

THE GOOD NEWS

The Official Newsletter of All Saints Episcopal Church

Advent is Here!

by Mother Kelli Grace Kurtz



“To truly see we must forget the name of the thing we are looking at” —Claude Monet

The newly formed Communications Team and newly appointed newsletter editor Amy Lopez (three cheers to Amy!) asked that I write about Advent for the December restart of THE GOOD NEWS newsletter. I looked back on other articles I have written about Advent in December church newsletters. They pretty much all say the same thing: Today’s Advent happens while most of the larger community is celebrating Christmas. Here’s a section of the article I wrote in December 2019, my first Advent as rector of All Saints:

Advent is here. Our holy season of preparation and anticipation. And the secular season of shopping, parties, and house decorating is here too. The two walk parallel to one another, bump into one another, overlap at times, and, at times, go in separate directions. I have lost the energy and interest in militantly insisting that one is better than the other, although I remain convicted that the lights on my house are Advent lights and not Christmas lights. But I am also looking forward to taking my grandchildren on a walk through the Woods Streets Christmas light maze. I am just not interested in beating up anyone because they dive head-first into the secular season of Christmas-before-Jesus-gets-here. God bless them.

I do want, though, to advocate for, and participate with others in, the observance of a sacred season of preparation, anticipation, expectancy. Advent affords us the opportunity to slow down and reorient back to the divine mystery of God-with-us. And in a very real sense it means we must forget what we thought we knew about these weeks before Christmas in order to make room for divine mystery.

Not bad writing, if I do say so.

(Continued on page 2)

We don't need to feed the false binary of "religious Advent or secular Christmas". We can stand in Advent with all its sense of pregnancy and look out through the secular space with all its over-the-top glitz, to a holy Christmas where we rest in God. It all informs the whole of our life-in-God's care. What I want to advocate for more than anything else is the truth that none of this should be a burden. The Church had a time when Advent was known as a "little Lent"; it was a penitential season with a focus on fixing, confessing, denying, to prove ourselves worthy of the birth of the Son of God, our Redeemer. We have moved away from that emphasis back to a more organic, and I believe more holy, sense of preparation as with the last few weeks of a pregnancy. We strive to be more reflective, to practice more charity for neighbor, and to raise our gaze to the stars, watching for the one that leads our way in the darkness to Bethlehem. In a real way, Advent affords us opportunity to forget the name of the season so we can truly see the sacred in the season.

Bethlehem is rather strong on my heart these days, it being located in the West Bank of Palestine, about 6 miles from Jerusalem. I've been there twice on Christmas Eve at the Church of the Holy Nativity, the oldest church in Christendom. Bethlehem is surrounded by the Separation Wall that divides the People of Israel from the People of Palestine, thus baking into their lives separation, and hate, and suspicion. The Church will have military sharpshooters on its roof top come Christmas Eve, just like the years I worshiped there. And it will weep over all of Israel and Palestine, more so this year than in any other year in our recent past. There's no room, or time, or effort for a season of Advent in Bethlehem. There is only room for hope. I saw it there those years I got to worship at The Manager. I am sure it is there again this year, it must be. Even in the middle of hatred and war, there must be hope. That's the quiver that lingers through this time: can we hope, can we trust, can we prepare for God choosing again to make a way for wars to cease, hearts to heal, peoples to forgive, and creation to rest and rebirth? The hope that Jesus will be born again so that the world and its people can continue to inch closer to heaven. This is the focus of Advent in our land.

How, then, shall we observe a holy Advent? Our liturgical color changes from green to primarily blue, with a touch of purple and a Sunday of rose. Blue for expectancy of the very pregnant Mary, with the profundity that God calls us to birth the Christ. Purple to reorient/restore/repair that which has fallen away from the Incarnation. Rose for rejoicing. We set aside "the Gloria" for the Magnificat, and we spread across the four Sundays of Advent the great hymn O come, O come, Emmanuel.



Sunday, December 3, 6:00 p.m. is Advent Lessons and Carols. Based on the great Anglican/English tradition, this sweet, ancient service sets the tone for the whole season.

We make time and space for those who find the holiday season less than jolly. **The Blue Christmas** service is designed for those who are wrestling with a recent death or loss, for those who are in a dark space—loss of employment, or health, broken relationship, seasonal affective disorder (holiday blues). A good time to invite someone you know who is walking in darkness to come experience light. Wednesday, December 13, 6:00 p.m. Andy Cooper will be our preacher. **On Saturday, December 16, 5:30 p.m.** it's **Pizza Feed/Carol Sing/Cookie Exchange/Fun Holiday Wear EXTRAVAGANZA!** Need I say more? O.K., we're adding Gingerbread House-building to the mix! Bring cookies to share, wear your most fun, silliest holiday, and be prepared to sing Frosty the Snowman and Here Comes Santa Claus. On **Sunday MORNING, December 24** it's Advent IV (not yet Christmas Eve) and the **Hanging of the Greens** after Morning Prayer at 8:00 a.m. There will be **No 10:00 a.m. service** on Christmas Eve. We'll take down the blue and purple and set our worship space ready to greet the newborn King of kings.

Plenty of ways to mark a holy Advent amid holiday lights.
May you find the Holy in all of it.

A Health Update

FROM KGK+

I am deeply moved by the care and concern I have received since announcing I am undergoing treatment for breast cancer. The tender notes, the many prayers, and the respectful whisper "I know we're supposed to give you space, but, how are you doing?" are all cherished gifts. Thank you.

