

DECEMBER 2008

The True Gift, again.

*Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live.
(Isaiah 55:2-3).*

Each Advent, the old question of how to deal with the “Christmas frenzy” pops up again. It begins just before Thanksgiving (“Oh, Lord, is it that time already?!”), and continues to build through December (“Ahhhh!, there’s so much to do...I’ve got to send my packages to that niece in Nome, get a new snood for aunt Minnie, marinate the Bulgarian kumquats cousin Alphonsus likes so much...”), and then reaches full tilt just before Christmas (“I’m so stressed! This commercial Christmas is too much; why, the whole world is filled with evil, obsessive, greedy, and judgmental people who need to get the right Christian attitude!”).

But, then comes Christmas Eve. Advent is done; all efforts to prepare on my own rather hectic and self-obsessed terms are over. The moment has come, and ready or not, the Holy Child is born again. The Gift is given once more. I am reminded each year that Advent’s peculiar purpose is never really known until afterwards – when the tree is up, the lights lit, the carols sung, and the child deep within me knows that God has come into the world for everyone, including myself...so that we might be restored to or true dignity. There is no need to spend money for what is not bread, as Isaiah dryly comments. So much time, so much worry, so much stress, so much anxiety: where does it get us, and what do we gain by it?

Like many in our society, I grew up with the notion that Christmas is about having, getting, doing, and feeling full. My parents didn’t set down and tell me this one day: it was just the result of so many messages that come to us in our

(Continued)

St. Timothy's Episcopal Church
PO Box 7416
Salem, OR 97303
503-363-0601
www.sainttimothys.org

Return
Service
Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SALEM, OR
PERMIT NO. 409

(Continued)

culture. It has taken many years for me to realize just how jealously I hold on to this misery-producing way of thinking about Christmas. But, God has slowly been making his way into my heart about this, gradually subverting my Scrooge-like fixation with the strange poverty of Christmas.

In the Gospel, Jesus calls us to claim not our fullness, or our being busy, or our self-importance. He calls us to claim our poverty, our emptiness, our inability to get it all done or to get it all right. He says: “Blessed are the poor in spirit.” Jesus ‘walked the talk,’ right from the start. He was born in a stable (very likely in a cave). No one was ‘ready’ for him; the cards weren’t all sent, the food wasn’t even purchased – much less cooked. Indeed, the whole thing was a complete organizational disaster, from an efficiency standpoint. But, it was all going perfectly to plan, from God’s perspective.

When Christ was born, God took unto Himself our limitations. He filled up the emptiness created by our desire to “go it alone,” trying to be God rather than love and serve God. Christmas is the first and decisive step in the overcoming of sin and death that culminates in Easter. He became poor so we might be made rich. Thus, he set the standard for all of us. When we, too, learn to set aside our craving for fullness apart of God and our neighbor, we will experience the true joy of Christmas. For, it is the poverty of human love that has given rise to all the other poverty of this world.

So: give gifts, share food, celebrate the season...but don’t “labor for what does not satisfy.” This year, enjoy the season by embracing the Real Gift. And then – relax. God has done all the important stuff for you, so that “your soul may live.”

Your fellow-servant in Christ,



The Rev’d Brandon Filbert, Rector



Epiphany Pageant

The Nativity Pageant is just around the corner! We will observe the Feast of Epiphany once again this year with a service and nativity pageant on the evening of Tuesday, January 6th. Our preparations will begin on the second Sunday of Advent (December 7th) when we cast the parts (Mary, Joseph, wise men, etc., plus a few new characters this year). This is especially a time for the children and youth of the parish to shine, but adults are welcome, too — both as cast members and helpers. We will plan to gather in the chapel at **11:45 AM, December 7th**. If you cannot make that meeting and would like to participate, please call Pamela Filbert (503-585-2635) or leave her a message in the church office. There will also be a rehearsal on **Sunday, January 4th at 9:00 AM** in place of regular Sunday School classes (Godly Play will still be held on that Sunday), with a final dress rehearsal in the evening prior to the performance, time to be announced. Come, make merry, and rejoice in the birth of our Savior!



