

DECEMBER 2018



St. Cross
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Crossroads

THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. CROSS EPISCOPAL CHURCH



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HABITAT REPORT

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CHRISTMAS PAGEANT!

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PIANO DREAMS

Advent: Liturgy Carries Us Through

REV. RACHEL

It is difficult for me to fathom that twenty-eight years ago my sister died at this time of year. I don't know how my family navigated Thanksgiving and Christmas that year, but we did. As I reflect back on it, I think part of what helped my family was our sense of tradition. We knew what we needed to do for the season, and so we just did it, we just moved forward as we had for years before as a family.



tradition, whether lighting an advent wreath, or participating in pre-Christmas rituals, reminds us that God is the center, and hopefully the focus in our lives.

The death of our organist and music director, John Tveit, weighs on our hearts. And yet, as John would remind me, our liturgy is there to carry us through. The liturgy reminds us of what we are doing, and why are doing it. As we move into the Advent then Christmas season, our liturgy shifts to a more solemn tone. The readings foretell of the coming of Jesus, and also warn of our need to be in relationship with our God. The liturgy directs us to listen, to make time, to prepare a place, and most of all to remember Emmanuel, God Is With Us.

I believe the same will be true with St. Cross as we step into Advent and Christmas this year. Our liturgy tells us what hymns to sing as we prepare our hearts and homes for the coming of the Christ child. This

No matter where we find ourselves in this holiday season, God is with us. God comes to us throughout Advent and Christmas. God is with us in our having patience in the long lines at Target, the traffic on the freeway, the lists and lists that need checking off. God is with us when the people we most want to be with us, cannot. God is with us in our joy and in our sorrow.

MORE ON PAGE 3

WORSHIP SERVICES

SUNDAY

8:00 AM Holy Eucharist
10:00 AM Choral Eucharist

WEDNESDAY

8:30 AM Centering Prayer
7:00 PM Holy Eucharist

CLERGY

RECTOR

The Rev. Dr. Rachel A. Nyback

ASSOCIATES

The Rev. Robin Denney
Christian Formation

The Rev. Nathan Biornstad
Pastoral Care

PRIEST IN RESIDENCE

The Rev. Cn. Robert Cornner

DEACON

The Rev. Patti Angelo

RECTOR EMERITUS

The Rev. Cn. Dr. Paul D. Lawson

St. Cross Episcopal Church
1818 Monterey Boulevard
Hermosa Beach, CA 90254
310-376-8989
info@stcross.org

WEEKLY EVENTS

MONDAY

10 AM: Listening Hearts
1 PM: Staff Meeting
1 PM: History Committee *
4 PM: Temple Shalom
7 PM: Tai Chi
7 PM: EfM

TUESDAY

9:53 AM: Sewing Group

WEDNESDAY

8:30 AM: Centering Prayer
9 AM: Women's Bible Study
5:45 PM: Men's Bible Study
7 PM: Holy Eucharist

THURSDAY

11 AM: Sociable Seniors **
6:15 PM: Bell Choir Rehearsal
7:30 PM: Choir Rehearsal

FRIDAY - Office Closed

* 2nd and 4th Monday

** 2nd and 4th Thursday

WEEKLY 12-STEP MEETINGS

Sun: AA 7:30 PM

Mon: Al-Anon 7 AM
CODA 7:30 PM

Tue: Serenity 7 PM

Wed: Al-Anon 7 AM
OCA 5:30 PM
CEA-HOW 7:30 PM

Thu: Al-Anon 12 Noon
OA 6 PM

Fri: AA 8 PM

Sat: Al-Anon 10 AM

More info: (310) 376-8989 or
info@stcross.org

December 2018 Calendar

12/02: Giving Tree Gifts Due
12/02: Christmas Dinner (Page 5)
12/06: Neighbor to Neighbor, 4 PM
12/09: Giving Tree Gifts Due
12/11: OSL Healing Service, 5 PM
12/13: Sociable Seniors
12/15: Pageant Rehearsals (Page 4)
12/16: Pageant Dress Rehearsal 3 PM
12/16: Christmas Pageant 5 PM
12/18: Folding of *Crossroads*
12/24: Christmas Eve (See box, this pg)
12/25: Christmas Day
Office Closed
12/26: Laundry Love

Did You Know?

