



FROM THE PASTOR

The members of the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, no matter where they are gathered in the world— sing a hymn of dedication — remembering the events of September 8, 1900.

I always drive down to Galveston, Texas, when visiting my parents in Houston and feel drawn to spend a few moments at this spot on the seawall overlooking the Gulf of Mexico (above, left).

The Great Storm devastated Galveston—the worst natural disaster in U.S. history. Among those who perished were 10 sisters and 90 children from the Saint Mary's Orphanage—two dormitories just off the beach—behind a row of tall sand dunes (above, right).

As the structures began to deteriorate, the sisters cut clothesline rope into sections and each sister tied to herself eight children. Some of the older children climbed onto the roof.

The dormitory was soon lifted from its foundation and the roof collapsed.

The sisters and children were buried where they were found (6,000+ had perished and prevented any formal burials or memorials). Many of the sisters were found with children tightly held in their arms.

Three boys survived, ending up together on a tree trunk out in the Gulf—floating more than a day before landing on the mainland.

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The Sisters mission was a “commitment to the healing ministry of Christ”—determined to remain in Galveston—the orphanage was rebuilt in 1901 and remained active until 1967.

On December 10, 2021, nature’s fury was unleashed—from Edwardsville to Mayfield lives were altered forever—as a tornado cut a destructive path for over 200 miles.

Many of you were hit with unexpected, unplanned destructive winds in 2021.

The foundations have been lifted and the roof has caved in.

Why was tragedy and loss written into your story?

I don’t know.

But here’s what I do know:

The Lord is near the broken hearted and saves those crushed in spirit.

(Psalm 34:18)

And God has gifted a spirit of resiliency for those who trust in Him.

The destructive areas of our lives can be rebuilt.

The loss of those we love can be honored through our stubborn determination to live a life formed in the image of Jesus.

And if you connect with those suffering loss and destruction, your prayers and presence are needed more than attempting to answer the question “Why?”

I pray you will keep rebuilding, singing, and remembering who you are and where you’re from in the coming year.

I continue to believe all will be well—and the calm beauty of the above photo (page one, left side), taken on December 14, 2021, is the eternal image of our destinies—even in a place where horror and death once visited.

Blessings all,

Tommy

New Year's Eve Zoom

All are invited to join the Simons family—stay or drop by between 10 p.m. - 11 p.m.



Family Ministries

Rev. Drew Phillips
Minister to Families

So much life is learned by doing. We watch, listen, practice, and try it ourselves.

So much of how we are taught to think about faith and the mysteries of God is an attempt at filling the head and heart with the right information, ascent to the correct belief, and *then* we do.

Godly Play curriculum assumes that children have innate spirituality, that they are born ready to do and participate in the conversation of and about and the practice of living the God story.

Our youngest have been Godly Playing on Sundays through Advent and will continue during children's church January, beginning with the creation story.

Our youth will be celebrating MLK day and looking at parables, those told by Jesus, those we have heard, and those we live.

Be praying for several of our youth as they enter their last semester of high school: Eliot Barnes, Addison Hulett, David Jolly, and Grace Moore—we love you all, are proud of you and cheering for you. Finish strong with hard work and our prayers!

If you are interested in chaperoning trips, teaching, or otherwise helping with our children and youth please ponder and pray and talk to Drew!

I am excited for what this year holds for us. I'm so grateful to serve with Third and her families.

Peace,
Drew

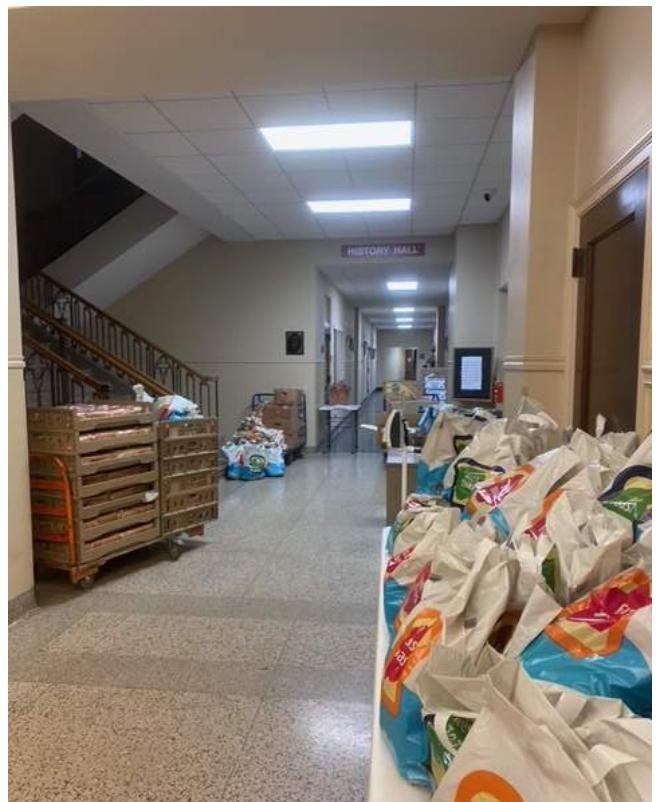


~ Christmas Baskets ~ December's Annual Food Pantry Event

**Many, MANY thanks to our tireless Food Pantry planners and leaders,
Monica McDaniel-Collins and Alexandria Hamilton,
for their year-round championship of this important
community outreach service.**



The December event involves *even more* planning and preparation than other months of the year, including food for a full Christmas dinner, prepared hygiene kits, and Christmas presents for children of registered families. This year PPE items such as gloves, masks, and sanitizer were also given out.



Frozen chickens, bread, and food bags lined up, waiting to be distributed to registered individuals and families.



Christmas "basket" recipients waiting patiently at the end of the hall for their turn to collect December items.



Christmas presents for the kids (donated toys and games).

December volunteers from top left to bottom right:

Dani and Julius Phillips, Tim and Mona Harrison;
Carolyn Jaeger, Michelle McDonald, Bonnie McDaniel, and Deanna Davis;
Derrell Kennedy, Leslie Davis, Sandy Walker, and Ella Banks;
Harold Jackson;
Monica McDaniel-Collins, Drew Phillips, and Alexandria Hamilton

Not pictured: Victoria Johnson



January Worship at Third ~ Sundays at 11 a.m.

The Journey of the Wise Men ~ January 2nd

The Star Leads the Three Kings to Bethlehem ~ *Epiphany*, January 9th

Following the Stars in our Midst ~ *MLK Jr. Recognition*, January 16th

The Command of the Star—Scripture's Guidance ~ January 23rd

Jesus Leading Us as the Star led the Magi ~ January 30th



Adult
Discipleship in
January

Please join
Pastor through
Zoom

Tuesdays
at 6 p.m.



EVERYDAY PEOPLE



EXTRAORDINARY GOD

FIND THE PODCAST *EVERY KINDA PEOPLE*
ON THE THIRD BAPTIST WEBSITE

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 02 🎁 Clara Jackson
- 05 🎁 Leslie Davis
- 07 🎁 Margaret Warmann
& Steve Campbell
- 12 🎁 Kia Moore
- 20 🎁 Matthew Watson
- 26 🎁 Thomas Puhse
& Betty Swyers
- 27 🎁 Charlotte Wilkerson
- 29 🎁 Robert Hoffman
- 30 🎁 Mike Thiems
& Gabe Thiems



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