THE STEEPLE

The Church of the Nativity

December 2, 2015

Our Mission

God's family at the historic Church of the Nativity is joyfully and energetically committed to sharing Christ's love and healing by proclaiming the Good News of the Gospel through worship and service to the world.

Advent Preparations

Advent has suddenly sprung upon us! Falling on Thanksgiving Weekend when most of our attention has been focused on family gatherings (or for some, football games), it almost feels that we have been pounced upon by this holy season of hope, preparation, and expectation. With the Feast of the Nativity looming barely three weeks ahead, can we take some time to pause before rushing to put up the Christmas decorations and think about our place in Advent? What are we hoping for? For what and how are we preparing? What are you expecting to happen?

Before we embrace the beautiful story of the babe lying in a manger; the tales of those high and low, shepherds and kings seeking this child whose birth is heralded with great joy, may we consider "the why" of it all. The hope, preparations and expectations for our lives and especially for this world we undergo especially in this season, find their meaning in Advent's main message: God's reign, God's kingdom is coming into this world. The One who created the sun and the moon and the other stars and in whom we live and move and have our being has always wanted the creation to reflect the holy purposes of what we call the Kingdom of God.

God's messengers, prophets and angels have been reminding us, however, that we have not always been aligned with the Divine purposes of God's reign. And so in Advent we hear their clarion call of repentance and to renew our commitment to God's Kingdom that is always coming and will one day be all in all. God's incarnation (joining God's being and existence to created matter) in the birth of Jesus of Nazareth loses its impact if we fail to recognize that Jesus gives us that clarion call to live as he lived: fully aligned to God's purposes in God's kingdom.

Our world seems never more in need of our renewed commitment to God's reign that is ever embracing the entire creation and every family, language and tribe of nations. The world seems dark, but God's light as it has been revealed over and over again, and especially in the Word Made Flesh, Jesus, pierces the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it. The world seems so divided, but we are all one from the foundations of God's good creation.

Although prudence and wisdom are important virtues, God's reign means we will not allow fear to rule our lives. Many of the conversations going on in the world today are more governed by fear than the love we know in Christ Jesus. The cold-heartedness found in many of the voices around the Syrian Refugee Crisis and how we can respond does not reflect our values of God's reign. The question for all of us is "how does our hoping for, preparing for, and expectations for God's reign change our voice in these conversations going on in the world around us? How does our care for others, through our time, talent and financial resources, reflect God's reign in our lives? Are we more concerned about the right Christmas presents than the Christmas presence of God coming into the world?

God's presence in Christ builds a human community of love and blessing across differences of tribe, race, religion, gender, economic status, sexual identity and all the issues we face in our complex and beautiful world. We proclaim a God who is God of all, who has been at work in this world from the beginning of creation and who has been specifically revealed in the Word made Flesh, Jesus. Our God continues to bring people together in love and peace through the power of the Holy Spirit.

In our Advent preparations may we engage others with this way of living together in this world, setting our fears aside, revealing our hope in God's call. Welcoming God's reign, we offer a view of the world that locates all humanity in the embrace of a loving and caring God...a God who is revealed in Jesus, the babe of Bethlehem whose birth we celebrate at Christmas, and whose presence wants to be born again in our own lives and world.

CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY, EPISCOPAL

Est. 1843

Worship Schedule

(* Nursery available)

SUNDAY

7:45am Rite I Holy Eucharist (Bibb Chapel)

*8:45am Rite II Holy Eucharist Children's Chapel

*11:00am Rite II Holy Eucharist

<u>WEDNESDAY</u>

Noon
Holy Eucharist & Healing
(Bibb Chapel)

THURSDAY

6:00pm Rite II Holy Eucharist (Bibb Chapel)



Children's Corner Children's Sunday Formation Advent Events!



St Nicholas Sunday, pajama party and Oscar Mason gifts, this Sunday!

Children are invited to wear their pj's to church and enjoy a visit from St. Nicholas during children's chapel. The celebration will continue in Sunday school with a special snack and creating artwork for the Christmas Eve Bulletin.

