



THE BETHLEHEM

Hebrew for "House of Bread"

December, 2023

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THE ARRIVAL OF CHRIST IN OUR HEARTS



As we embark on the festive seasons of Advent and Christmas with the Church adorned with an Advent wreath and candles, twinkling lights on our new Parish Hall Christmas tree, and the sweet scent of evergreen all around, it's the perfect time to delve into the rich tradition of what Advent is all about. Truly, Advent holds a deeper significance that goes beyond the opening of daily calendar doors or the lighting of candles for a countdown towards Christmas.

What is Advent?

Advent, derived from the Latin word 'adventus,' meaning "coming" or "arrival," is a season observed in Christianity as a time of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ at Christmas and the second coming of Christ. This is why Marian Blue is the liturgical color for many parishes—a time of waiting and preparation. This period typically spans the four Sundays leading up to Christmas Day, marking the beginning of a New liturgical year.

Advent is often represented by a wreath adorned with four candles, each symbolizing a different theme - hope, peace, joy, and love. The lighting of these candles, one for each week of Advent, serves as a symbolic journey towards the arrival of the incarnation of Christ in our lives. We are setting aside time to prepare and make room in our hearts for Jesus!

Reflecting on the Themes of Advent and the Advent Wreath

Hope: The first candle (purple or blue) is often lit to symbolize the hope of Christ, acknowledging the anticipation of the Messiah's arrival and the hope for a brighter, more compassionate world.

Peace: The second week (purple or blue) centers around God's peace, inviting individuals to reflect on inner tranquility from God and the pursuit of harmony in a world often marked by crisis, conflict, pain and suffering.

Joy: As the third candle is lit (pink), the focus shifts to abiding joy, celebrating the impending arrival of Christ and the joy that this brings to the hearts of the faithful. It is a break from the penitential season of Advent to express the understanding of why we rejoice to what is arriving in our lives.

Love: The final candle represents God's love, embodying the profound love of God for humanity and encouraging a spirit of generosity and compassion towards others through the incarnation of Christ.

In our challenging current affairs and the fast-paced, technology-driven world we experience, taking a step back to embrace the season of Advent can offer a meaningful pause. Whether you follow the liturgical calendar or not, Advent provides an opportunity for reflection, gratitude, and connection with loved ones, and a reconnection and closer relationship with God.

As we celebrate the festive seasons of both Advent and Christmas, let us pray and reflect on this sacred time of the year to get right with our relationship with God, to appreciate the profound meaning of the coming greatest gift that God has given us, and to prepare our hearts and minds to the realization of what is behind Advent. Advent is a season that encourages us to cultivate a spirit of anticipation, reflection, and goodwill and the Season of Christmas to live the incarnational Spirit of our living God through Christ in thought, word and deed in every Season. Truly, Jesus is the reason for the Seasons!

A blessed Advent and Christmas,

Fr. Barrett+

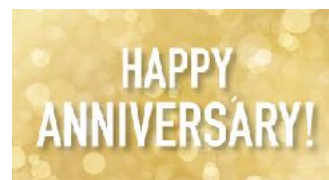
Deacon's Corner



When you think of the word 'discernment', what do you think of? You would probably think of discernment committees, perhaps of exploring the call of a new rector, or a lay person exploring a call to ordained ministry. But discernment is much more than that, and everyone in the Body of Christ is called to discernment. When we discern something, we carefully examine the situation, inviting the Holy Spirit along with us, and being completely open to the still, small voice of our Father to guide us on the path we need to take. We are over a month away from the opening of Santa Angelina Senior Housing Center on our campus and we are going to have some brand-new neighbors soon. It's possible, that some may need pastoral care and would like Blessed Sacrament to provide that care, so we are going to need to have some more Lay Eucharistic Ministers/Visitors. Also, our sanctuary may be fuller (YAY!!), so we would need a lot more assistance at the altar. This is where discernment comes in. We ALL have gifts to offer to the glory of God!!! Consider entering into a season of discernment this Advent for entering into ministry at our parish. I will be mentioning this, (briefly I promise!) just to remind you all, at announcements on Sundays. May this Advent season be one of discernment, expectant waiting, and joy and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ!!

