



All Saints' Episcopal Church
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Priestly Perusings

*People, look East, the time is near
Of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able,
Trim the hearth and set the table,
People look East and sing today,
Love, the Guest, is on the way.* -Carol of the Advent

Jesus is coming soon! In just a few weeks, in fact. Will we be ready to greet him? Are our hearts and minds open to the movement of the Spirit, and prepared to receive our Lord and Savior? **November 30 is the first Sunday of Advent** (a word which means “coming”). The beginning of the new Church Year is a time to slow down. This is not what the secular world would have us believe. The message of our culture is to hurry up and shop, shop, shop for lots and lots of expensive Christmas presents; wrap, bake, clean, party, decorate the tree, etc. In the process, most of us become more and more exhausted, frazzled, depressed, etc. The Church takes Advent seriously. This is a season of patience; of holy waiting in anticipation of the coming of Christ in history, as a child born in a stable and into our hearts, and also of his Second Coming in glorious majesty, to judge the living and the dead. Advent was once a very penitential season – a “little Lent,” but over the past 40 years or so, it has been transformed into a period of restrained joy and preparation for the celebration of the Holy Nativity. Like other liturgical seasons, Advent has its own sights and sounds: the color changes to purple (the color for both royalty and penitence); the Advent Wreath helps us count down the four Sundays; altar flowers are replaced by simple greens, the singing of the “Gloria in Excelsis” is replaced by the Trisagion; the Alleluia and Verse before the Gospel are replaced by verses of an Advent hymn; and on at least one of the Sundays, the recitation of a psalm is replaced by a Cantic, the Song of Mary (canticles are biblical songs which are not in the Book of Psalms). We use Eucharistic Prayer B throughout the entire Advent-Christmas-Epiphany season because of its emphasis on the Word-made-flesh. True to our Anglican tradition, we sing Advent hymns throughout the season and save the Christmas carols for the twelve days of Christmas. Here are some suggestions for keeping a holy Advent and preparing for the coming of Christ: Plan now to set aside some time for prayer and reflection each day, to converse with God and get your spiritual house in order. Make a sacramental confession to a priest, if you feel the need of it (I hear confessions by appointment). Pray daily for justice and peace, and for an end to poverty and oppression. Keep your Advent wreath in a prominent place – the family dining table is a great spot;

open one window a day on your Advent calendar. Decorate your house, little by little, in preparation for the coming of the Christ Child. Set up the crèche (nativity scene), but keep the baby out of the manger until Christmas Eve and let the Wise Men (Magi) travel from the East across the room until they finally arrive on the Feast of the Epiphany, January 6th. Slow down, even though the rest of the world hurries up, and practice holy patience, as we wait in hope for the coming of the Prince of Peace, our Savior, Jesus Christ the Lord.

Faithfully,
Susan+

THE ANNUAL COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING EVE SERVICE will take place on **Wednesday, November 26, at 7 PM at the Wolcott Congregational Church**, 185 Center Street (on the Green). All Saints' will be represented by lectors Pam Lindvall and Jackie Pineau. Members of our Choir will be a part of the massed choir. The preacher will be Deacon Emil Croce of St. Pius X Church, and the collection that evening will benefit the Wolcott Fuel Bank. You and your family and friends are encouraged to attend!

THANK YOU!! to all who have so far turned in pledges of time, talent and treasure to the ministry of Christ at All Saints' for the Year 2015. So far, we have received 19 pledges for a total of \$39,476. If you have not yet had time to do so, it is never too late to do so – God will not love you any the more because of it, but the work of God in Christ will be furthered by your generosity, so that others may learn of the Holy One's love for them. In such ways, the Light of Christ, and the circle of awareness grows.

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF ALL SAINTS' PARISH will take place on Sunday, January 25, 2015, with a "snow date" of February 1. The purpose of the meeting is to elect new officers and members of the Vestry, and to receive reports of the various ministries of the parish, as well as the annual budget (which is approved by the Vestry at its January meeting).

BECOMING A MEMBER OF ALL SAINTS' is really very simple. If you have been Baptized with water in the name of the Trinity in any Christian tradition, all you have to do is register your Baptism with us – this makes you a member of All Saints' Parish, but Baptism makes one a Christian; it does *not* make you an Episcopalian! If you are already an Episcopalian, please just ask Mother Davidson to request your Letter of Transfer from your former parish. In order to become an Episcopalian, you must be Confirmed (for those who have been raised in most Protestant traditions, as well as other Episcopal churches) or Received by a bishop in the Episcopal Church (for those who have been raised in the Roman Catholic or Eastern Orthodox Churches). Preparation for Confirmation/Reception of adults will be offered through Inquirers' Classes in the course of the coming year. Bishop Ahrens will make her Annual Visitation to All Saints on All Saints' Day (November 1) and will Confirm and Receive youth and adults. For more information on all of these, and to apply for Baptism for adults or children, please speak to Mother Davidson.

THE REV. JUDITH TOFFEY will preside and preach at All Saints' on Sunday, November 30 (Advent I) while Susan is away on vacation. Mother Toffey was a member of All Saints' in its earliest days and always looks forward to being back "at home."