How am I doing? I am failing miserably at keeping my distance. I am not good at not extending a handshake, or leaning in for a hug, or talking close-in with a small group. Other than that, I am doing o.k. Some of the diagnostic procedures leave me sore and give me headaches, but I am grateful for the outstanding medical treatment I am getting, and I am grateful to the vestry, staff, Fr Ryan, and other leaders who both give me space to rest and remind me I should rest.

What's coming up? I will be having surgery in the middle of December, which will keep me away from most Advent activities. Whether I will be in the church building for Christmas Eve worship is still up in the air. Fr Ryan is set to preach Christmas Eve and Andrea Briggs is preaching in Advent for me. It is looking more and more like I will not need to go through chemotherapy, but I will have a course or two of radiation in January. Of course, as my surgeon keeps saying, all of this can change as we learn more. So my lesson to learn, and learn-again is to trust the journey will lead to wholeness.

I'll remind you again, let's challenge ourselves to deepen our prayers for all those who are undergoing treatment or getting a new diagnosis, let's find ways to fill the gaps left by those who must rest and recover, and let's give thanks to the Great Healer who moves through it all.

KGK+

P.S. if you are able and so moved during this season of giving,
www.CityofHope.org

UPCOMING EVENTS @

All Saints Episcopal Church

December

- 3rd* First day of Advent; Advent wreath making after 10am service in Smith Hall
6pm- Festival of Advent Lessons and Carols
- 9th* Palm Springs Gay Men's Chorus- 7pm
- 11th* Taizé, First Congregational Church- 7-8pm
- 13th* Blue Christmas- 6pm
- 16th* Carol Sing, Crazy Sweater, Pizza Feed, Cookie Exchange Extravaganza!- 5:30pm
- 24th* 8am- Advent IV Morning Prayer
9am- Hanging of the Greens
5pm- Early Christmas Service (Children telling The Christmas Story)
9:30pm- Carol Sing (with Choir)
10pm- The Christ Mass (with incense)
11:30pm- Sherry Reception
- 25th* Christmas Eucharist- 10am
- 31st* 10am- Lessons and Carols
6pm- New Years Eve Prayer Service (ONLINE ONLY)

January

- 28th* Annual Meeting- Stay tuned for details

2023 Holiday Outreach Opportunities at All Saints'

by Paul Johnson and Jim Boyer

There are several opportunities to provide gifts and much-needed supplies to the community during the Christmas season. Here are some ways that you might get involved:

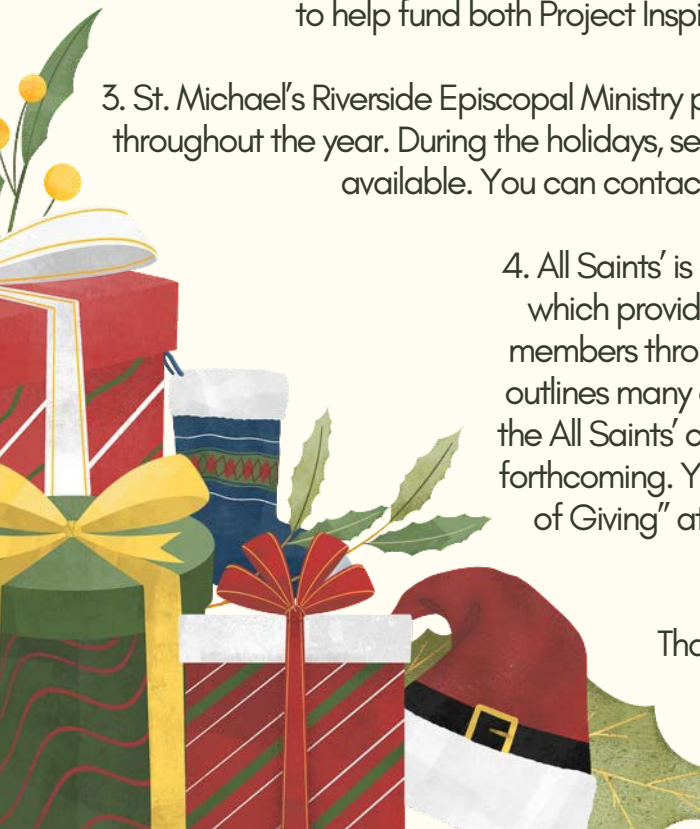
1. The Training and Research Foundation is committed to transforming the lives of children, families, and the community. This child care center for infants through 5-years-old is located on the lower level of our north wing. You can help provide gifts and other needed items for the children, siblings, and families of this center during the holiday season. More information about The Training and Research Foundation can be found at their website <https://www.trfhs.org/>. Here is how you can help: Starting November 26th, take a tag from the Christmas tree in Smith Hall. On it, you will find information about a child, including gender, age, clothes/shoe sizes, and some suggested items that the child's parents think they might need or enjoy. Choose something to provide; you don't need to get everything on the list but feel free to provide one or more. Be sure to tape the tag you took from the tree to the unwrapped gift and bring it to the Christmas tree at Smith Hall any Sunday between December 3rd and December 17th. You can also give unwrapped gifts to Jim Boyer or Paul Johnson or drop them off at the church office during regular business hours. Jim and Paul will collect, collate and deliver the gifts to the child care facility prior to Christmas, on or about December 20th.