In His Service,
The Rev. Deacon Dominique Piper

Anniversaries



Fr. Barrett and Penny celebrated their 35th Wedding Anniversary this November. Aren't they a fine-looking couple? Congratulations and here's to another 35 years!

Outreach

November Outreach

Laundry Love

On 11/16/2023, Blessed Sacrament Laundry Love served 61 clients, doing 550 loads, spending \$823.65 (\$13.50/person, \$1.50/load, 9.02 loads/person). Blessed Sacrament volunteers were Tom Johnson, Maureen Burton, Al Gagnon, Marion Lee and Doug Lee. The Busy Bee attendant was Soledad, substituting for Maria. CLC contributed \$40. Maureen Burton and Al Gagnon contributed many pieces of candy from Halloween. Teri Niebuhr's contribution of 14 stuffed animals and nine pairs of socks were all given out, as were two stuffed animals from Marion and Doug Lee. Two remaining bottles of hand sanitizer from Sheila Jordan were also picked up. EarthBreeze.com provided detergent at no charge. Thanks very much to all supporters.

Thanksgiving Boxes

Six Thanksgiving boxes were given to Placentia Neighborhood Services including the fixings for a wonderful Thanksgiving feast. A \$25 Give Certificate for a turkey was also given, making six needy families very happy. As members of the Outreach Team drove up to the Whitten Center (on Melrose), several families were waiting to be called in to receive a box. Cynthia Alvarez, Coordinator welcomed the boxes and gift cards as well as other miscellaneous groceries. Thanks to the Outreach Committee for making this possible.



Packed and ready for delivery!

Thanksgiving Eve Service



A candle was lit as a memorial for President John Fitzgerald Kennedy who was assassinated in Dallas, Texas on this date in 1963. It is hard to believe that 60 years have passed.

Our Thanksgiving Eve Service took place on Wednesday evening, November 22, 2023. We gave thanks for the many blessings bestowed on us, our community, and the world. We prayed for peace. It was a small, but close-knit gathering concluding with Miles and Brigitte singing the National Anthem.