Following our tradition for St Nicholas day, we'll be collecting gifts for our friends at the Oscar Mason Library afterschool program. This year we are bringing hats, gloves, and scarves. Sign up for a boy or girl here

http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c094ca8a62ca2fc1-pajama. Children will bring their gifts forward when they follow St Nicholas out for children's chapel.

Art Contest for Christmas Eve bulletin cover:

During Sunday school this week, the classes will work on pencil drawings of a Nativity scene. The church staff will vote on the winner and the selected work will be featured on the cover of the 4:00pm Christmas Eve bulletin. If your child can't be at Sunday school but would like to enter a drawing, email mcoe@nativity-hsv.org for more information.

Caroling on December 13th, 12:45pm

Please join us at Harborchase Assisted Living (4801 Whitesport Circle, 35801) for carol singing with the residents. NO singing expertise is required! Every singer is welcome. This is a great way for children to experience the Advent message in action. The carolers enjoy it as much as the residents. Contact: Barbara Bonner bcbonner65@gmail.com

ERD Hope chest coin collectors

Kids, continue collecting your coins for Episcopal Relief and Development. Bring your hope chest coin collectors back on December 20th or to Ridley Hall before the 4:00pm service on Christmas Eve.

Contact: Mary Coe mcoe@nativity-hsv.org



Upcoming Events

EYC Church of the Nativity

EYC Christmas Party - Sunday, December 6th

5:30 to 7:30pm in the LOFT

Wear your best over-the-top Christmas sweater and come ready to get cozy and watch a classic Christmas movie while sipping hot chocolate and enjoying Christmas treats. This is for all EYCers (7th-12th grades) and their friends. Let us know if you're planning to come!

EYC Outreach - Sunday, December 13th

5:30-7:30pm, Dinner at 5:30 in the LOFT Program at 6:00 in Ridley Hall It's our Second Sunday Outreach day! We'll eat supper in the LOFT, then head to Ridley Hall to pack meal bags for kids who don't have enough to eat at home. We'll finish up with dessert and compline in the LOFT.

Chrismons & Caroling - Friday, December 18th

Meet in the Nave at 3:00pm

Celebrate the beginning of Christmas break by decorating the church's Christmas tree! After that, we'll go caroling at few Nativity parishioners' houses, and end the day with some Christmas treats. Stay tuned for more details!

Contact: William Blackerby wblackerby@nativity-hsv.org

3333333333333333333333333333333333333 Wednesday, December 2 - 5:30pm

Family Spaghetti N



or cgadomski@nativity-hsv.org



Sewanee Lessons & Carols Saturday, December 5th - Seats are still available!

Bus departs Nativity at 2:00pm. \$55 per person that includes: Round-trip luxury coach, happy-hour enroute, reserved seating, and dinner at St. Mary's Conference Center following the service. Payment required at the time of the reservation.

Contact Connie in the church office for reservations. For more information, contact Sam Porter (256.651.8990).



Nativity's Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols Saturday, December 19, 5:00pm

The Annual Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, an integral part of the Church of the Nativity's worship schedule and a Friends of Music event, is fast approaching on Saturday, December 19 at 5:00pm. This beautiful panoply of readings and anthems from the Advent and Christmas season lays out the central theme of the Incarnation event in scripture and song. The Nativity Choir is preparing a rich blend of musical styles in the anthem/carol settings which will be interspersed between the lessons which begin with the Genesis reading describing the Fall to the ninth lesson in which John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation. From the boundless energy of Frank Boles' setting of the familiar medieval text "Adam Lay YBounden" to the lush harmonies of Paul Manz's "E'en So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come," the musical portions illuminate the themes of this service, which is modeled on that heard yearly from King's College.

Nicholas Bergin, organist from Nashville where he serves First Presbyterian Church, will assist Dr. Stephen G. Schaeffer, Interim Organist/Choirmaster who is conducting and playing the final hymn and voluntary. Nativity's clergy will be joined by readers representing parish and community organizations and leaders. Mark your calendars for December 19th at 5pm, spread the word to your friends and colleagues, and certainly plan to attend this very meaningful festival.