—Pamela Filbert

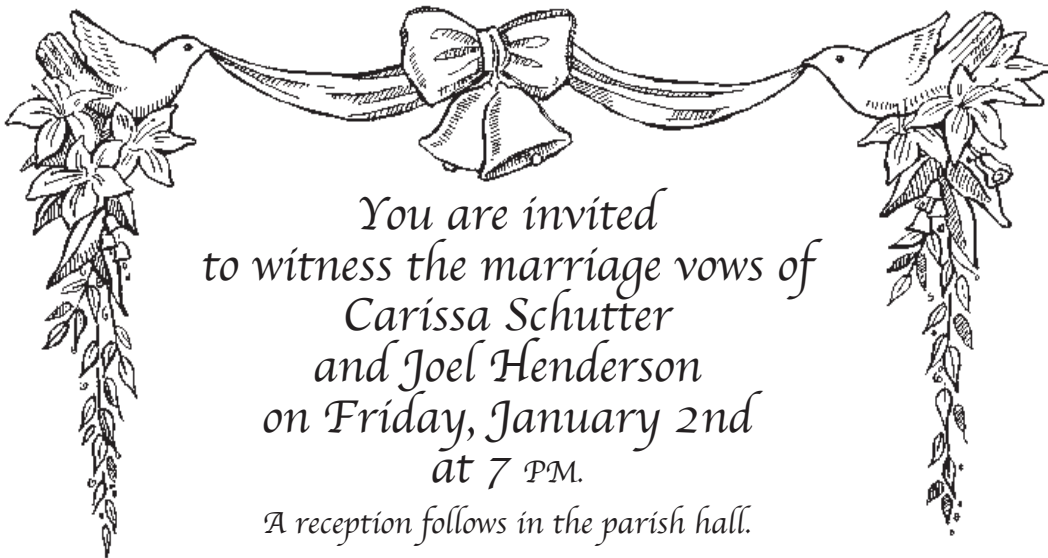
Court Child Care

The Court Child Care program at St. Timothy’s has begun. After our volunteers attended two sessions of training, the program was launched on Wednesday, November 19th. Our cadre of volunteers is working with two teachers from Family Building Blocks—a non-profit serving at-risk children and their parents—to provide care for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers while their parents participate in the Fostering Attachment Treatment Court nearby.



During Advent we are having an ongoing “baby shower for Jesus,” collecting **disposable diapers (size 3 and up), disposable training pants, and diaper wipes, as well as books for toddlers and preschoolers**. Just put them in the manger located in the narthex! Also, as the year draws to a close, please bring your old photo calendars (or any new ones you don’t plan to use, sent by your insurance agent, realtor, Aunt Mabel, etc.) and we can use them for art projects! Watch for the donation box near the manger.

—Pamela Filbert



*You are invited
to witness the marriage vows of
Carissa Schutter
and Joel Henderson
on Friday, January 2nd
at 7 PM.*

A reception follows in the parish hall.

An Advent Quiet Day at St. Timothy's

Saturday, December 13th (St. Lucy's Day), 9:30 AM – 2:30 PM

**Theme: "Ponder These Things: Meditations on the Blessed Virgin Mary
by Archbishop Rowan Williams."**

Opportunity for Advent Confessions

The day begins with the Holy Eucharist, commemorating St. Lucy of Sicily (virgin and martyr, early 4th century), then have a meditation from Archbishop Williams' beautiful and wise book, looking at how icons of St. Mary and the infant Jesus provide rich and useful insights into living the Christian faith. Time for silent reflection will follow the meditation. Noonday prayers will be followed by a "brown bag" lunch-time (please bring your own lunch, and perhaps something to share with others). An afternoon meditation time will be followed by time for silent contemplation. The short office of None will conclude the Quiet Day.