Christmas Eve is a great time to invite
friends and neighbors to church!

Christmas Services

Christmas Pageant:
12/16 at 5 PM

Read more about the Christmas Pageant
and practice schedule on page 4!

Christmas Eve Family Service:
12/24 at 4 PM

**Christmas Eve Caroling and Holy
Eucharist:**
12/24 at 9 PM

Christmas Day Holy Eucharist:
12/25 at 10 AM

Walk By Faith: Human Rights on the Way of Love

How can the lens of Human Rights help us live
out our Baptismal Faith? This class meets on
Wednesdays through Dec. 19 from
7:30-8:30 PM in the Guild Room



ST. CROSS History



Where in St. Cross can we always find examples of the
preparation/expectation for Jesus' birth and of the nativity?

Answer on page 6

ADVENT

FROM PAGE 1

Every year, the same liturgy for the four weeks before Christmas reminds us to prepare a place for God in our hearts and to remember that in the gift of the Christ Child, God is with us, Emmanuel. A both/and if you will. Wherever your heart may be this season, full of life and joy, or full of sadness and grief, please know that not only is God with you, but St. Cross is here with you too. Come home and worship with us.

Peace,
Rev. Rachel+

SUCCESSFUL HABITAT BUILD DAY



On October 20, the St. Cross Habitat Team had a big build day. Everything went wonderfully, our labor volunteers did great work, and our support volunteers were fantastic!

There is a role for you in Habitat. Each time we have an event, we get more people saying they want advanced notice, so this time we

already have our March build day in the calendar. Our next build day is Saturday, March 23 in Culver City. This would be a great time to get involved!

Contact the office for more information.

Notes

Giving Tree Ministry- The St. Cross Giving Tree Ministry, which offers parishioners the chance to provide Christmas gifts to children in need this holiday season, is underway, with signup board available through Dec. 2nd. All wrapped presents must be returned that Sunday or, at the latest, Sunday the 9th.



All Saints' Day Baptism - James Miskowicz, son of Sarah and Paul, was welcomed into the St. Cross family on Nov. 4. Welcome, James!



Sociable Seniors at California Science Center!

Youth Service Weekend

Coming up over Martin Luther King weekend (January 19-21, 2019), our youth will be doing a three-day local mission experience. We will be joining with two other youth groups at nearby Episcopal Churches. We will do service work, learning and conversation around social justice themes each day.

Middle School and High School students will participate together on Saturday and Sunday, and the High School students only will participate on Sunday. The theme of Saturday will be homelessness. Sunday's theme will be Civil Rights. We will worship together at St. Francis church and go on a hike. Sunday evening all the youth will go home, and on Sunday there will be an outing just for the high school students to the border wall, and the theme will be immigration. Please RSVP to Rev. Robin by the end of December.



Sunday School Schedule

December is a time of great activity and a few schedule changes. Throughout the month, much of our regular Sunday School time is spent in pageant preparation.

Here is the December Sunday schedule:

December 2: pageant costuming and practice in Sunday School classes

December 9: pageant practice in classes

December 16: pageant practice in classes

December 23: NO Sunday School

December 30: NO Sunday School

Starting January 6, we get back into our regular Sunday morning rhythm.

Advent Study Series

This advent, adults and youth are invited to join our study called "Walk by Faith: Human Rights on the Way of Love."

Join us Wednesdays through-Dec 19 from 7:30 -8:30 in the Guild Room (following 7pm Eucharist). We will be looking at how the lens of Human Rights can help us live out our baptismal faith. The series involves discussion of scripture and the baptismal promises in the Episcopal Church.

This is a new curriculum being developed by Cristosal and The Episcopal Church. We are one of the first congregations to use it, as a pilot program, for the planned launch of Lent 2019.