2. Inspire Life Skills offers support to young people who have aged out of the foster care system. It provides them with a place to live and support as they begin a new life. All Saints' rents the house next to our parking lot to Inspire for housing up to five young men who are part of the program. We provide gift cards to each of our Inspire residents at Christmas. To fund these gift cards, the All Saints' community participates in the Penny Bowl. Every Sunday from November 26th–December 17th, bring your pennies to earn positive points to support the ministry of your choice, and all other change and paper money to earn negative points for the ministry that you'd like to "help" get to last place. The winning ministry gets bragging rights, and the donations will be used to help fund both Project Inspire and the TRF Child Care Holiday Outreach.

3. St. Michael's Riverside Episcopal Ministry provides housing and support to members of the community throughout the year. During the holidays, several different opportunities to support St. Michael's will be available. You can contact Mother Kelli Grace for additional details.

4. All Saints' is one of many organizations that supports Path of Life Ministries, which provides shelter, food, and essentials to assist homeless community members throughout the year. During the holidays, POL's "Season of Giving" outlines many different ways that you can help. More information about how the All Saints' community will be providing outreach during the holidays will be forthcoming. You can also find additional details about Path of Life's "Season of Giving" at their website: <https://www.thepathoflife.com/season-of-giving>.

Thank you for your participation and Merry Christmas!!





Music Notes From Abe

Dear saints,

December is the month of beautiful holiday music, especially choral music about the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. This year, the choir will be presenting several of our favorite anthems for Advent and Christmas.

Here are some anthems and pieces that I'm looking forward to:

On Sunday evening, December 3rd, we will be again offering a Festival of Advent Lessons and Carols. The music for that service will include arrangements of the French carol, "Comfort, Comfort Ye My People" and the Sacred Harp tune "Trumpet in the Morning." One of the cornerstones of the choral repertoire, "E'en So Lord Jesus, Quickly Come" by Paul Manz will be offered. We also had sung this anthem during our recent Evensong for the Feast of St. Michael in October.

For the 5pm Christmas Eve service, I plan to bring in a brass quartet and a timpanist to join in with our carol singing for that service. The beautiful tune, Greensleeves, sung with the words: "What Child Is This?" will be the offertory for that service.

During the 10pm Christ Mass and Carol Sing which immediately precedes the mass, the choir will sing the now-classic setting of "O Magnum Mysterium" by Morten Lauridsen. This is one of my personal favorite choral anthems ever, and the text "O Magnum Mysterium," which has been set by composers for centuries, is one of the most poetic Christmas texts in our tradition.

To ensure that Advent and Christmas this year will be festive and joyful, I ask that you consider a gift to the church for Christmas Flowers and Musicians. For example, a gift of \$125 would bring in an extra professional singer for the Christ Mass at 10pm, and gifts totaling \$250 would bring in a brass instrumentalist or timpanist for the early Christmas Eve service. Please pray about your gift for Christmas at All Saints. I hope you might also consider giving towards Flowers and Music for Christmas this year.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Abe

Blue Christmas

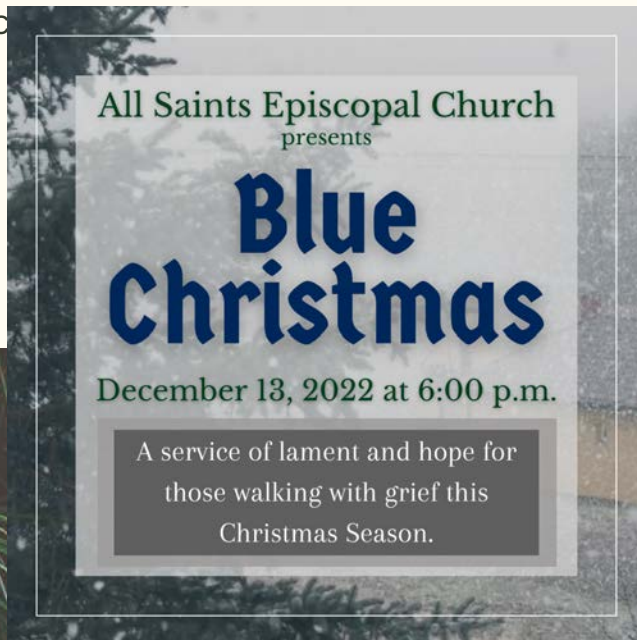
by Andrew Cooper

All Saints Riverside will be holding its Blue Christmas service on Wednesday December 13th.

For those who may not be familiar with its history, Blue Christmas is a day in the Advent season, recognized in Western Christian tradition, marking the longest night of the year. It is sometimes referred to as the Longest Night because it is traditionally set for December 21st, the Winter solstice. A number of churches in Western Christianity will hold a Blue Christmas service as a point of gathering for those who have lost loved ones. For these persons, the ongoing experience of grief can create a barrier which makes it difficult for them to celebrate at Christmas. A service such as this provides a safe space where these grieving individuals may gather, pray, sit in silence, and reflect. They also find community with others who have suffered significant loss. The hope is that this service will help those grieving to find a means to navigate the holiday season and to find comfort and meaning where possible.

At All Saints, we seek to provide this opportunity for those grieving to gather. We have also chosen to expand the notion of grief to incorporate other types of loss, including the loss of one's health, the loss of a significant relationship, the loss of one's livelihood, the loss of a treasured pet, etc. Each of these types of loss can make it difficult to face Christmas and the holiday season.

We hope that you will join us on Wednesday December 13th at 6:00 p.m. You will find a quiet, sacred space where you can safely be present in your grief. God will meet you there, and your beloved church community will be glad to pray you through.



Our World



Our Neighborhood

by Andrea Briggs

Episcopal resources in response to the conflict in the Holy Land –

The war in Gaza – are you still reading the news? Are you still trying to take in the horror of this violence, or the violence happening in many other parts of the world today? Sometimes we need to be able to do something, in order to come to some sense of peace when the world seems to be in chaos.