A MINISTRY TO INFANTS AND TODDLERS HAS BEEN RE-ESTABLISHED

Donna Lydem, who has spearheaded the formation of our littlest ones, has creatively adapted the curriculum Rhythms of Grace to help them learn God's love for them. Donna needs four responsible adults who would be willing to work with her and our toddlers one Sunday a month during the Liturgy of the Word, leading them into church for the Eucharist. *These persons must be willing to submit to a background check and to take the free, one-day Safe Church training, offered on various dates in the spring.* Safe Church practices require two non-related adults in each class. We could also use a few safe, soft toys. If you are interested and able to help, please speak to Sr. Warden Donna Lydem.

THE GREENING OF THE CHURCH will take place after the Eucharist on Sunday, December 21 (Advent IV). All are invited to stay for a bit and help decorate the church for Christmas.

CHRISTMAS AT ALL SAINTS:

Christmas Eve	Wednesday, December 24: 5 PM - Family Eucharist with carols 11 PM – candlelight Midnight Mass with Choir
Christmas Day	Thursday, December 25: 10 AM – Holy Eucharist
Christmas I	Sunday, December 28 9:30 AM - Holy Eucharist
Christmas II	Sunday, January 4 9:30 AM - Holy Eucharist and Carols followed by the first King Cake of the season
Sunday, January 11	The Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord 9:30 AM - Holy Eucharist <i>(This is an especially appropriate day for Baptism, if you or yours is interested in receiving that Sacrament.)</i>

CHURCH SCHOOL UPDATE...

Upcoming events...

~Book Collection- Thank you for making our fall food drive so successful! We were able to donate a crate full of food to the Wolcott Food Pantry. Over the next 4 weeks we will be collecting children's books to donate to the Wolcott Food Pantry. These books will be given to families that use the pantry to give to their children as Christmas gifts. Please consider donating a new or gently used book for a child ages 0-10. Thanks!

~ "Take a Friend to Church"- On Sundays, December 7th and 14th we will be making Christmas cards to deliver to residents of Wolcott View Manor. Friends are welcome to come to church school and help us. We will deliver cards on Sunday, December 21st after church.

~ Sunday, November 30th is a Family Day and also the first day of Advent. There is no church school. Please consider coming to church and worshipping with your family.

~During Advent children will begin in church for the lighting of the Advent wreath, then proceed to Andrews Hall after the procession. Children will sit on the left side of church in the first few pews with their church school teachers.

SENIOR WARDEN

Dear Brothers and Sisters of All Saints',

Did you know that the mission statement of All Saints' Episcopal Church is vibrantly alive? You, yes every single person, made this possible. Our mission statement is located in the hall and in the kitchen. Check it out.

"We are a fellowship of Christians, young and old alike, who come together in faith to worship, share, our beliefs and support one another. We have been called by God to share Christ with each other and our community as we celebrate the gift of eternal life."

We have a toddler division vibrant and active. Safe church practices require two people in the room. If 4 people volunteer, just one Sunday out of the month, then this requirement is covered.

Scholarship Fundraiser has hit the \$300.00. Thank you for taking off the bottle caps. Remember ice tea, juice and the powerade, gatorade drinks are not redeemable.

I thank you for your time, talent and treasure in supporting All Saints' mission.

Respectfully submitted,

Senior Warden, Donna R. Lydem

ALTAR GUILD

Save the date December 21, 2014. Hanging of the Greens for the Christmas Festive season, many hands make light labor, refreshments, and fellowship will be in abundance. Altar Guild still looking for volunteers; this is urgent.

ENCORE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM CAROLING

Wolcott, CT and neighboring towns will come together to attempt a NEW Guinness World Record "The Most Carolers," singing door to door. This will raise scholarship funds and help fulfill dreams of deserving music students in Wolcott.

When?

Saturday, December 13th 2014

Arrival time: 2pm

Registration time: 2:00-3:00pm

Photo & Press: 3:00-4:00pm

Caroling Start Time: 4:00pm

Admission

Adults \$10

Children \$5, for 10 years of age and under.

Acceptable forms of payment: Paypal

KEY GOALS

- 1) Break the previous record held by Waukesha Wisconsin... and put Wolcott, CT on the world map.
- 2) Assemble more than 1,822 singers to carol on 12-13-14.
- 3) Raise scholarship funds for ENCORE Scholarship Program and local music & arts programs.
- 4) Raise awareness for music education programs and their benefits to our youngsters

All participants **MUST pre-register** for this event. Please see link for registration application, sign up, and payment.

NO late entries or payments will be accepted.

<http://www.encorescholarship.org/>

GOD ALMIGHTY

by Joanne Dobensky

God Almighty,
You gave me Grace
You gave me Hope,
You gave me Love,
In the Face of Jesus

God Almighty,
You gave me Verity,
You gave me Faith,
You gave me Wonder,
In the Charity of Jesus

God Almighty,
You gave me Worth,
You gave me Heart,
You gave me Redemption,
In the Birth of Jesus

God Almighty,
You gave me Protection,
You gave me Salvation,
You gave me Eternity,
In the Resurrection of Jesus

God Almighty,
I give you my Self,
I give you my Fidelity,
I give you my Steadfast Love,
through the Help of Jesus.

God Almighty, You gave me of yourself, so I could know you and myself. I give you Thanks and Praise. Amen.