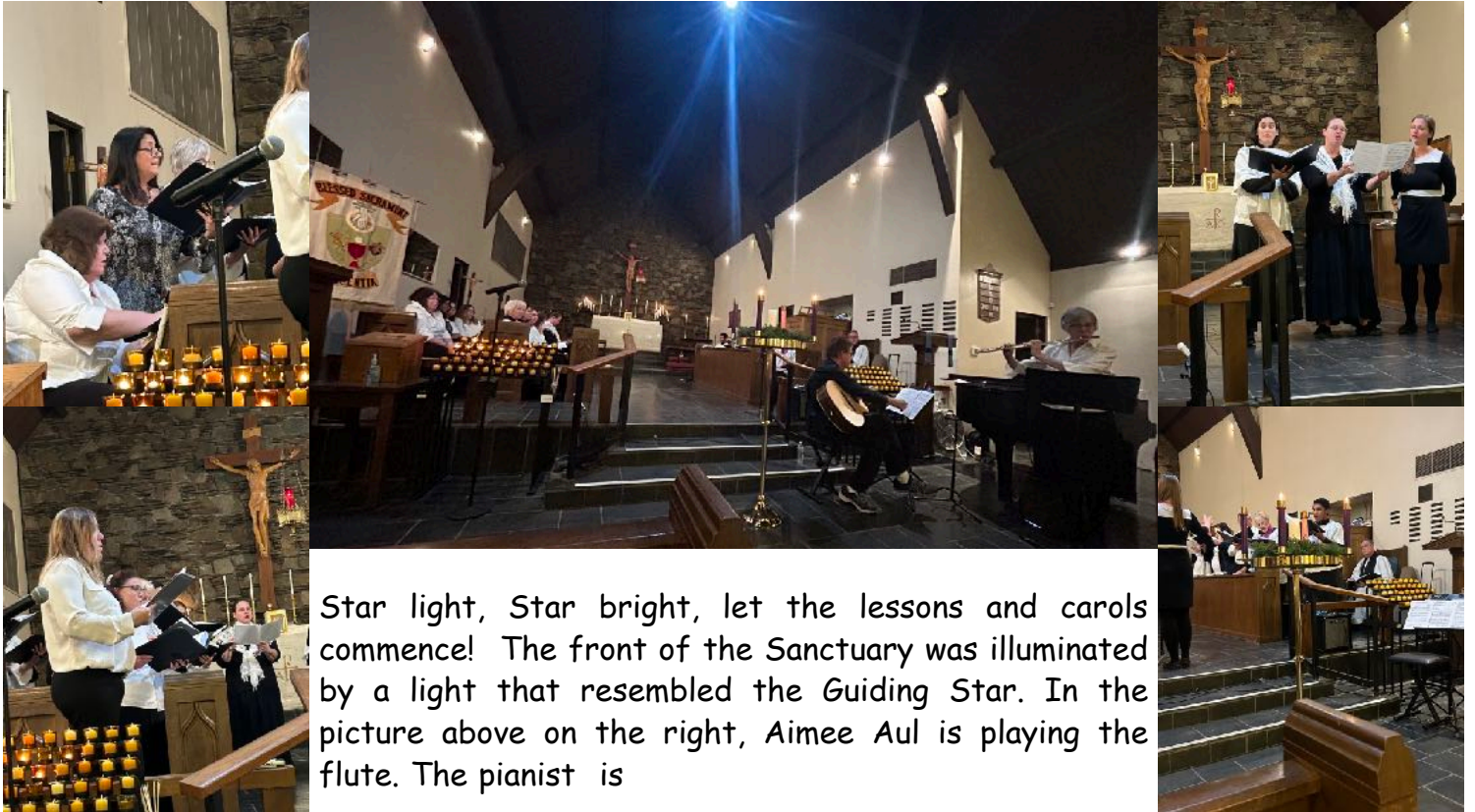
WOMEN'S RETREAT



Fourteen women from Deanery 9 gathered for an incredible Quiet Day at Trinity Episcopal Church in Orange on Saturday, December 9, 2023. The Quiet Day was co-hosted by Trinity and Blessed Sacrament.

The half day Advent Retreat included reflections and practices of silence from the book *The Spirituality of the Desert Mothers* by Henri Nouwen. The guest facilitator was Julie Mussche.

LESSONS & CAROLS



Star light, Star bright, let the lessons and carols commence! The front of the Sanctuary was illuminated by a light that resembled the Guiding Star. In the picture above on the right, Aimee Aul is playing the flute. The pianist is



Group picture of the entire cast! Well done!!

Yuyoung Jeong pictured below on the immediate right.

Our Readers!



The over 23 Choir members and Instrumentalists from Blessed Sacrament, Luminaria Chamber Singers, St. Andrew's and other musical friends made it a special evening that gave us all a taste of the coming of our Lord Christ in our lives.

Such a tradition of music, hymns and the sacred reading of Scripture combined during Advent has taken place for over 100 years. Our parish continues to share the story of the fall of humanity, the promise of the Messiah and the birth of Jesus, included in nine lessons that also inspires the congregants with Christmas Carol's, hymns and choir anthems.

Special thanks to the God given musical talents of our Choir Director Brigitte Bellavoine for her conducting, coordination and many hours of preparation for such a blessed event.