- Prayer is always first.
- Pay attention to alternative news sources. St. George's College, Jerusalem, is the Anglican Center for pilgrimage, education and reconciliation in the Holy Land. The college website <https://www.saintgeorgescollegejerusalem.com>, and Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/sgcjerusalem> have current updates. Also look at the Facebook page of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem <https://www.facebook.com/diocesefofjerusalem>. Those who have been pilgrims in the Holy Land may want to see what tour guide and friend Iyad Qumri has posted at <https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=qumri%20pilgrimages>.
- Other organizations are in touch with what is happening on a daily basis. Three are the Episcopal Church Office of Government Relations, <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/ministries/office-government-relations>, Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD) <https://www.episcopalrelief.org>, and the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem (AFEDJ) <https://afedj.org>
- If you are able to donate, ERD and AFEDJ (above) will direct your donations to where they are most needed.
- In addition, Presiding Bishop Michael Curry is asking us to call on our government to do more to stop the killing in Gaza. Read his statement online at the Office of Public Affairs of the Episcopal Church, <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/publicaffairs>, at the top of the queue. Then contact your representatives in Congress to repeat his message. Not sure who represents you or how to phone or email them? Go to www.usa.gov for names and website addresses.

Our World



Our Neighborhood

by Andrea Briggs

What's happening in Riverside?

- Now on display at the Riverside Art Museum, 3425 Mission Inn Ave., "Sacred Spaces: The Art and Collection of Charles Bibbs." Riverside resident Charles Bibbs' large body of work has focused on themes of African, African American and Native American lore and style, and on the themes of the power and hopefulness of art in public and private spaces. In addition to a large collection of Bibbs' own paintings and drawings, the exhibit includes art from his extensive personal collection. Through March 24, 2024. Open Wed-Sat 10-5, Sun 12-5; reservations are recommended. \$10.95-\$15.95; free first Thursdays and first Sundays.
- December 1, 7-9pm, and Saturday, December 2, 4-6pm, La Sierra University Department of Music cordially invites you to their 76th Annual Candlelight Concert, at La Sierra University Church, 4937 Sierra Vista Avenue, Riverside. This special Christmas program will feature all their major ensembles, chamber groups, and soloists to lead the Riverside community into the holiday spirit. Free General Admission; \$20/person priority seating. More information at (951) 785-2036, <https://music-events.lasierra.edu>.
- December 3, 11am-3pm, the Alternative Gift Fair returns to First United Methodist Church, 4845 Brockton Avenue, Riverside. This is an opportunity to do some Christmas shopping from local and international vendors whose work supports a better world. They are again offering music and lunch, and a shopping opportunity unlike what you will find elsewhere.
- December 11, 7-8pm, First Congregational Church will host Taizé Meditative Worship, an ecumenical style of worship that uses silence, repetitive chanting and thought-provoking readings to encourage a deep reflective experience of the presence of God. Several Riverside churches have joined together to provide this worship opportunity to the community on the second Monday of every month. First Congregational Church is located at the corner of Lemon Street and Mission Inn Avenue, in downtown Riverside. Remember to allow extra time to find parking during the Festival of Lights.
- December 11, 6-8pm, outside the Court House, 4050 Main Street in downtown Riverside, join in the outdoor celebration of the 19th annual Chanukah Festival, hosted by the Chabad Jewish Community Center of Riverside. Hanukkah (Chanukah) is the Jewish eight-day "festival of lights," celebrated with a nightly menorah lighting, special prayers and fried foods. The Riverside festival features the lighting of Riverside's giant menorah, the largest in the region, live music, traditional foods, entertainment, and children's crafts and activities. The festival is a gift from the Jewish community to the community at large, in affirmation of the universal message of Chanukah: the triumph of good over evil and the infinite power of a single act of kindness and humanity.

REFLECTIONS: ALL FAITHS PRAYER SERVICE



I was raised in a Christian home and throughout my childhood my family was a part of various bible-believing denominations. I felt a strong sense of Jesus' love for me in my formative years, but there was always a sense that those who didn't worship and pray like us were somehow on the outside looking in. The Lord, in all His goodness, led my husband and I to All Saints a year ago and as we are learning and growing, we feel at home here. We are experiencing special and sacred ways of worship we never knew. Just recently, we attended The All Faiths Peace/Prayer Service. I personally have never felt such an atmosphere of unity in a prayer service before. The outpouring of heavy lament and heartfelt petitions from image bearers of varying faith traditions gave me a glimpse of what Heaven just might look like. -Amy López

On October 23, 2023, All Saints hosted an interdenominational All Faiths Service of prayer for peace and reconciliation in three areas of the world today dramatically affected by war: Palestine, Israel, and Ukraine. On that day, the outbreak of war in the Israel and Palestine was recent, while the Russian aggression against Ukraine had been underway for almost two full years. The Service was a plea to God and to humanity to end the terror.

That plea was expressed individually by the people assembled, and collectively by several faith communities. The rhythm consisted of silent prayer, punctuated by the lighting of candles, well-timed readings, and the (deliberately) sparse but extremely beautiful music, brilliantly led by Abe Fabella. The Service reached out to several religious communities; its central, constitutive, aim was presence and participation by our Muslim and Jewish sisters and brothers.

