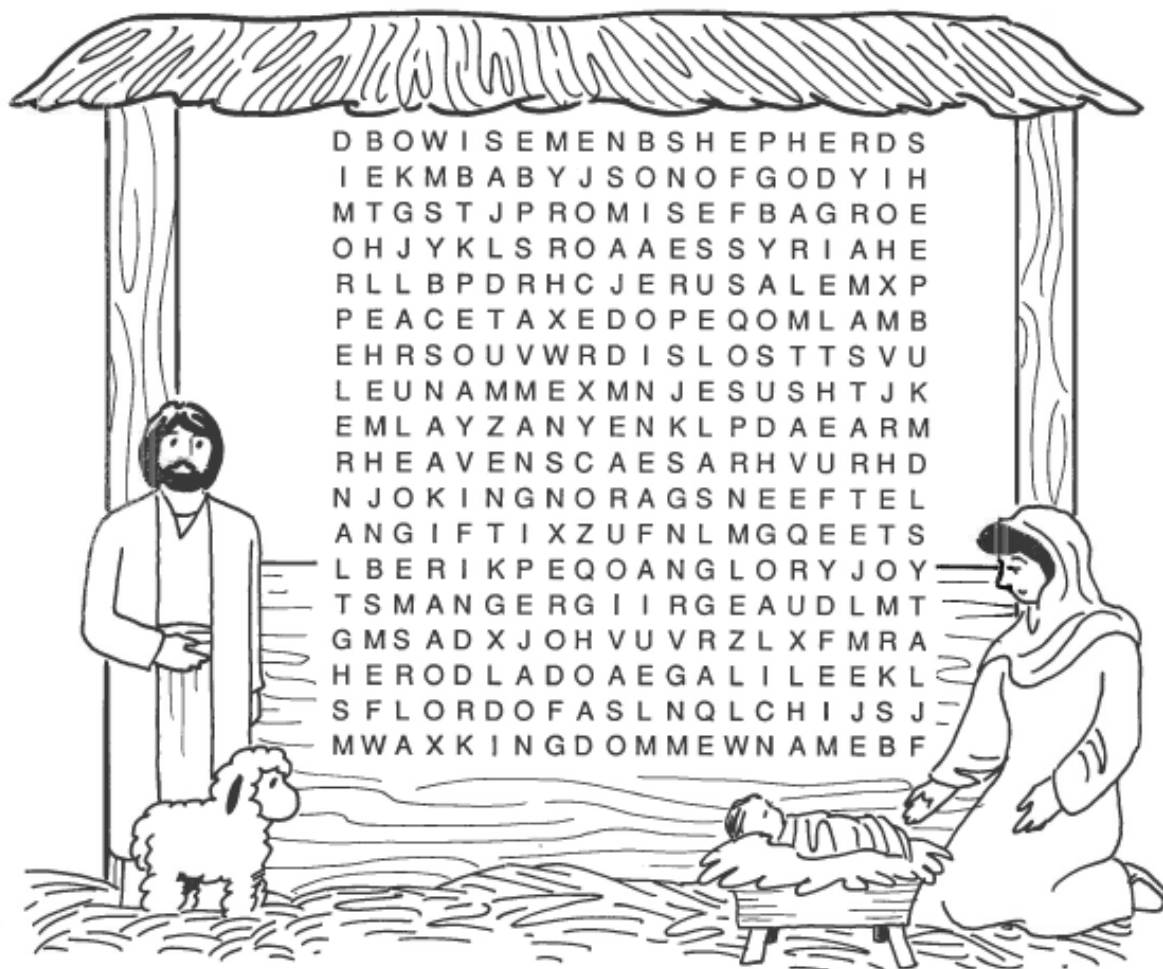
December 2017

Matthew 1—2; Luke 2

## Jesus' Birth

Jesus, God's Son was born in a stable where cows and donkeys lived. His first bed was on hay in a manger where the animals usually ate their food.

The words in the list below come from the story of the birth of Jesus in Matthew 1 — 2 and Luke . Find and circle the words in the puzzle. The letters must be in straight lines, either vertically, horizontally or diagonally. Words may be spelled either forward or backward. Fifteen other words are also hidden in the puzzle. How many can you find?