Christmas Pageant

The Christmas Pageant is a long and glorious tradition at St. Cross! It is a separate service, where the youth and children tell the story of the birth of Christ. All children and youth are welcome to participate in the pageant, but attendance at Sunday School in December is needed for preparation. Practice for the pageant songs, and costume fitting for the pageant will take place in Sunday School. For those cast in acting roles, the practices are:

- ◆ Saturday Dec. 15, 9am (call times by roles)
- ◆ Sunday Dec. 16, 11:15am tech rehearsal
- ◆ Sunday Dec. 16, 1:30pm costuming (call times by roles)
- ◆ Sunday Dec. 16, 3pm, dress rehearsal
- ◆ Sunday Dec. 16, 5pm, Pageant

Men's Ministry Hosts Christmas Dinner

On Sunday, December 2nd, beginning at 6:00pm, the St. Cross Men's Fellowship Group will host their Annual Christmas Dinner. Those who have attended before will be sure to tell you what a wonderful holiday feast this is! Featuring mouth-watering Prime Rib, Yorkshire Pudding, Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Veggies and a delectable dessert – you won't want to miss it!

Ah, but there's a catch! – only eighty guests (that's 80) can be accommodated, and you must purchase your ticket(s) in advance!

Tickets are just \$15.00 and will be on sale in Parker Hall on Sunday, November 18th & November 25th, and also online at:

stcross.org/mensdinner/

We look forward to sharing this feast and fellowship with you!



Dreaming of Pianos: A Story from John

Note: At John Tveit's funeral, Rev. Rachel made mention of an article she read in the past 2 weeks, one which John had written a few years ago. She loved the anecdote he related in the article, and we are sharing it here. This originally appeared in the Burbank Chorale blog in February of 2008.



I come from a fairly unmusical family, although my father loved to sing and had a very good lyric tenor voice. My earliest exposure to music came through recordings of classics that we had at home, and through the music I heard in church on Sundays. I've never been much of a singer myself, but I have always been around choral music, and I've loved it since I was very young. At one point, one of my teachers noticed that I often drew pictures of pianos, and mentioned this to my parents, with the not-so-subtle suggestion that they provide me with one. They wouldn't. Nevertheless, it became obvious that I had become obsessed; I fantasized about pianos, I dreamt about pianos - the very sight of a piano was a thrill. I had to play; it was a compulsion stronger than any other I'd ever had.

I took to going around the neighborhood, knocking on the doors of those that I knew who did have piano, asking to come in and play theirs. Often, these people weren't even known to me, but the urge to play overrode any shyness I might have had about inviting myself in. The fact that I didn't know HOW to play didn't matter; just having my hands on a keyboard was everything that I wanted. There was something magical about pressing a key and hearing the particular sound of a hammer striking a wire, and then ringing, bell-like on a particular pitch. Also, the fact that they could be combined; several notes could be played at once - that just opened up another whole dimension. Maybe it was magical because it seemed that there was a world of infinite possibility. Eventually, my parents heard about the visits to the piano-households. They were horrified: amused probably, but very embarrassed nonetheless. And so they relented and bought a piano for me and for my sister. Lessons soon followed, and continued on through my college years and beyond. To this day, they like to recount how I "shamed" them into making that purchase, and we all have a good laugh.

Pastoral Care Corner: Expressing Love

As I continue my series of articles on pastoral care, this month's focus is on expressing love.

How do you express love and care?

In this season of Advent, many of us are preparing feasts for those we love; we are searching for gifts that will bring a smile to some loved one's face. Maybe we are writing Christmas cards so that others will be reminded that they matter to us. As we actively preparing for Christmas, there are many ways to express our love.

In Gary Chapman's 1995 bestselling book *The Five Love Languages*, Chapman writes how people generally express love in five ways: through the giving/getting of gifts, spending quality time together, speaking words of affirmation, performing acts of service, and providing physical touch.

When do you feel the most love? If when someone hugs you? When some spends quality time with you? Think about the times that you have felt the most love and then look for a pattern.