The community's response was wonderful. We had a full sanctuary. The congregation included, but also extended well beyond, our parish membership. Present were religious leaders: from our two great sister religions, Imam Mahmoud Harmoush of the Islamic Center of Riverside and Rabbi Phil Cohen of Temple Beth El; and, from the Christian denominations, our own Mother Kelli Grace Kurtz and Father Ryan Macias, Mother Mary Crist from Saint Michael's Episcopal Community Center, Jeffrey Ryan, Senior Pastor at the Center for Spiritual Living, Erin Thomas and Alfred Graise, co-Pastors at the Calvary Presbyterian Church, Stephanie Lape, Pastor of Eden Lutheran Church, and Kent Tuohino, Pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church. Rounding out the spiritual team were three secular friends, all known to us, pillars All Saints: Andrea Briggs, Christina Miller, and Abe Fabella.

The readings were delivered by this group. The texts ranged across prose and poetry, drawn from the Holy Books of our three great religions, compositions by major spiritual thinkers, prayers for peace, and music. One peace prayer was Ukrainian. A particular source of inspiration was the reading of two peace prayers in the vernacular: Hebrew, as Rabbi Cohen read the entire prayer; and Arabic, in the opening invocation by Imam Harmoush.

Spoken, not scripted, texts included Mother Kelli Grace's words of welcome, Father Ryan's opening acknowledgment of the tie between Native American Nations and the lands on which we now live, and a beautiful homily by Mother Mary, who bridged Native American trauma with the current three crises, as she disclosed her identity as a member of the Blackfeet Nation (and her indigenous name, Eagle Woman!), and recalled her encounter with Palestinian schoolchildren, on a visit to the Holy Land in better times.

Bridge is a suitable metaphor for what happened that evening. Sadness was bridged with comfort. Comfort was sustained by our turn to God, one another, and the victims in Ukraine, Palestine and Israel. That turn was a bridge with the trauma of peoples inhabiting our own Continent. It was all brought forth by All Saints' earmarks of worship: a cadence of silence, light, and sound, sustained with a calming, timeless dignity.

-Piotr Górecki

The Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

by Father Ryan Macias

While in seminary, I did a two-year field education internship at a small bilingual congregation in East Oakland. That church is located in the historic neighborhood of Clinton-San Antonio Park—just South of Lake Merritt. It's a part of town with a reputation for being one of the last places in Oakland where newly arrived migrants with little resources can hope to settle down (although that reality is changing every day). Many of the families living in that neighborhood found their way to Oakland by way of Cambodia, Laos, Guatemala, El Salvador and, of course, Mexico. It was an exciting place to train for ministry, and part of my heart will always reside in Clinton and at Santiago-St. James.

I didn't own a car back then— I was on a tight seminarian's budget, and I wouldn't have wanted to drive in the Bay Area anyway. My commute involved a short BART ride, a bus around the Lake, and a couple blocks on foot. For a long season during that two-year stint, I would walk past a shanty particleboard dwelling that had been erected by an unhoused resident of Clinton. An image of Our Lady of Guadalupe was glued onto one of the boards.

It struck me that she was there to keep a watchful eye over that intersection—silently listening to all to the sounds of the city... the laughter of teenagers on their way to school... the jingle of the paleta man pushing his cart... the confessions of drunks late into the night... the shivering prayers of unhoused folk not quite fortunate enough to know the luxury of a particle-board dwelling.

There she was at the corner of International Boulevard and Fifteenth. Only this particular icon portrayed her not as the picture of virginal grace and purity we so often see in church, but as a pin-up girl with shiny brown skin, wearing her characteristic blue-green veil and a matching brazier to boot. It was perfect. She was perfect. And this was her home, I thought—exactly where she had lived for thousands of years.

Every year on December 12th, we remember that Lady, in all of her glory, as she appeared to Saint Juan Diego at the hill of Tepayac. The story of Our Lady of Guadalupe's appearance is a story worth knowing if you don't already. To tell it faithfully, I think we must begin with the story of the Doctrine of Discovery, and the European conquest of the land now known as the Americas.

In 1493, Pope Alexander VI issued the Papal Bull *Inter Cetera*, which recognized the right of the King and Queen of Spain to seize any land in the New World not already held by a Christian prince. Historians estimate that before the signing of that document, as many as 112 million indigenous people were living in the land that was later called "The Americas." In the 100 years that followed, that number declined to as few as six million. Scientists plotting climate change have shown us that in those 100 short years, human beings witnessed one of the most dramatic fluctuations in global temperatures in recorded history since the Ice Age. They attribute this to fluctuations in greenhouse gasses that occurred in the atmosphere, due to the decomposition of human remains and the overgrowth of now abandoned farmland.

This is the world that the Chichimec peasant Cuauhtlatoatzin was born into. Just ten years before Our Lady appeared at Tepayac, Hernan Cortez arrived in the region historically known as Anahuac. With him came Franciscan missionaries, who baptized Cuauhtlatoatzin, renaming him Juan Diego.

(Continued on page 12)

The story goes that Juan Diego was a pious man, who was on his way to mass when he came to the great hill of Tepayac. There a woman appeared to him in radiant splendor, dressed in the finery of an Aztec princess. She spoke to him in the Nahuatl language and identified herself as the “mother of the very true deity.”

Build a church in my honor at this sacred spot, she instructed him.

In awe, Juan Diego returned to the city from whence he had come, and reported this miraculous occurrence to the Archbishop. However, the Archbishop did not believe him. Defeated, Juan Diego returned to his daily life. But it was only a matter of hours before Our Lady appeared to him again.

Again she pressed him- BUILD ME A CHURCH!

