



The Tentmaker

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

Daphne, Alabama

January 11, 2017

A Message from Thack

Happy Epiphany! One of the favorite images of Christmas is that of the wise men traveling by camel through a starlit night. A lone star dominates the sky as they arrive at the hill overlooking Bethlehem. It's been a long trip from a country somewhere in the east. The wise men look down from the star in the sky to the house just below it. This is where they will find the new born king of the Jews that they had read about in the Scriptures.

This picture of the wise men is a popular one on Christmas Cards, in our nativity scenes and Christmas plays. We typically place the wise men at the manger with the shepherds who have come to the stable to see the baby boy.

I'm sure most of you know that these wise men don't belong in the manger scene. The biblical narrative of this event suggests they arrived quite some time after Jesus' birth in a stable. Jesus is no longer referred to as a baby and the wise men found the family in a house. Most biblical scholars have suggested that Jesus may have been one or two-years-old at the time of their visitation because Herod ordered the killing of the children who were two years old or under. (Matthew 2:16).

Regardless of the actual time they encountered the Christ child, I don't have a problem with them being there with the shepherds in the stable. The stories are typically conflated to incorporate Mary, Joseph, the baby Jesus, the shepherds and wise men into one scene.

There are a lot of things we don't know about these wise men--like how many there were, what their names were, where they came from, and how far they traveled following the star. Tradition has assigned names to three wise men (Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar) because there were three gifts offered, but no one knows for sure. We do know they were familiar with the Hebrew Scriptures and Gentiles, but Matthew doesn't give us too many other details.

One of the facts that Matthew does give us is that the wise men came with special gifts for the new born king. The gospel writer tells us, *"On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh."* (Matthew 2:11, NRSV).

Gold, frankincense and myrrh--what strange gifts for a new born child. Tradition has it that these gifts are symbols of who this baby was. Gold is a gift for a king. It represents power and wealth. This child Jesus is royal and kingly. Frankincense, because this baby is God who has come to earth. Myrrh was used in embalming the dead. It indicated this child's humanity and foreshadowed his suffering and death as Savior of the world.

At first blush these might seem rather impractical gifts for a small child, but what do you give a child who is the all-powerful God? When God condescends in love to come to us in the flesh as a baby, what gifts might be fitting for the occasion? Can any gift be worthy of this child? Even the wise men must have realized that their expensive presents were hardly adequate for the child they encountered in Bethlehem that night. But, maybe that's the point.

What can we give in return? All we can do is like those men from the east, make our own humble offering of the best we have. For the wise men, it was a bag of gold, some frankincense and myrrh. Our offering may not be any more practical, but it must be the best we can offer. Maybe that's always the way it is with our gifts to God. All the gifts that we offer in worship--our praise, our music and singing, the words of

our liturgy, our bowing and kneeling, the words we mutter in prayer, and the offering envelopes we drop in the offering plate--are just gold, frankincense, and myrrh--small gifts in comparison to God's goodness and love toward us. All we can do is to offer God the best of what we have now.

A little over a week ago we celebrated the beginning of the new year. As the old year ends and a new year begins many people reassess where life is taking them and they make a new year's resolution or a promise to themselves that things will be different in the coming year. This may take the form of looking for a new job, improving or restoring relationships, or being more intentional about one's faith.

As I write this we are ten days into the New Year. Having heard about the gifts of the wise men, I believe this would be a good time for us to take another look at our response to God. I'm not just talking about money and what we give in the offering plate, though that's part of it. I am asking how well have we given ourselves to God in response to God's wonderful gift to us? How regularly have we spent time with God in prayer, study and worship? How regularly have we given of ourselves and our time to someone who needs love and compassion? How well have we used our gifts to do our work faithfully? How readily have we given to God, not our second best, not what's simply "good enough", but the best of what we have to offer?

The wise men went home from Bethlehem by another way and we too can walk a different way this year, a way where we can make Christ the living, active center of everything we are and do. To do this we must make each moment of our lives a gift worthy of the King.

Peace, Thank

Music Notes

What a great joy!

The Parish Choir is in need of new robes. The cost per singer is approximately \$280. We're going to raise the money ourselves rather than wait for a budget item opportunity. Our first project is currently underway - we're producing a series of CDs featuring some of the best work we have done over the years.

Dave Hale has been editing and archiving music we have made over the last 11 years. I have been reviewing each and every piece of music. **What a great joy** to rediscover some treasures from over the years: choral singing, organ, piano, young Kemp Jernigan from Gulf Shores on oboe, Bob Wakeman's daughter Erin [now living and making music in Naples, Italy] soaring to the heavens on an operatic aria or singing Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Pie Jesu* in duet with Christopher Conger or Albrecht Kludzuweit from the Essen, Germany, Opera Company singing the famous tenor aria *Nessun dorma* or *Come back to Sorrento* or the Parish Choir and Hand Bells doing Advent and Christmas music right up to this year's celebrations.

The CDs will be offered at a very reasonable price. We hope you will buy them and enjoy them in your home or car and give them as gifts to friends and family.