Holiday Market & Open House

Saturday, December 5th, 11:00am - 3:00pm



Join us for a holiday market and open house in and around the Greene Street Store that will include locally produced goods, special tastings, book signings and more!

Interim Organist/Choirmaster Stephen G. Schaeffer recorded a CD on the Cathedral Church of the Advent's 100-rank Möller organ. The CD is for sale in the Market Store for \$15.

Familiar organ favorites will make a great Christmas gift.

The Greene Street Market and Store are part of Nativity's Outreach Ministry.



"Advent Memory Walk...A Time for those Grieving During the Holiday Season"

Hope Presbyterian Church invites you to join us in a Memory Walk at our prayer labyrinth on Dec. 5 at 10am. This time of worship and prayer is open to the community.

As we approach the holidays our thoughts often turn to those who are no longer with us. Sometimes these memories enrich us, sometimes they cause pain. Each person will carry a light signifying those they are remembering into the labyrinth. We will then carry out fragrant Rosemary, the herb for remembrance. By remembering we are participating in the "communion of saints" and allowing the Holy Spirit to give us peace. If you don't wish to walk, you may stand on the outside circle and bear witness.

Hope Presbyterian Church is located in SE Huntsville at the corner of Bailey Cove Road and Weatherly Road. The prayer labyrinth is on the west lawn of the church (the side that faces Bailey Cove Road)—the entrance to the labyrinth is off the rear parking lot and is marked by a wrought iron arch. If you have questions or would like to let us know you will be attending, please contact the church office

256-881-4673 or office@hopehuntsville.org

ADVENT QUIET DAY

CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY 5 DEC 2015

9:00am 2:00pm

with the Rev. Dr. BASYE HOLLAND-SHUEY
HOW TO LIVE WELL

Spiritual Practices that ground us, bringing peace, mindfulness, acceptance, and joy



Click anywhere on this story to view the full schedule and register for the optional lunch (\$7).

You may also call the Church Office to register for lunch (256.533.2455).

The Heart of St. Francis of Assisi with Renaissance Florence and classical Rome Join Nativity's pilgrimage to Italy: May 26-June 6, 2016



Father Andy Anderson and Academy International Travel lead this 12 day trip praying in the steps of St. Francis and St. Clare in Assisi other holy places significant to Francis.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Click or tap the image for Nativity's website page or contact Amy Baxter (256.533.2455) abaxter@nativity-hsv.org for an information packet

Stewardship of Creation Reception

December 13th, following the 11:00 Service (Ridley Hall)

Please join the Stewardship of Creation Ministry for a reception with refreshments and conversation.

Important and very useful information will be available on how to be good stewards of God's creation and making your home and the world GREENER

QUICK BITS



HAP for December

Items needed: Small canned hams, canned fruit, canned vegetables, Holiday Little Debbie Cakes.

Thanks for all your support!

HAP Sunday is December 6

Monthly Men's Breakfast

Tuesday, December 8, Suggested donation \$5
6:30 am Simple Eucharist, Bibb Chapel
7:00 am Breakfast with guest speaker



Important Tax Notice from Nativity's Finance Committee

To ensure the deductibility of your church contributions, please do not file your 2015 income tax return until you have received a written acknowledgment of your contributions from the church. You may lose a deduction for some contributions if you file your tax return before receiving a written acknowledgment of your contributions from the church.



For those participating in this year's FOCAL gift giving campaign, gifts will be presented this Sunday, December 6.

It is important to put the tag from the FOCAL board on your wrapped gift. Without the tag, FOCAL representativeness can not match your gift to the correct child.

Gifts may also be delivered to the church office by Friday, December 4th. Questions: contact Gail or Ronnie Rogers (256.539.8044)

Nativity Women's Retreat 2016

St. Mary's Sewanee, TN

This year's theme: Prayer Boot Camp

SAVE THE DATE

One night only – Friday, Feb. 19th and Saturday morning Feb 20th!

Speaker –Suzanne Matthews

Price - \$130.00 per person

Contact Lane Tutt

Chalice Bearer Training

Sunday, December 6th, following the 11:00 service.

You must be at least 16 years of age and a confirmed Episcopalian.

Contact Connie in the church office to register.