Advent Confessions may be made with Fr. Brandon in the chapel during the silences following each meditation.

A Quiet Day is an opportunity to worship, learn, and "come to one's self" before God in the context of quiet contemplation. You are welcome to bring material for journaling, doing handwork, yard-work, or anything else that helps you (quietly) focus on God's voice in your life. You are also welcome to sit in silence.

Lessons and Carols: Sunday, Dec. 21 at 6 PM

For the 37th year, St. Timothy's will offer a service of Lessons from scripture and carols from the wealth of our musical heritage as part of our Advent preparation. We have been doing this for so many years it is tempting to forget just how blessed we are in having this long-standing part of our parish tradition.

Lessons & Carols is a 19th century English liturgical development, crystallized at King's College, Cambridge, in 1918. The heart of the service is the sequence of scripture lessons, recounting the story of Adam and Eve's fall, and the process leading up to God ultimately entering the Creation in the person of His Incarnate Son, Jesus. This service is a profoundly Anglican way of focusing on the Incarnation, and in so doing helps us remember the centrality of that event in the process of our Redemption in Christ, culminating in Holy Week, Easter, Ascension, and Pentecost.

Each lesson is followed by a musical meditation, in the form of a choir anthem. Hymns for choir and congregation to sing are also part of the service. The whole service is framed by prayers connecting us to the Church Year and its message of God's love made available in the sacred mystery of the Gospel. In this way, we are blessed to experience one of our tradition's greatest gifts: meditative, artistically and spiritually substantive worship. This service is also a very valuable way of preparing inwardly for the gift of Christ at Christmas. Remember: it is not a performance; it is a liturgy of the Church, and thus an encounter with the Living God.

Lessons and Carols is not only for "insiders." It is for anyone. It is essential that members of St. Timothy's invite friends, relatives, and (especially) people they know who may be searching for a spiritual home to attend this service. It represents a fine opportunity for "liturgical evangelism," much as does the Easter Vigil. Draw up a list of folks to invite; consider making it part of an evening of pre-Christmas activities. Enjoy a time of true contemplative delight in this brief but beautiful Advent season. Also, please remember to thank Mr. Jeffrey Swartwout, our organist and musical director, for his devoted and thoughtful service to God and this parish.



Voices from Diocesan Convention

From Ruth Speaker:

The opening of the 120th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Oregon was at St. Paul's with the Holy Eucharist. The music with the Jazz singers was the highlight for some -- but not me. All services during the convention were short on "liturgy." The majority of the delegates' time was spent on Appreciative Inquiry. My gut reaction to this process was that delegates were saying what they thought they should say and not what they felt. My reason for feeling this way is that our membership would be growing and not shrinking as it is doing. The resolutions that were not controversial passed. The resolution on Same Sex blessing was changed at the last day as it was thought it would not pass. The new resolution was that we discuss this subject for the next year at convocation to ensure its passage at the next Convention. The canon change for paying less DPA (Diocesan Program Assessment) did not receive the 2/3 majority in both the clergy and laity to pass. It did receive a majority vote from both the clergy and laity, so it also will be on next year's agenda. A canon change requires either a 2/3 majority at one Convention or passing 2 years at Convention by a simple majority.

From Sandy Noble:

This was my first opportunity to be present as a delegate at convention and I found it to be an experience that has given me some perspective on the scope of work done by the Episcopal Diocese. There are a great many dedicated people — clergy and lay — who are working hard to help our Diocese through the search for a new bishop. A great deal of effort is being placed on putting together a profile of our Diocese and much of our time was spent in joint interaction with others to help develop data to create this profile. There were two resolutions that will continue to be discussed throughout this next year relative to who we are as the people of God. One of those is blessings of same-gender relationships and the other issue is that of decreasing the DPA. Both of these issues will effect who we choose as a bishop and who will be interested in becoming our next bishop. Our Diocese has embarked on the same path which we as a parish have recently traveled (calling a new ordained leader) and I pray that we will support our clergy and those who are leading us in the task so they may not be overwhelmed or discouraged as they proceed. Thank you for your confidence in me.