Juan Diego returned to the archbishop, but still, the archbishop did not believe him. Ay, Juanito, bring me proof! Bring me a sign that proves to me what you say is true. So, Juan Diego returned to Tepayac, and Our Lady was there waiting for him. When he explained to her his woes, she consented to provide a miracle that would confirm his account if he returned the next day. But the next day, Juan Diego’s uncle fell gravely ill, and so he was prevented from returning to Tepayac. Ashamed by this missed appointment, Juan Diego returned home using an alternative route that avoided the hill of Tepayac. But, of course, Our Lady intercepted him on the road.

Why didn’t you come back? She asked him.

When he explained to her what had happened, she assured him that his uncle would recover fully. And there on the road, she provided him with the miracle he needed- Castillian roses, which could only be grown in Spain. Juan Diego gathered them up in his cloak.

When he unfolded the tilma before the Archbishop, and the roses fell to the floor, so too did the friar fall to his knees at the sight of them. And then he looked up at the cloak itself, and his eyes were opened to the image of our Lady, exactly as she had appeared to Juan Diego at Tepayac.

When I think of my own experiences with Our Lady of Guadalupe, I rarely think of her in the context of church. But I do think of her in all the kistchiness, and in the silly, every day, ordinary places she shows up. I think of her image on belt-buckles and bolo ties, spray painted on inner-city buildings and as carved fruit displayed at the local mercado.

The Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and the season of Advent provide us with an invitation to step into the mystery of God. There, we may find that there is a certain quality of subversive playfulness to God’s character, that in the face of sadness, trauma, and systemic oppression, God shows up in exactly the right places. And often, these are the places labeled “impossible” by supposed experts and the Powers that Be. In Advent we remember that for as long as the earth has orbited the cosmos, the God of the universe has been moving towards us- not from the centers, but from the margins. Not from the hallowed halls of our pristine institutions, but from the corner of International Boulevard and Fifteenth. This Advent, what will it take for us to meet God on God’s own terms?

Los Angeles Diocesan Convention Reflections from the Delegates



The Los Angeles Diocesan Convention was held at the Riverside Convention Center on Friday and Saturday, November 10-11, 2023. The theme for this year's convention was "Love in Action for Healing, Housing and Hope." Here are a few highlights and excerpts from All Saints' delegates attending the convention.

Bishop Taylor called on us to be awake in the light of Christ. "Sleepers Awake," he said: if we're not asleep in darkness, if we're awake in the light of Christ's love, justice, and righteousness, then, yes, that means we are "woke." Episcopalians in the Diocese of Los Angeles "are woke and proud of it." -Laura McMorris

One highlight of the meeting was final approval (329 to 20) of parish status for St. James, Newport. Another was approval of a resolution to recognize the ordination of the first female priests in the national church with a minor feast day on the church calendar. A third was a presentation on the non-profit California Endowment's efforts to reduce school suspension and imprisonment rates, especially for young Black men. The speaker and CEO, Robert Ross, who is African American and Episcopalian, outlined the extensive philanthropy carried out by the California Endowment to improve all aspects of community wellness. I was struck also by the news of how many LA Diocese parishes are building housing for low-income tenants. That information came with the offer of diocesan guidance and a caution: a parish must have the land to build on, and must be ready to embark upon a five-year or longer process of discernment, planning, and securing grants and other funding, while navigating a labyrinth of regulations, even under the best of circumstances. Despite these challenges, half a dozen parishes are well on the way to opening facilities of fifty residences or more. Approximately 20% of LA Diocese parishes are at some stage of that voyage, which might involve smaller projects. Although these sorts of initiatives might very well be beyond the reach most parishes in the Diocese, it is heartening to hear about these successes in our region. -John Briggs

As I reflect on the convention, I am reminded that the Church must do more to welcome and include all our brothers and sisters in the world today. On the agenda was a panel discussion with leaders of the Multicultural Ministries in the Episcopal Church. The panel consisted of Rev. Fennie Hsin-Fen Chang, vicar of St. Thomas, Hacienda Heights; Rev. Albert Rodriguez, consultant to The Episcopal Church's Office of Latino/Hispanic ministries; Rev. Brad Hauff, missionary for Indigenous Ministries; and Rev. Ron Byrd, missionary for African Descent Ministries. How do we listen to and see other groups who are culturally different, in language, appearance, and income? Are we all willing to accept other groups into All Saints Episcopal Church as brothers and sisters in Christ? As Rev. Brad Hauff stated, "We are all related, we are all connected." What does that mean, what does that look like, and how much work are we willing to do to strengthen connectedness? The Beloved Community is defined as the body within which all people can grow to love God and love the image of God that we find in our neighbors, in ourselves, and in creation. Listening to the panelists share about themselves, their ministries, and best practices for local congregations, reminded me that, even though there is much work to do as we embrace The Beloved Community, I believe we are on our way. -Stephanie McMorris



From the Senior Warden

The Laundry Love initiative consists of regular opportunities to come alongside people who are struggling financially by assisting them with their laundry. We see the laundromat as a place where strangers become friends, people are known by name, hope is hustled, and the worth of every human being is acknowledged and celebrated.

Laundry Love Riverside was founded in January 2020. In that time, we've helped hundreds of clients and done thousands of loads of laundry. As of March 2023, Laundry Love Riverside completed its final event at the Sparklean Laundromat in Riverside as the laundromat sold. Since April 2023, the Laundry Love Riverside team has been actively looking for its new laundromat partner to continue the Laundry Love ministry.

The Laundry Love team has visited and contacted 15 laundromats in the city of Riverside. Most laundromat owners do not respond to calls, e-mails or on-site laundromat visits. It's been difficult and challenging to speak directly to laundromat owners and if contact is made, the response has been, "No, thank you."

