



## Epistle Update for the Week of Sunday, December 28, 2008

### A NOTE FROM DEX

#### **Finding Joy in Unexpected Places**

by Safiyah Fosua

##### **When Mary's baby was born**

Calendars were renumbered  
The heavens applauded  
And a new star appeared in the sky.

The angels sang,  
And shepherds came running into town.

Inquiring wise men brought gifts and unwittingly  
Frightened King Herod when Mary's baby was born.

##### **When Mary's baby walked this earth**

People came from miles around to sit at his feet  
And hear the wisdom that could only come from God.

They brought the sick, the lame,  
And those who were troubled  
In their minds.

The winds and the seas had to obey him  
Because he was Emmanuel, God with us.

Formidable demons trembled  
And ran away screaming  
When Mary's baby walked upon this earth.

##### **When Mary's baby died,**

Even the earth was grieved,  
The sun hid its face and refused to shine,

And the ground staggered and lost its footing  
(Some called it an earthquake.)

Graves opened up and saints walked around  
While Roman soldiers  
Confessed that Mary's baby, Jesus, was the Son of God.

But now,

**Mary's baby lives again**

And is seated in heaven.

**Mary's baby lives again**

And is praying for you.

**Mary's baby lives again**

And makes it possible for you to have joy!

Dex

## **EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Newcomer's Dinner, January 31, 2009 starting at 5:30 PM with a social and dinner at 6:00 PM-** Invitations will be sent.

**DVD of 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Service** is available for \$2 - call the church office at 880-0247 to order your copy. Lipton Moy has produced this fantastic DVD of this very special service.

**Vestry Nominations will continue** this Sunday, December 28. The nomination box is located in the Narthex. Please talk with your hopeful candidate to verify that they are willing to serve as a Vestry member if nominated. The nominees must be a confirmed Episcopalian and a member in good standing of this parish. To be eligible to vote (voting will take place during the Annual Meeting, January 11, 2009) you must also be a confirmed Episcopalian and a member in good standing of this parish.

**Some "Alleluia II" books have been turned in but many are still missing -** St. Thomas has quite a collection of the "Alleluia II" books and we are not able to find all of them. Please if you have any church copies of this book return them immediately to the church. We would like to use them during upcoming Cursillo events. Thank you so much.

**First Stop Gift Cards** are now available for your consideration as you make your Christmas gift list. The front of the card is a drawing of a homeless camp. The artist, Craig Rupert, was homeless and First Stop helped him get into housing. For a minimum of \$15.00 donation per card to First Stop, one of these attractive cards will be sent to those you would like to honor. A

sample of the drawing and order forms are available on the bulletin board in the Information Hall. All proceeds will benefit First Stop. Please contact Becky or Jack Stokes at 881-4748 if you have questions.

### **Christmas Season Worship Schedules**

Wednesday, December 24

no Bible Studies

11:00 AM Healing Service

5:30 PM Christmas Eve Service, nursery available

11:00 PM Christmas Eve Service

Christmas Day, No Service, Office Closed

December 26, Office Closed

Sunday, December 28, Regular Services but No Sunday School,  
Continental Breakfast

December 31

no Bible Studies

there will be no 11:00 AM Healing Service

January 1, 2009, New Years Day, No Service, Office Closed

January 2, 2009, Office Closed

**Annual Parish Meeting is January 11, 2009 starting at 12:30 PM.** The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on January 11 and will consist of Parish Reports, election of new Vestry members, and a Chili lunch (along with other soups). This is a very important meeting in the life of St. Thomas and we urge all of you to attend. We will serve lunch as part of the meeting. We will need 10 pots of chili and 5 pots of soup (non-spicy) along with breads, salads, and cookies. This is a fun way of showing off your favorite chili or soup recipe to 100s of friendly judges!! Join the fun and sign up today or call Evie Wilson, 679-7928. The sign-up sheets are on the bulletin board in Information Hall. Nursery will be provided.

**Vestry Retreat-** The Vestry Retreat will be held at Camp McDowell **January 16 and 17**. You will receive a letter inviting you to the retreat that will explain its purpose and what to bring. All vestry members are encouraged to come for these two days.

**January 11, 2009 will be the next Baptism Sunday** - please contact the church office if you would like more information.

### **CHRISTIAN FORMATION**

There will be no Sunday School on December 28.

## YOUTH NEWS AND EVENTS

No activities are planned for this Sunday, December 28, 2008.

## CALENDAR

As committees and groups set dates for events and meetings in 2009 please notify the office so we can post it on the web page calendar and/or facility calendar.