BETHLEHEM  
NAZARETH  
CAESAR  
GALILEE  
JESUS

PEACE  
TAXED  
JOY  
MARY  
HEROD

EMMANUEL  
MANGER  
SAVIOUR  
GLORY  
MYRRH

INN  
ANGEL  
JOSEPH  
SHEPHERDS  
EGYPT

WISE MEN  
STAR  
GOLD  
FRANKINCENSE  
JERUSALEM

# MERRY CHRISTMAS From the



DECEMBER 2<sup>nd</sup>:

Jingle Bell Run

You can Sponsor, Donate or Register  
St. Peters. Sprinters

Join Our Team Here:

OR

<http://www.jbr.org/faf/home/default.asp?ievent=1173350>





# JINGLE BELL RUN

Arthritis Foundation

**DECEMBER 2<sup>nd</sup> 2017**

Join The Youth Group as we dress in our Christmas  
to Best to Run (or walk) for an important cause

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

**You can register, sponsor one of our runners, or  
donate below!**

[http://www.jbr.org/faf/home/default.asp?ievent=11  
73350](http://www.jbr.org/faf/home/default.asp?ievent=1173350)

# FROM THE RECTOR

**Vestry Highlights:** At their November 12<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Vestry:

- + Approved the October Financial Report

In October, our income was \$660 less than expected.

In October, our expenses were \$625 less than expected

Thus far in 2017, we are \$17,430 under budget

- + Discussed plans for the Community Thanksgiving Eve worship service.

- + John discussed the process of filling the organist staff position left open after Joyce Baker's retirement at the end of December.

- + Discussed plans for Christmas Caroling through the neighborhood on Dec. 16<sup>th</sup>

- + Bruce Comfort presented an update on kitchen renovations.

- + Reviewed and discussed a preliminary 2018 Operating Budget.

**Rector's Prayer List-** Please join me in praying for:

- + Our Diocese and our Bishop, *The Rt. Rev. Herman (Holly) Hollerith*

- + Our Assisting Bishop, *The Right Rev. Jay Magness*

- + Our Presiding Bishop *The Rt. Rev. Michael Curry*

- + The people and clergy of our neighborhood churches.

- + St. James Holiness Church and their pastor, Elder Gavin Wainwright.

- + Large attendance numbers at our Advent/Christmas services.

- + Safe journey for all those traveling during the holidays.

- + A very Merry Christmas for all!

- + Lots of nominations for the 2018 Vestry.

- + Lots more *Positive Change* for our youth collection jars.

**Answered Prayers-** Please join me in giving thanks to God for:

- + My incredibly talented *Church Staff!*

- + The ministry of Joyce Baker as she retires at the end of this year.

- + Those volunteers working hard to renovate our kitchen- led by *Bruce Comfort*

- + The Acts of Random Kindness done by so many of you.

- + The generous donations made to the *Church Discretionary Account*.

- + Those good deeds "*known and unknown*" to us and done by our church members.

# RECTOR'S LETTER

## Christmas-Changing Human Behavior

A few years back, the University of Minnesota was having problems with Christmas Tree thefts. Thieves would sneak onto the campus in the middle of the night and saw down the school's evergreen trees. They lopped of the tops of several 18 foot trees that were more than 20 years old. The University decided to take action. They sprayed all their balsam firs, Scotch pines, and anything that could pass for a Christmas tree with skunk scent.....that's right- skunk scent! Cold weather masks the smell. But warm, indoor air releases it.

*"We'll probably still lose some trees," the groundskeeper said. "But I have some satisfaction in knowing that things are not going to work out quite the way the thieves expected- especially when the warm, indoor air hits those trees."* He did admit wondering, however, what the campus would smell like when the warm weather hit in the spring!

How do you change human behavior? Do you make the consequences so unpleasant that people never want to behave in that same way again? Possibly....but then why do so many people released from prison commit crimes again? Maybe something more is needed.

The Christmas story is an amazing story! The God of all creation became human flesh in a baby born in Bethlehem. But why? Why did God come down to where we are? And why did He take the form of a helpless baby? He did it because it was His way of changing the hearts and the behavior of people- people like you and me. His goal was not to overwhelm humanity and rob us of our freedom to choose. Rather, the object was to win our hearts and our souls in order to fashion a new creation. And God accomplished this by becoming one of us.

Sound mysterious? It's really not. Leaders in organizations today are constantly looking for ways to motivate their employees. They want people to enjoy their work enough that they will stay self-motivated without having them feel that they are being pressured by management to perform well. One way to do that is for management to meet the people where they are- to rid themselves of their vestments of power so that their presence will not intimidate.

God emptied Himself and became a human being. He set aside the privileges of deity and took on the status of a human. And having become human, He stayed human. It was an incredibly humbling process. He didn't claim special privileges. Instead, He lived a selfless and obedient life and then died a selfless and obedient death....and the worst kind of death at that- crucifixion.

God came down to lift us up. That is what Christmas is all about. And there was only one purpose: God's desire to change our hearts and so our behavior. This is the heart of Christmas. It was all for the purpose of making each of us a new creation. What a wonderful Christmas gift! The proper response to such a gift is to open ourselves and to let the love of Christmas fill our hearts and make us new. I pray you will do that this Christmas Season.

Peace and love,  
John+