VESTRY CANDIDATES

Aimee Aul



Aimee has been a member of Blessed Sacrament since 2004. She is a musician and artist and often plays her flute at church. She works for the City of Fullerton as a Parks and Recreation Coordinator and was the longtime Museum Educator at the Fullerton Museum Center. She is a graduate of Fullerton High School, and Cal State Fullerton.

Aimee is interested in serving on vestry to help guide Blessed Sacrament into our next chapter with the Santa Angelina low income, senior housing ministry. She is especially interested in liturgy and children's and family programming. This would be her second term on the Vestry. She is fondly remembered for her service, dedication, and talent during her term.

Karin Laufer-Richey



Karin Laufer-Richey has been a member of the Blessed Sacrament congregation since November 2022 after her son's baptism. She is married to her partner of over 25 years, Jennifer Richey, a Caregiving Coach & Consultant. They live in Placentia and have an adopted son, Alexander and one dog named Charlie. They fostered their son from birth and adopted him in September 2021.

Before becoming a very active mom, Karin worked for The Institute for Applied Behavior Analysis (IABA) from March 1997 to October 2020. This private company funded through the Regional Center, provided support to adults and children with intellectual disabilities and behavior challenges. Karin

had numerous positions within the company including direct support professional and Senior Employment Specialist. She ended her 23-year tenure as the Training and Education Specialist, which included teaching ProAct, a Crisis Management Certification course. She ended her work at IABA to take a caregiving role for her father-in-law who was waiting for a kidney transplant. Karin also volunteered at the Brea Senior Center for almost 5 years while caring for her grandfather. During this time, she also took on a personal assistant/caregiver role for her mother-in-law. Karin has a very strong commitment to being of service to others, both personally and professionally.

Karin is fluent in Spanish, and watching Angels baseball and collecting coins are her favorite pastimes. She has been volunteering at Blessed Sacrament since September of 2021 when she enrolled Alexander in CLC. Her current and primary responsibilities include preparing school lunch, shopping for the school and assisting with CLC fundraising. She became a parent member of the Blessed Sacrament Board of Directors in September 2022. She is eager to work as a liaison between the vestry and CLC to ensure a cohesive partnership. She is excited for the future of cooperation between Santa Angelina and Blessed Sacrament.

Christmas Schedule

- *Christmas Eve Family Service & Children's Pageant December 24@4:30PM BSC with reception
- *Christmas Eve; December 24@9:00PM BSC Sanctuary
- *Christmas Day one service; December 25@10:00AM BSC Sanctuary-special champagne reception following service in Scully Parish Hall

Annual Staff, CLC, and Vestry Christmas Party

On December 12, 2023 at 6 PM for the first time in our new Parish Hall, the annual staff combined Christmas party dinner was held. Guests included Parish Staff, CLC, Vestry and their significant others. Everyone enjoyed the fellowship and the fantastic array of various appetizers, Italian pasta dishes, chilled bottled water, delicious punch and lively spirits served. The dessert table was filled with varieties of delicious mouth-watering holiday sweets for the over 35 guests gathered.

After opening prayer and dinner, the gift giving and exchange marathon began with Patty Bell as the Game hostess. The array of gifts included everything from wind chimes, selection of wines, Christmas coffee mugs with bags of coffee to a giant snowman floor decoration. It was a fun time for all and a great way to say thank you to all of the CLC and Parish Staff, as well as Vestry members and CLC board members for all that they do to make Blessed Sacrament come alive through the Spirit of our living God and meet the needs of the community in so many ways through God's help.



Will this go with Penny's tree?





Everyone is enjoying their gifts..but for how long...?

The seeking starts...if they see another gift on the table they like, then can take it when called!



That was a full bag!!



..looking... pass... maybe



Pick gift... from Penny! Penny picks another gift...



Our thanks for the crew who made sure all went off without a hitch.

Finally the last gift, last chances to swap, then FREEEZ called! Hope all like their new gifts!!

Published 14Dec2023

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