Then consider your favorite people. How do the people, that you love most, best receive love? If you do not know, ask. Share your love in way that is most meaningful to them. Show them your love not in the way that you like to experience it, but in the way that they do. By loving them the way that want to be loved, you really show them how much you care.

If you would like to meet together, I would be delighted to take you out for coffee. Please contact me through the church office at 310.376.8989 or via email at nbiornstad@stcross.org.

-Rev. Nathan Biornstad



Construction Updates for December

Many have asked about how construction is going and what is being spent where. Costs are approximate and don't include fees for fundraising, architect, engineers, city fees, etc. Rev. Rachel or Konrad the treasurer would be happy to review the complete budget with you. The descriptions below are not exhaustive, but are general to keep everyone in the loop with the happenings and where your money is being spent.

Church and Office: The brick work on the office building is almost complete and scaffolding has

come down in the garth. Brick work on the church has begun. The waterproofing that was so desperately needed between the chapel and the sanctuary is almost complete. We have narrowed down to two color palettes and will be looking at samples through this next week and begin painting on the education building and the office.

Education Building: The framing to replace the rotten posts has begun. We ask that parents use caution in the next few weeks getting in and out of Sun-

See page 7

ST. CROSS

History

From page 2



The Annunciation of Jesus' Birth is in the south nave window near the back of the church and the Nativity of Jesus is in the left panel of the Christus Rex window above the altar. .

Search for New Organist, Director of Music

A group of choir members has met with Rev. Rachel to outline a process for a new director of music. While we know it will be difficult to fill John's shoes, we also know that we must move forward with a vibrant music program to sustain the momentum of St. Cross's worship. The process will be the circulation of a job description, which will be formulated by the committee. This job description will be posted with the American Guild of Organists, the Association of Anglican Musicians, and in our diocese and local networks. The committee will review resumes and samples of music. Finalists will be asked to come and work with the choir one week and play that Sunday. After such auditions an offer will be extended, we will have a new Director of Music by the start of March, and hopefully sooner.

Canon James Walker, Interim Organist and Choirmaster

We are pleased to announce that we have hired Canon James Walker, the retired organist and choirmaster from All Saints' Pasadena, to be our interim organist and choirmaster. Canon Walker will be working with the choir and playing for most Sunday services starting November 25.

Be sure to give him a warm St. Cross welcome! We are very appreciative of his service in this time of transition, not to mention this time of year.



Family Service Day to Abundant Table

There will be a family service day to Abundant Table in Ventura in late February. Please respond to the poll Rev. Robin sent via email, to help choose a date, or contact her at rdenney@stcross.org.

Construction Updates

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

day school. The contractors are doing this over the next two weeks as they thought attendance might be down due to Thanksgiving. Painting of the ceiling and the new molding will be completed in most of the classrooms this week. Windows should arrive shortly and we will start on those after Thanksgiving.

Organ: The organ console is installed and was played for the first time for the congregation at John Tveit's funeral on Saturday, Nov. 17. Only the front ranks (those over the choir and in the altar area) are working, which is plenty to lead us in music while the organ tuners work on the back ranks. The ranks in the back of the church should be ready in a few weeks.

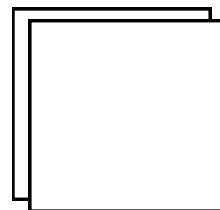
Colors: The first round of color choices are being reviewed at the time of printing. More info on this in the weekly emails and next month.

As always, if you have questions or comments please see Rev. Rachel or a Vestry Member.



1818 Monterey Boulevard · Hermosa Beach, CA 90254 · 310.376.8989 · www.stcross.org

First Class Mail



Christmas Services

December 24

4 PM: Family Christmas Eve Service

9 PM: Caroling followed by
Holy Eucharist

December 25

10 AM: Christmas Day Service

More on page 2!

*Special thanks to the volunteers
whose generous gifts of time and talent make this
newsletter possible.*

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Canon James Walker—Int. Choirmaster and Organist
Merrill Whatley—Communications Coordinator
David Dawson—Facilities Manager
Cameron Johnson—Connection Coordinator