Laundry Love Riverside has been in contact with a laundromat owner who is interested; yet, fearful of the implications that this ministry may pose to his staff and his establishment. He hasn't said no to LLR... but he hasn't said yes either. We continue our talks with the owner and pray that he will say yes... soon!

Please continue to pray for Laundry Love Riverside as we walk alongside all our brothers and sisters.

Love never ends... neither does laundry.

Faithfully submitted,
Liz Atkinson
Laundry Love Riverside Co-Coordinator



Junior Warden's Report



Ever wonder how many times you have complained about a problem only to relegate it to the back of your mind? We all have the ability to create mental spaces where good intentions and unfinished tasks can hide. How often do we use these mental storage spaces? Most of us would rather not say. That is why it was so refreshing to watch parishioner Jon Schlueter do just the opposite when he recognized a problem. During the early coffee hour a few Sundays ago, Jon pointed out some odd-looking plants growing between a playground on the lowest level of the All Saints' campus and the fence that separates us from RCC's baseball fields. This is the area occupied by TRF – the nonprofit childcare operation that leases that area from us. These plants were large, and about to bend over into the children's play area, and as it turns out, they carry a toxic threat in their seeds. This was the potentially serious problem Jon saw – these Castor plants threatened the safety of the children who played nearby.

As it turns out, Jon had a childhood friend whose father knew about Castor plants, and during a hike through the hills around Grand Terrace, he told Jon about the toxin in their seeds. The lesson stuck, and when he saw those Castor plants growing close to where young children play, he didn't just report the problem or complain. Nor did he file the information away in the mental storage place we all seem to possess. Jon asked if I would meet him the very next day so he could deal with the problem. Jon showed up at All Saints' about 10:30 the next morning, pruning tools in hand. After making sure Jon had access to the lower level and that TRF staff knew what he was up to, I left to take care of other business. When I returned a few hours later, I found that Jon had not only cut the Castor plants back, but he had also dug them out of the ground.

With the job simply accomplished, and with no fanfare or expectations of accolades or applause, Jon did what needed to be done. He secured a safer environment for the children he saw under threat. Thank you, Jon.

You probably noticed that we were short five restrooms over the past several weeks. The two in the breezeway between the Sanctuary and the South Wing, the two across from the Sunday School classroom, and the one inside the South Wing had to be closed. The old, galvanized-steel water pipes that supplied water to those facilities had sprung a leak. This is to be expected - steel pipes inevitably rust, and just as inevitably leak. These pipes have likely been in the ground over 70 years, for as long as the Sanctuary has stood, and they have served us well. It took a little over a week to excavate, identify the problem, and get a plumber out to our campus, but the bathrooms were quickly back in service. A special thanks is due to our Quaker Friends for their patience as we worked through this.

The problem moving forward is that it appears a threshold has been crossed, and the old pipes are more prone to failure than ever. So, if you see water running in, or from, the bathrooms, or around the back side of the Sanctuary, please let someone know right way. There is a bit of good news though. About 15 years ago, new plastic and copper water lines were run to Smith Hall, the lower North Wing, and half of the upper North Wing. These should last a very long time.



Castor Seed pods & Castor Plant

Care of Creation

There has been great progress to in our efforts to care for God's creation. Thanks to a generous donation, and a bit of good luck, we have electrified All Saints' kitchen. Parishioners Yvonne and Chuck Stowe, both retired from the restaurant business, donated money to replace the old 1950's-era gas stove we had been using. As volunteers researched clean energy alternatives, they stumbled across a little-known facility operated by Southern California Edison. Their Food Service Technology Lab in Irwindale is meant to serve two functions. The first is to test new appliances to ensure they meet the energy savings touted by manufacturers. If the appliances pass muster, Edison certifies them as energy efficient and they qualify for rebates from utility providers. The second function is to demonstrate these clean energy appliances to commercial kitchens and restaurateurs.

I was able to accompany members of All Saints' Hospitality Committee and Mother Kelli Grace to that facility. We received a wonderfully informative demonstration of how efficient clean energy appliances can be. The Edison staff working in the lab were great enthusiasts of electrification in general, and their enthusiasm was infectious. We left the facility with renewed determination to move away from fossil fuel-powered devices on our campus to the greatest extent possible, to avoid contributing climate-warming emissions to our environment. And on top of the great presentation we received, as we left the facility we were told that Edison makes donations to nonprofit organizations of the appliances used in their testing. Thanks largely to the efforts of Edison employee Andre Saldivar and his crew, Edison donated a commercial convection oven, a warming oven, a chef's table with refrigerated drawers, and a commercial food prep table to All Saints'. If you get a chance, stop by the kitchen and look at these impressive cooking tools. And what about the donation from the Stowe's? To round out the electrification of our kitchen, we are going to use those funds to purchase an induction cook top, a commercial-grade microwave, and possibly an electric griddle.

There will be more significant Care of Creation progress to report in the next issue of the Good News. If you see building and grounds issues that need attention, please let us know by dropping a note in the business office, or and sending an email to juniorwarden@allsaintsriverside.org

-Steve Slaten, Junior Warden



St. Michael's Foodshare Update

- 310 Families served
- 9 All Saints Volunteers
- 109 Volunteer hours
- 1425 Plastic and paper bags recycled
- 17 Bags of clothing, and bedding donated
- 4 Boxes of used toys and books donated
- 1 Paper shredder donated

Our small but mighty group of volunteers continue to help the St. Michael's Team with their weekly food share. Every Thursday morning we show up early to pick up the bread, fruits and vegetables from a site in the warehouse district of Riverside and transport them to an eagerly waiting team at St. Michaels where we all unload the trucks, sort and bag the loose vegetables and assist with their distribution. Hannah Guest, one of our volunteers often interprets the 8:30 religious service in Spanish for many in attendance. This communion service continues to grow weekly. We also help in preparing bags for latecomers and general cleanup.