Nativity Young Adults

will meet this month on Monday, December 14th, 5:30pm

Location to be determined.

Contact Mother Bonnie McCrickard bmccrickard@nativity-hsv.org (256.533.2455 x207)

Baptisms

The next date for baptisms will be The Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord, January 10, 2016.

Anyone wishing to have children baptized at Nativity on that date should contact Mother Bonnie no later than Monday, December 4th and the required preparation begins the following week

Contact Mother Bonnie McCrickard bmccrickard@nativity-hsv.org (256.533.2455 x207)

Outreach in Action Be The Change Alabama Project Update:

Members of the Be the Change Alabama (BTCA) Team presented 6 laptop and 4 tablet computers to the staff at the Huntsville Inner City Learning Center this week. Funding was made possible through Nativity's Outreach Committee by using vestry approved funding from the Nativity Trust (a part of the Alabama Episcopal Foundation).

The laptops will be used at the Learning Center in support of the newly opened Women's Center in their GED preparation program and the tablets will be used in the new K-2nd grade program.

Our BCTA team, in partnership with the Inner City Learning Center, is beginning to address the concern of food justice in the Butler Terrace community. Residents there have limited or no access to fresh produce, which is critical for healthy bodies and minds. The Learning Center began to address food this need by creating raised vegetable gardens, which the children of the center plant, weed, water, harvest, and eat what they produce. These first steps are the beginning of food sovereignty and justice. Be The Change Alabama hopes this effort will soon enable the entire community to be empowered to provide much of their own food, especially produce. The Learning Center's future goals are: to purchase and remodel a building into a community grocery store that is supplied with produce grown by the children, to work with Greene Street Market and other local farmers to sell their produce in this store; to have cold storage in which the center store produce; and to conduct regular cooking classes to teach their community how to cook seasonal produce. These donated computers will also be used to design garden space, plan menus, produce cookbooks and for other projects that support this food justice issue.

BTCA is a partner with the Learning Center in helping them realize and actualize their goals of food sovereignty and justice. How can you help? Be part of the team as we develop and foster vital relationships in the Butler Terrace community; help the team and the Learning Center create resources; find volunteers to partner with the Learning Center, to include individuals who like to cook and share their expertise on how to cook seasonal food; and finally to pray along with us that we can show the love of God, through Christ, in the world that is hungry for compassion.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN BEING A PART OF OUTREACH? Please contact Mother Bonnie McCrickard at bmccrickard@nativity-hsv.org or Marilyn Lands at marilynlands@gmail.com

WANT TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE NATIVITY TRUST Contact Frederick Lanier flanier@jsmithlanier.com



Father Andy Anderson presents Art Leslie, Inner City Learning Center Director, a gift from the Nativity Trust of tablets and laptop computers.

Also pictured (I to r): Susan Callaway, Program Director, Marilyn Lands, Nativity's BTCA representative, and Mother Bonnie McCrickard.

NATIVITY TRUST GIFT MAKES A DIFFERENCE FOR THE HUNTSVILLE INNER CITY LEARNING CENTER

With the Vestry's approval, the BTCA Team presented a gift of 4 tablets and 6 laptop computers to the Huntsville Inner City Learning Center's staff. Team members requested these funds in a joint effort with our Outreach Ministry from the Nativity Trust (a part of the Alabama Episcopal Foundation) to make this \$6,000 gift possible. The Nativity Trust may use trust fund income (not corpus) to support new ministry initiatives reaching out to the community that are not funded by the operating budget. Some of the many projects funded by the Nativity Trust include: The Icons in Transformation exhibit; helping build a new chapel at Limestone State Prison, and providing support for a family who lost everything in the April 2011 tornado.

Nativity has two planned giving vehicles to support critical non-funded ministry expenses The Nativity Trust, through the Alabama Episcopal Foundation, directs 75% of allocated income proceeds to new efforts reaching out to the community that enrich lives through justice ministry efforts and other ways to connect people to God's love and grace.

The Nativity Trust may also direct 25% of allocated income proceeds for any capital project or debt service. The Nativity Historic Preservation Foundation directs all its support to care for our historic buildings. Gifts for historic preservation must be specified while any non-designated bequests to Nativity must be directed to the Nativity Trust.