The 12 Days of Christmas: A Primer

Christmas Eve

4 PM: Children's Service

This year, we will be offering a slightly different form of service, with a procession beginning in the narthex and telling the story of the Nativity as we move along, culminating in the Holy Communion at the altar.

10:30 PM: Carols and Readings in the Nave

Our annual opportunity to sing beloved carols and hear poems and readings that celebrate this glorious season. Come early and enjoy this meditation as a way of preparing for the proclamation that "God is with us, Emmanuel" in the Eucharist.

11 PM: Christmas Eve Midnight Mass

Beginning with a solemn procession and the blessing of the Creche, our main celebration of Christmas is, along with Holy Week, the most solemn and probing encounter with the central mysteries of the Christian faith through the year. At the end of the liturgy, before the blessing and dismissal, we will hear the Prologue from the Gospel according to John, with its invitation to ponder the extraordinary message that through Christ, we are able to become "children of God" and enter into eternal life. [Childcare is offered]

Christmas Day: 11 AM

This service (said, but with hymns) is as simple and straightforward as Christmas Eve is sumptuous. The lessons at this service give us the "meaning" of the events of the Nativity.

1st & Second Sundays after Christmas: Dec. 28 & January 4th

This Sunday continues the Feast of the Nativity with rejoicing and an examination of the impact of the Incarnation on our understanding of God's and our nature. We keep singing those Christmas carols and hymns because it is STILL CHRISTMAS!

The Epiphany: January 6th

6:30 PM Holy Eucharist (in the church), followed by Pageant (in the parish hall), Reception (in the narthex) and Fireworks (outdoors) — The Feast of the Epiphany is the climactic conclusion to the Christmas celebrations. A special, shortened service in the church (no sermon) will be followed by a children's Christmas Pageant, serving as the "sermon" for the day. A reception in the narthex, followed by fireworks, will conclude this great season and celebration.



(Continued)

Beginning a New Year in the Lectionary Cycle

Year B of the three-year Sunday Lectionary is largely anchored in the Gospel of according to St. Mark. This, the shortest of the canonical Gospels, has been likened to “a revolutionary tract, passed hand-to-hand in a crowd,” demanding our response: “yes or no” to Jesus and the Gospel. One of its characteristics is urgency: it uses the word “immediately” many times. Another characteristic is terseness: details are provided only where absolutely necessary to advance the narrative.

Eucharistic Prayer B

This form of the Great Thanksgiving contains both a special emphasis on the Incarnation and the eschaton (or “end-of-the-ages”), and accordingly will be used from Advent through the Last Sunday after the Epiphany.

The Offertory

During Advent, we will not be singing the Doxology at the presentation of the money and food offerings, as another way of marking the season’s character.

Advent Blessing

The blessing given near the conclusion of the liturgy similarly reflects the mixed elements of the season: Christ’s coming to us as an infant at the first nativity, to us in our earthly pilgrimage, and in judgment at the end of the ages. This complex Christian sense of time is richly explored in the Book of Revelation.

Dismissal

During the Advent Season, the Dismissal will be given from the altar, and there will be no formal procession out. The altar party will line up before the altar, reverence, and depart through the sacristy. This will emphasize the more somber element of the season, making us hungry again for the closing hymn we will sing on Christmas Eve.

Gaudete or Rose Sunday

The 3rd Sunday of Advent has a special name and character. This arose, in part, due to a verse from the Letter to the Philippians once used on this Sunday: Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice! The theme of joy and expectation was particularly in evidence on this Sunday, and the color pink came to signify this day. Worshippers on this Sunday will notice roses placed at the altar, and the rose-colored candle in advent wreaths is lit on this day.