Most of the next 4 weeks I will be off the organ bench. Glenda Sutton from DeFuniak Springs, FL, will be subbing for me.

There will be **no** Taize prayer service during this month of January.

Paul Anderson

Annual Southern Antiques Show and Party

St. Paul's will again be hosting the Southern Antique Show for the 3rd year, on February 2, 3 and 4 in the Life Center.

The show has been a good fund raiser for our church yielding \$12-20,000 depending on the year.

Considerable help is needed to put on this event. We need helpers to unload vendor's wares from their vehicles to their booths in the Life Center. Carts and hand trucks will be available but a few more would be helpful. Vendors will be bringing heavy boxes as well as furniture.

We will need help in two shifts on Thursday, February 2nd; one at 8 AM and another about 11 AM. We should be through unloading by about 4 PM. Up to 8 helpers per shift will be needed so that no one is overworked.

We will also need up to 8 helpers to move boxes and furniture back to Vendors vehicles on Saturday, February 4 starting at 5 PM. We should be finished by 8 PM.

The more that show up, the easier it will be for each of us. Please consider helping our church make the Antiques Show and Party another success as a community event and as a way to secure our financial future.

Helping for even a few hours will make a difference!

Mark Costlow

Life Center Sexton

251-391-1299

Mark61342@gmail.com

Youth News

We had a great representation of parents and youth at the diocesan listening session last week, and we look forward to the future of diocesan youth ministry and the shapes it will take for our youth.

We also had a great 2017 kickoff with bowling this week for both JR and SR High youth!

We have Wednesday Night Live this week, 5:30-7:30 for JR High (6th-8th) and AAJ (3rd-5th). We will have dinner, games, and s'mores!

This Sunday JR High 4:30-6:00, SR High 5:30-7:00

Happening is fast approaching, the first weekend of February. Please keep all Happeners, youth staff, and adult staff in your prayers!

2017 Pledges

I would like to thank everyone who has turned in a 2017 pledge card. While posting contributions we have noticed many of you are noting for "pledge" on the memo portion of your check. Many of these have not turned in a pledge card, so it will be posted as a "non-pledge". If you are unsure if you turned in a pledge card or not please call the office and we will check on it for you. Pledges do not automatically renew each year. A new pledge card has to be filled out for each new year and manually typed in to our bookkeeping system. Thank you again for your help. Call the office at 251-626-2421 if you have any questions.

Southern Antique Show

February 3rd & 4th , 2017

Dealers from across the Country will sell furniture,
glassware,
Estate jewelry, china, silver
And many other treasures

**For those who attend the Preview Party admission @
\$25.00**

General Admission \$8.00
(good for all 3 days)

St. Paul's Life Center
28788 North Main, Daphne, AL

Tickets at Thrift Shop

BINGO/Spaghetti Supper

WE'RE BACK!! At least we will be **Friday, January 27th, at 6:00 p.m.** This will begin our "4th Friday Spaghetti and Bingo" for 2017. We ended the year with a great crowd. Help us pick up the pace where we left off! We welcome new folks any time - Parishioners and Non. The spaghetti is outstanding and the Bingo is loads of fun. Come join us! Your friends are there - you should be too!!

Dinner is served at 6 p.m. and the cost is \$5 for Spaghetti, Salad, Bread, Drink, and Desert. Bingo starts at 6:30. Cards for 11 games are \$20 - play them all, or share with your family or friend! **Child care is no longer provided for the younger children, older children are welcome to play!** Hope to see you there! Remember, all proceeds go to help pay for our beautiful Life Center.

FAMILY PROMISE is looking for two new coordinators.

2017 will be the last year I will be coordinating the FAMILY PROMISE program. My husband and I want to travel more in our RV. What I am looking for is 2 people to be co-coordinators. One would coordinate the volunteers who prepare meals and shopping for the products that are used by the families for breakfast, drinks etc.

The second coordinator will organize the volunteers who staff the evening and overnight shifts. By breaking it up in two parts it would make the job easily manageable. I have a spread sheet that coordinates all volunteers, times, shifts etc.

There is a large list of volunteers but I am always interested in adding new volunteers so the "regulars" are not over used.

I would like to have people who are interested in filling these positions contact me and I will give them the details of what the jobs entail. **PLUS, I WANT TO HAVE THE NEW COORDINATORS INVOLVED DURING THIS YEAR TO GET COMFORTABLE WITH THE PROCESS.** If no one volunteers we will not be participating in FAMILY PROMISE in 2018. This is a very rewarding program worth effort so I hope we will be able to continue our involvement.

Nancy Dziubakowski

Please contact me by email nkincade@yahoo.com or 625 3406

St. Paul's Episcopal Preschool

St. Paul's Episcopal Preschool is now enrolling for the 2017/2018 school year! Registration for currently enrolled students and church members is during the month of February, but open enrollment to the community begins on March 1st. Spaces fill up very quickly now that we offer Extended Day hours! Our core program is from 9am-1pm with engaging age appropriate curriculum. Our Extended Day Program offers before-care from 7-9am and our after-care is from 1-5:30pm. Please contact, Mary Haulard, Preschool Director, at 626-2774 for more information.