Our congregation continues to save their grocery bags for recycling and also donate items from their closets. There is a box in Smith Hall where you can leave items for our pick up or just place them outside my white van in the church parking lot if you see it there. I am proudly being referred to as the "bag lady" as I drive around during the weekday filling my van with bags for recycling.

But photos can say more than words. Here's some inspirational ones from the October Food Share.

Patricia Korzec
951.543.7171
pskorzec@me.com





Most of us probably have been at a performance or other event recently which was introduced with a land acknowledgement. Someone said a few things about the native peoples who occupied the land the gathering was on, before Europeans arrived here. And then the event proceeded. This seems to be a fairly new practice; what is it all about?

Land acknowledgments are used to recognize Indigenous Peoples as the original stewards of the lands on which we all now live. Native Nations, communities, families and individuals sustain their sense of belonging to their ancestral homelands through languages, oral traditions, ceremonies, and other forms of cultural expression. A land acknowledgment intends to recognize Indigenous history and culture, and the large Native population that lives in this nation today.

The Episcopal Church has committed to including land acknowledgements in our corporate life and worship. Our national church describes land acknowledgements as a step toward remembering the brutal history of Indigenous-European interactions and the ways our church contributed to that persecution, and seeing its present-day effects. They are also an invitation to greater awareness of Indigenous people who currently live in our regions, and an honoring of them for their resilience, faithfulness and wisdom, and their respect for the Earth and all of creation.

Making a land acknowledgment should be motivated by genuine respect and support for Native Peoples. It can be an important step toward creating collaborative and respectful relationships with local Indigenous communities.

MARIE'S *Homecoming*

by Kurt Marcks

On March 19, 1924, Marie Antoinette Harris, daughter of Victor E. and Antoinette F. Harris, was baptized by Henry Clark Smith (see his picture next to the fireplace in Smith hall). On May 8, 1938, Marie was confirmed by the second Bishop of our Diocese, William Bertrand Stevens (a name well known to Episcopal campers!). All Saints' was Marie's home parish until she transferred to a an Episcopal church in San Diego in May of 1974. All of this information is in our meticulous, albeit dusty, records.

Now, nearly 50 years after Marie moved away, a small bequest was received by our community from Marie. She had set up a remainder charitable trust in 1986 with the Episcopal Church Foundation and designated that All Saints' receive a portion of the remaining principle after she died. She recently passed away at nearly 100 years of age and left a gift for the community into which she was born.

The gift was placed in our Kairos Mission and Ministry Fund, which is the default way an unrestricted bequest made to All Saints' is received. The Kairos Fund is the flagship of our Endowment Program, and as part of this fund, Marie's gift will help provide annual disbursements that will enhance the ministry and mission of All Saints' far into the future.

A charitable remainder trust is one of the many services offered to us by the Episcopal Church Foundation. Such a vehicle can establish a source of income for the donor, similar to an annuity, a tax deduction in the year it is established, and distribution to an Episcopal parish, diocese or other Episcopal organization at the end of the donor's life. As part of the pooled assets of the ECF, such accounts may be started with a minimum amount of capital.

There are many types of homecoming. Marie leaving a bequest from her Remainder Charitable Trust was a way to faithfully return a legacy to the community of her youth that will resonate in the life of All Saints' for many years to come. Consider a remainder charitable trust as part of your estate and retirement planning and designate All Saints' as a recipient. More information can be found at:

<https://www.ecf.org/uploads/pages/Charitable-Remainder-Trust-02.25.22-1645825177.pdf>



A Return Home

by Brad Orton



The dictionary defines homecoming as “A return home” or “The return of a group of people usually on a special occasion to a place formally frequented or regarded as home”. This is the way I feel about All Saints as we begin the new program year.

Carol Bliss, an author whom I admire, writes about the future. I feel it fits right alongside our Homecoming theme.

A Vision for the Future

If enough of us believe in hope, love, and peace, we can form a critical mass that is unstoppable. We can return to the values that we believe in, despite what the world looks like now. We can do anything we choose to bring those ethical values back into society again. We, the people, can bring about a world that works for all.

A world that values all people. A world in which all are included and invited to dine at the banquet of all the good things life has to offer. Where the strong help the weak and the powerless rise up and see their own power. A world where the voiceless are unafraid to speak their truth. A world where there is a sharing of resources. This can be our collective vision of a world that is coming.

When we don't quite see the fruits of our labors yet, we can plant seeds. We can be the voices of inspiration. We must believe that the future is bright, that we all can make it better by steering it, by taking little tiny steps in the direction of more love, greater compassion, more trust in God. Together, we can share that vision everywhere we go, and through our vision, and through our actions, the world will become a better place for all.

It is my prayer that this new calendar year will bring a renewed sense of energy where we can make a difference in all we do. May it ever be so.



Note from the editor

It's been just one year since Luke #4 and I were led to All Saints and I want to take this opportunity to say "thank you"; you embraced our family instantly and for that I am grateful. Taking on The Good News is an honor I don't take lightly. It is my prayer that you have enjoyed this edition and I welcome any thoughts or suggestions for future editions.

-Peace to you, Amy López