Future Out-Reach for St. Timothy’s



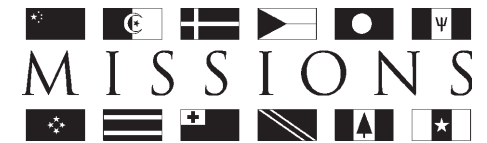
We are in the process of gauging and discerning future directions for mission out-reach. For the first time, the Parish has a Mission Commission. This group is committed to assessing the gifts and energy we have as a community of believers and determining what the Lord would have for us.

“...we are sent out to love and serve our neighbor,
see the Christ in others, and share the Gospel...”

The above section of St. Tim’s mission statement prompts several questions and challenges: *Sent where? Who will go? How will we serve? Who is my neighbor? How much time, energy, \$, and resources will we seek?*

We are a parish of limited size and means. In the same breath, we must also acknowledge that God is, that He provides, and that He makes the impossible come true. The key question gets down to this: what strengths, gifts and interests you have with respect to the type of outreach we can do here at St. Timothy’s?

Historically speaking, we have done a variety of close to home out-reaches and the Parish has supported two YAC missions; the first to Idaho at the Lillian Valley School and the second to Ensenada building two small houses. The Parish budget has always had a Missions line item; the Vestry has dispersed this money to Mano a Mano, medical clinics at Hoover School and West Salem, Inter-Faith Hospitality, Habitat for Humanity, Food Bank, and many more places.



Our congregation presently is involved with local outreach on many fronts: Soup Kitchen, Inter-Faith Hospitality for homeless families, Angel Tree Prison Ministry, Food Bank, and most recently Wednesday Court Child Care Program. In the past, we have also done mission to Hoover School, Willamette University, young families with Music Together, and Habitat for Humanity house building. This list is by no means exhaustive.

The Mission Commission will be doing a survey in these next weeks. Please be thinking and praying about what talents, interests, or passions do you have. What type of mission outreach are you willing to support by your prayer, finances and direct participation? —Shep Earl & Zac Harmon for the Mission Commission

Greening of the Church

Help is needed at 7 PM on Monday, Dec. 22 for decorating the church for Christmas. Dress warmly and bring your work gloves! Cookies and hot cider will be served by the Rite 13 group.



Transportation Ministry

Mother Earth needs our help! There is a wonderful opportunity for all of us who drive to “be green” and serve those of us who no longer drive. If you drive and can offer a ride or would like to carpool, or if you need a ride to church, please call Gloria Grace (Carol) Jones at 503-581-3566. —Gloria Grace Jones



Salem Interfaith Hospitality Network Host Week: Dec. 14-21

Our winter Host Week with Holy Cross Lutheran Church is Dec. 14-21. We are responsible for dinners, evening hosts, and overnight staff on Monday, Dec. 15, Wednesday, Dec. 17, and Friday, Dec. 19. Take this opportunity to do something concrete about homelessness, and share the spirit of the season. Sign up in the church narthex.



Opportunities for Sharing

Dec. 7: Bring a toy for a needy child

During Advent: Bring disposable diapers or a picture or board book for our Court Child Care outreach effort.

During the Month of December: Bring tuna for the Food Bank.

During Early December: Take an angel off the Angel Tree Dec. 7 and bring a wrapped gift for the child of a prisoner by Dec. 21.



Poinsettia Delivery

If you ordered poinsettia plants from Journey to Adulthood, please pick them up in the parish hall on Sunday, Dec. 7.



Liturgical Notes for Advent—Some of what changes... and what it means

Advent is an all-too-brief season of joyful and solemn preparation for both Christ’s coming at Christmas and at the End of the Ages. As such, it has elements of both celebration and penitence. The liturgical color used at St. Timothy’s is a rich blue (in accordance with pre-Reformation English usage). This color shows us the double nature of the season: its somber awareness of our need to turn to God anew, and the sense of great joy and delight about to break upon us.

Advent Sunday: 1 Advent.