Bible on Tap

Bible on Tap will meet January 13 at 6:00 p.m. at Café del Rio on the Causeway. Please call or email Elizabeth Faust to RSVP. Ea.fst@hotmail.com or 251-404-0537

Thank you!

ST. PAUL'S SERVICES:

Sunday Worship

Holy Eucharist, Rite I
8:00 am

Christian Education
(Life Center and Malone Hall)
For Children and Adults
9:15 am

Holy Eucharist, Rite II
10:30 am

Wednesday Worship

Holy Eucharist, Rite I
7:00 am

Holy Eucharist, Rite II
with Healing Service
Wednesday
12:00 pm (Noon)

3rd Thursday
of each month

Taize Prayer
(Narthex)
7:00 pm

BIBLE STUDIES

Sunday

Christian Education
(Life Center and
Malone Hall)
For Children and Adults
9:15 am

Tuesday

Men's Bible Study
(Malone Hall)
7:00 am

Wednesday

Morning Bible Study
(Library)
10:30 am

Great Wednesday

(Malone Hall)
6:00 pm
Potluck Supper and Study

**VESTRY AND
OFFICERS**

Term Ending

December 31, 2017
Donna Brown
Nancy Dziubakowski
Tim Michael
Howard Wilson,
Jr. Warden

December 31, 2018
Roxanna Carpenter
Davis Daniel
Jim Jackson
Janet Norman

December 31, 2019

Sue Cody
Alice Frederick
Michael Koepp
Tom Walker
~
Walker Jackson,
Youth Representative

Martha Lathan,
Clerk of the Vestry

Airrior Norwood,
Treasurer

Church Website

www.stpaulseasternshore.com

Email Address

officestpaulsdaphne@gmail.com

Phone

251-626-2421

Fax

251-626-2456

Children's Ministry:

I would like to take this opportunity to say *thank you* to our young people who worked so hard to make the Christmas pageant so beautiful and meaningful this year! I am so proud of all our little ones and would like to personally recognize:

- Walker Jackson, Julia Johnson, Bell Jackson, and Sophie Walker for being brave enough to speak the gospel to your church family!
- Christopher Conger, Mackenzie Nolte, Lilah Nagel, Adam Meshejian, and Peyton and Micah Brown for beautifully leading us in song.
- Camille Doyle, Jonathan Doyle, Adams Jackson, William Johnson, Grayson Kitchens, Jack Rigdon, Brian Robicheaux, Madison Robicheaux, Ford Turnipseed, and Tyler Smith for truly opening our eyes to see the wonder of that special Christmas mystery.
- Jessica Sawyer, Emily Sheets, Charlotte Patterson, Stefanie Patterson, and Sarah Pearson for helping the little ones to share their part in the story.
- Stefanie Patterson for babysitting during the practices, and Telea Hiatt for working the Christmas Eve nursery.
- Mr. Paul for being such an enthusiastic and calming side kick!
- All of the parents who made pageant practice a priority and therefore a success!
- And finally all of the many people that I could not possibly name who were willing to bring their children to the pageant, as well as, the children who were willing to participate.

Thank you all so much. I am so honored to be a part of such a lovely and spiritual night. You were all beautiful!

Ms. Elizabeth

Chapel:

- We are in constant need of snacks for chapel during our feast time! Thank you to those who continue to send in snack items for us. Our numbers in chapel are increasing and we go through the snacks and snack cups very quickly. I really appreciate your support! Please be aware when purchasing snack items that we have children with peanut allergies.
- Because our numbers are increasing, there will be weeks when some of our activities will have to be held in McCann Hall. The size of the space and restroom accessibility make our larger chapel's easier and more enjoyable. Please bear with me as we, as needed, will be in a different location! A notice will always be on the chapel door as well as outside McCann Hall!

Coming Soon:

Although early!!! Mark your calendars for VBS: June 19th-22nd!

Sunday School:

We continue to meet for Sunday School in McCann Hall for Kindergarten- 5th grade at 9:15. We are working toward a more efficient Sunday School that will be better for everyone's children to attend. For more information please contact me, Elizabeth Faust, ea.fst@hotmail.com or 251-404-0537.

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
28788 North Main Street
Daphne, Alabama 36526

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The Rev. Thack H. Dyson, *Rector*
The Rev. Mary Alice Mathison, *Curate*
Paul Anderson, *Church Musician*
Elizabeth Faust, *Christian Education*
Terri McMillan, *Administrative Assistant*
Joan McKnight, *Staff Assistant*
Mark Costlow, *Life Center Sexton*
Mary Haulard, *Preschool — 251-626-2774*

Office Hours 8:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m. (Monday-Thursday)
8:00 a.m. — Noon (Friday)

Church Telephone: 251-626-2421 Fax: 251-626-2456
E-mail: officestpaulsdaphne@gmail.com
Thrift Shop Telephone: 251-626-6102

*We worship together as we seek God, serve God,
and share God with love and acceptance for all.*