PRAYER REQUESTS

We pray for those who are ill or recovering:

Imogene Nunn, Marie West, Hap Welch, Judith Cather, Warren Vann, Dell Crawford, Elaine Sampson, Katherine White, Margaret Smitherman, Claire Johnston, Mildred Lane, Kingslea de Roode Merkel, Anna Chilton, Pam Rogers, Lorene Dilworth, Anna Post, Nancy Colin Swenson, Bob Hale, Carla King, Leigh Wahl, Elsie Olsen

We pray for the birth of a child:

Ann Hollon Mouron, great-granddaughter of Sally Ann Culver, born on November 24th

We pray for the departed:

Bitsy Coleman, mother of Betty Hornsby Lynn Jones

We pray for those deployed/serving with the Military:

US Navy - Middle East, Kenneth Vandervoort

US Navy, Jesse Teal

We give thanks for birthdays of our children:

12/2	Jensen Goeke	12/2	Liam Stevens	12/4	Alec Huskey	12/6	Betsy Stevens
12/7	Sloan Dill	12/8	Margaret Foster	12/9	Jacks McClung	12/10	Patrick Reid
12/10 Vivian Brouse 12		12/12	Will Knight	12/14	Hope Howell	12/14 Ireland Braudaway	

Click or tap the logo for Nativity's 2016 pledge page



We are so very Blessed!

Thanks to the 312 Nativity families who have made a financial commitment for 2016.

If you have not yet pledged, it can be easily done online from our website:

nativity-hsv.org.
then select PLEDGE NOW under the GIVING tab

Celebrate God the Giver by making your pledge today!

Acolyte Schedule ~ December 2015

This month brings more than our usual amount of services and special services. Please check the schedule closely as you may be scheduled more than once*, and you may be scheduled in a different position. If you are unable to serve as scheduled, *please let us know as soon as possible*, and see if you can arrange for a substitute. This is especially important for the Christmas Eve and Lessons and Carols services!

Sun., Dec. 6

8:45 A/M Putt
C Franklin Aldag, Sims Windham
T Evans Bryant, Betsy Bryant
T Thomas Aldag, Emery Windham
S Ireland Braudaway
AS Margaret Bryant
T 11:00 A/M Sherrill
C Powell Stockton, Robert McCown
T Ella Jane Duncan
T Mary Kate Brooks
S Chloe Parsons
AS Jack Benton Stockton

Sun., Dec. 13

8:45 A/M Ward
C Meredith Walker, Karsten Correale C Jordan Cozby, Bankston Creech
T Clay Walker, Van Dodgen
T Tess Lambert, Joshua Huskey
S Ellie Walker
S Cameron Pinson

11:00 A/M Sherrill
T Mary Maddox Creech
T Laura Kamelchuk
S David DiFranco
AS Riley Kamelchuk

Saturday, December 19 5:00 P.M Lessons and Carols A/M Nutt

Please arrive no later than 20 min prior for instruction

C Allie Starnes* T Caroline Knight*, Ella Jane Duncan* Thurifer John Laney*

Sun., Dec. 20

8:45 A/M Putt
C Allie Starnes, Jackson Anglin
T Huston Morring, Sam Hartley*
T Paxtyn Whitney, Jed Rainey
S Margaret Foster
AS Patrick Ahearn

11:00 A/M M Ward
C Allison Taylor, Molly Ward
T Alexander Grelier
T Evelyn Warren
S Evan Ward
AS Evan Ellison

Friday, December 24, CHRISTMAS EVE**

Please arrive at least 25 min prior to all Christmas Eve services for instruction

4:00 pm A/M Nina Putt, Dorrie Nutt C Forrest Webber, Steuart Evans

T Laura Kate Evans, Sarah Whelden Hall T Alice Malone, Cameron Pinson

S Britt Webber AS Sidney Gunter

Banners: John Sadler Evans, Sam Hartley, Parker Sanders, Elizabeth Evans, Leighton Luther