The Eucharist on the First Sunday of Advent will begin with the Advent Prose, a selection of verses from the Old Testament reminding us of our need for repentance and inner preparation for God’s coming into our midst. Its beautiful and plaintive melody is a poignant reminder that Advent requires our active participation in order for its secrets to be revealed. This is, after all, a season of preparation, not mere “observation.” The Prose is followed by the Penitential Order (the Exhortation, Confession, Absolution, and Asperges) as a reminder of our need for repentance if we are truly to embrace the joy offered us in Christ. The Christ’s message of Good News begins with the word “repent.”

Greens at the Altar

During Advent St. Timothy’s observes the custom of having only evergreens, rather than flowers, at the altar (with the exception of the 3rd Sunday – see below). The use of evergreens emphasizes the more somber character of the season, as well as reminding us that Christ’s coming is ever new in the lives of disciples, just as each celebration of the Eucharist is a renewal of an eternal covenant between God and His people made once and for all in Christ.

Kyrie eleison (“Lord, have mercy!”)

For Advent, the song of praise used after the Opening Acclamation is the familiar Kyrie. This ancient hymn was adapted by the early Christian Church from the greeting given to Emperors and Imperial officials in the Roman empire: the Lord (Kyrios in Greek) was begged for mercy by his subjects, as he had the power of life and death. We address our God (who is the source of all power) in these words out of a profound knowledge that in Christ, we have been given access to God, and in the Eucharist we approach the Kingdom of God in humility and reverence. The setting for the Kyrie, Sanctus, and the Agnus Dei used during this portion of the Liturgical Year is based on part of Franz Schubert’s Deutsche Messe, as arranged by Richard Proulx.

(Continued)



Epiphany

Tuesday, Jan. 6

7 PM

Christmastide ends with the Feast of the Epiphany, celebrating the first of the scriptural manifestations of Jesus as the Son of God. (Subsequent Sunday Gospel readings reveal Jesus as the Messiah to more and more individuals and groups.) Our festivities at St. Timothy's begin with Vespers in the church, followed by the Epiphany Pageant in the parish hall, Kings' Cake and refreshments, and fireworks to light up the night. Before we leave we take down the greens in the church and do our final Christmas clean-up.



Removing of the Greens



Children's Schedule



Advent Sundays: Meet Fr. Brandon at the Advent Wreath in church before the 10:00 Liturgy

Sunday, Dec. 7: Casting Call for the Epiphany pageant, for children, teens, and adults, after church in the Chapel

Sunday, Dec. 21: Last day of Church School classes before Christmas break

Wednesday, Dec. 24: Children's Christmas Liturgy, a short Eucharist for young children, 4 PM

Sunday, Dec. 28: No Church School classes

Sunday, Jan. 4: Pageant Rehearsal, 9 AM (No Church School)

Tuesday, Jan. 6: Epiphany Celebration, 7 PM



Commemoration of St. Nicholas, Dec. 7

On the Sunday nearest St. Nicholas Day (Dec. 6) we celebrate the ministry and example of the REAL Santa Claus, St. Nicholas of Myra. Children of the parish — and others who'd like to help — are asked to bring a **toy** (not wrapped) to be given to the Salvation Army for a needy child at Christmas.



St. Nicholas, pray for us

Angel Tree





Each year in December we are given the names of children whose parents are in prison and are unable to provide for their children at Christmas. We arrange for two customized **gifts** for each child, wrap them, and deliver them to the children. As she has for many years, Barbara Gaze is coordinating this effort, and will be hanging angel ornaments on a tree in the narthex on December 7. Each ornament will bear the name and gift ideas for a prisoner's child. Take an angel, or share an angel with another parishioner. Attach the angel to the wrapped gift and bring it back to the Angel Tree by Dec. 21. Or sign up to drive!

Food Bank

The state of the economy and the winter weather increase the need for food at Marion-Polk Food Share. This month we are collecting **canned tuna**— drop your donations in the baskets by the font as you come in to church on Sunday.



	<i>St. Andrew</i> 1 (tsf.)	<i>Channing Moore Williams</i> 2 10 am HE DIY Card-Making 7pm Vestry 7 pm	3 Craft Group 10 Catechumenate 7 Living in the - Kingdom 7	<i>John of Damascus</i> 4	<i>Clement</i> 5	<i>Nicholas</i> 6 Orthodox 9
<i>Advent II</i> 7 8 am HE 9 am CS 10 am HE St. Nicholas Choir Angel Tree	8	10 am HE 9	10 Craft Group 10 Court Child Care Catech. 7 LITK 7	11	12	13 Altar Guild 8:30 am Quiet Day 9:30 - 2:30
<i>Advent III</i> 14 8 am HE 9 am CS 10 am HE Choir	15	16 10 am HE	17 <i>Ember Day</i> SIHN Court Child Care Catech. 7 LITK 7 Choir 7:30	18	19 <i>Ember Day</i>	20 <i>Ember Day</i> Orthodox 9
<i>Advent IV</i> 21 8 am HE 9 am CS 10 am HE Choir Angel Tree Lessons & Carols 6 pm	<i>Saint Thomas</i> 22 Greening 7 pm	23 10 am HE	<i>Christmas Eve</i> 24 4 Children's Liturgy 9 Choir 10:30 Carols 11 Midnight Mass	<i>Christmas Day</i> 25 11 am HE	<i>Saint Stephen</i> 26	<i>Saint John</i> 27
<i>Christmas I</i> 28 8 am HE 10 am HE	<i>Holy Innocents</i> (tsf.) 29	30 10 am HE	31	<i>Holy Jan. 1 Name</i> Wedding Rehearsal	2 Wedding 7 pm	3
<i>Christmas II</i> 4 8 am HE 9 am Rehear. 10 am HE	5	<i>Epiphany</i> 6 10 am HE Liturgy 7 pm Pageant, etc.				

December Birthdays

- 24 Caroline Gilbert
Denis Williamson
- 27 Elizabeth Mills
Deborah Cowgill
- 28 Steve Cowgill
- 30 Paula Hartwig

- 7 Zach Tatman
Lloyd Filbert
- 11 Gilbert Purdy
Milt Hansen
Judy Hooper
Barbara Gaze

- 13 Ann Marie Bandfield
Tara Lee
- 16 Larry Ruhser
Andrew Dakopolos

Calendar Notes for December



Tuesday, Dec. 2: DIY Card-Making, 7 PM
taught by Jana McFerron

Sunday, Dec. 7: St. Nicholas Commemoraton:
Bring a toy for a needy child!
Poinsettia pick-up in the parish hall
Pageant Casting Call, after 10:00 Liturgy in the Chapel



Thursday, Dec. 11: Mission Commission Meeting, 7 PM

Saturday, Dec. 13: Altar Guild Meeting, 8:30 AM
Quiet Day, 9:30 - 2:30; bring a sack lunch.

Sunday, Dec. 14: Salem Interfaith Hospitality Network Host Week begins

Sunday, Dec. 21: Festival of Lessons and Carols, 6 PM;
reception following



Monday, Dec. 22: Greening of the Church, 7 PM; bring work gloves!

Wednesday, Dec. 24, Christmas Eve: Children's Christmas Liturgy, 4:00 PM
Choir Rehearsal, 9:00 PM
Carols in the Church, 10:30 PM
Midnight Mass, 11:00 PM



Thursday, Dec. 25, Christmas Day: Holy Eucharist, 11:00 AM



Sunday, Dec. 28, First Sunday after Christmas: Holy Eucharist, 8 & 10 AM
No Church School Classes

Friday, Jan. 2: Henderson-Schutter Wedding, 7 PM



Sunday, Jan. 4: Pageant Rehearsal, 9:00 AM (No Church School Classes)

Tuesday, Jan. 6, Epiphany: Epiphany Vespers, 7 pm
Pageant, King's Cake & Fireworks