7:30 pm A/M Clay Sherrill, Mike Ward

C Windham Hunter, Gillianne Sharp

T Madelyn Alison, Lucy Ellis T Mary Ellis Alison, Katherine Hunter

S Alexander Young AS Katherine Hunter

Banners Evans Alison, Luke Alison, Park Ellis

10:30 pm A/M Nutt

C Powell Stockton, Allison Taylor

T Nannette Aboudonia, Gertrude Aboudonia T Bailey Morrison, Caroline Knight

S Caroline Knight AS Dylan Chenoweth Thurifer: John Laney

Banners: Jack Benton Stockton, Dylan Chenoweth

December 27th 10:00 am A/M Nutt

C Karsten Correale

Christmas dedications are \$20 each 2015 CHRISTMAS FLOWER DEDICATION Please complete this form with your check made payable to: Nativity Flower Guild Mailing address: Andrea Vandervoort, 434 Locust Ave. Huntsville AL 35801 Please check the box next to the dedication you desire. Your Name as it is to be listed in Christmas service leaflet All dedications read (if you do not wish your name listed, please indicate) To the glory of God and... In loving memory of... Phone #: In thanksgiving for... in celebration of... Name for this dedication: PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION, If you have questions, you may call Andrea at 256.539.2673 THANK YOU 2015 Christmas and 2016 Altar Flower Dedication Forms are also available in the hallway by the Banister Room. December 18 is the deadline for Christmas Flower Dedications 2016 ALTAR FLOWER DEDICATION FORM Please complete this form with your check (\$40 or \$20 for shared dedications) made payable to: Nativity Flower Guild Mailing address: Andrea Vandervoort, 434 Locust Ave. Huntsville AL 35801 Please check the box next to **Date Desired** the dedication you desire. Your Name All dedications read To the glory of God and... Phone # in loving memory of... Would you share a dedication? in thanksgiving for... Do you wish to have your name listed in the bulletin? in celebration of... Name for this altar flower dedication:

SE PRINT ALL INFORMATION, If you have questions, you may call Andrea at 256.539.2673 THANK Y

STEEPLE SCHEDULE

The Steeple is published the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month.

To submit events or articles, bring them to the church office or email: gsommer@nativity-hsv.org

The deadline for the next issue is Monday Noon, December 14th.

CLERGY & STAFF

The Rev'd Dr. Andy Anderson Rector

The Rev'd Rusty McCown
Associate

The Rev'd Bonnie McCrickard Associate

Dr. Stephen G. SchafferInterim Choirmaster and Organist **Lane Tutt**

Adult Christian Formation

William Blackerby

Coordinator of Youth Ministry

Anna Quirk

Youth Ministry Assistant

Mary Coe

Children's Formation
Amanda Goeke

Children's Formation Assistant

Audrey Clayton

Nursery Coordinator

John Buyse

Property Manager

Marlin Wilder

Sexton

Sally Stockton

Kitchen Coordinator

Beverly Franklin

Bookkeeper/Business Mgr

Connie Gadomski

Worship & Ministry Assistant

Amy Baxter

Assistant to the Rector

Glenn Sommer

Communications

Prentice White

Verger/Wedding Coordinator

WARDENS' COUNCIL

Bill Starnes Sr Warden
Allen Daniels Jr Warden
Michele Hunter Clerk
Brandon Smith Treasurer
Brenda Chynoweth Finance Chair
Lou Durnya Long-Range Planning

AFTER HOURS EMERGENCY

A member of the clergy is on call each week. If you need assistance from a priest outside office hours, the priest on call will respond to your message.

The number to call In Case of an Emergency Only is 256.533.7007 All other calls should be directed to church phone 256.533.2455 and follow the prompts to leave a message for a priest to respond.

Church of the Nativity, Episcopal

208 Eustis Ave. SE Huntsville, AL 35801 256.533.2455 Fax: 256.533.2374 nativity-hsv.org

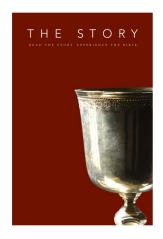
THE STORY at Nativity



December 6 & 7

David

Chapter 12



Solomon
Chapter 13 & 14

Click or tap for Nativity's 'THE STORY' page