Sunday	8:00 AM 8:45 AM 9:00 AM 10:30 AM	Holy Eucharist Service, Church Continental Breakfast, Parish Hall No Cherub Choir Practice No Sunday School Holy Eucharist Service, Church
Wednesday	9:30 AM 11:00 AM 12 Noon 12:15 PM 6:00 PM	No Bible Study No Holy Eucharist and Healing Service Offices closes early No Bible Study No Holy Eucharist Service
Thursday	New Years Day- Office Closed	Happy New Years
Friday	Office Closed	

## PRAYER LIST

*We pray for the Ill or Distressed:* **Barbara** (friend of S. Fletcher), **Jane & Roy** (sister & nephew of G. Mauldin), **George & Matt** (friends of the Gillies'), **Mary** (M.B.'s mother), **Julie** (friend of D. Boyer), **Jenny** (friend of P. & T. Lloyd), **Ken** (J. Stokes' brother), **Shirley & Jane** (B. Meyer's sisters), **Barbara, Cindy, Gaby & Brad** (family of Tracy Roberts), **Sara, Margie** (M. Harris's mother), **Buck** (friend of S. Smith), **Lorene** (R. Funderburk's mother), **Beth** (friend of L. Allison), **Gregg** (brother of P. Meister), **Brian & Christine** (Zeigler's son & daughter-in-law), **Hernan family** (friends of D. Bender), **Wes** (friend of P. Allison), **Bob** (son-in-law of H. Urban), **Kelli** (granddaughter of H. Urban), **April** (daughter of Father Dex), **Rhett & Alba** (A. & P. Johnson), **Teresa and family** (friends of B. Hill), and **Vicky** (friend of A. Schlenderling), **Jacob** (grandson of Father Dex), **Jamie** (friend of K. Boyer), **Mary Lou** (J. Poplin's Stepmother), **Roy** (brother of R. Roberts), **Chris & Brittany** (son-in-law and daughter of S. & D. Drachlis), **Laura** (friend of T. Conover), **Gary** (brother of B. Green), **Nancy** ( friend of S. Steel), **Evelyn** (friend of F. Steel), **Anthony** (great grandson of S. Kittle), **Jeff** ( friend of K. Evans), **Dan** (brother-in-law of C. Fitzgerald).

*We pray for Members of the parish who are ill or distressed:* **Catherine Albanese, Anerton and Harris families, Barbara Austin, Dorothy Barnett, Paul Bayruns, Josh and Noah Bowen, Corky Carlisle, Harold and Barbara Clayton, Beth and Lloyd Cook, Ann Cochran, Karly Dodson, Sharon Griffin, Garry Griffith, Josh Herman, Ryan, Ryan Paul Hoplamazian, Jones' family, Michael, Michael Jones, Pru Lawson, Diane Lucas, Linda & Bob Mixon, Lisa Mizelle, Penny Neilsen, Margaret Ratchford, Roth Family, Sara, Marge Schafer, Scott, Teresa Stephens, Christina Suto, Henrietta Urban, Joe & Pierrette Watson, Mike and Pat Young.**

*We pray for those who have died, **Frances Otey** (sister of G. Fryman), **Helena Hanson** (mother of J. Hanson), **Lynda Kadrmas**, **Ray Anerton**, **Axel Roth**, **Ron Barnett**, **David Bennett**, **Marianne Meyer** (cousin of L. Meyer), **Ricky and Lucy** ( friends of the Poplins), and **Charlie Poplin** (father of J. Poplin),*

*We pray for **Church of the Messiah, Heflin**; **Our companion diocese of Haiti and its bishop Jean-Zaché Duracin**; **our missionaries to Namibia, Jeremy and Penny Lucas**; **The Diocesan Review Committee**; **City Works: The Fairfield Initiative**; **For all who work toward the goal of eradicating of extreme poverty and hunger.***

*We pray for those who serve in and with the **Armed Forces, especially: Christopher Harris**, **Paul Mandrell**, **Chet Marr**, **Matt Neustadter**, **Sean Pyle**, **Danny Seaman**, **Denise Shelton**, **Bobby Sutton**, **James Cutting** (friend of A. Steel), **Christopher Erwin** (friend of S. Drachlis), **Charlie McNew** (S. Kittle's cousin), **Ben Meyer** (Meyer's grandson), **Brian Reasoner** (J. Reasoner's nephew), **Jason Kucza** (nephew of D. Boyer), **Denise Terrell** (fiancée of Chet Marr).*

*Happy Birthday to: **Graem Cook**, **Beth Cantrell**, **Laura Bliss**, **Gretchen Mauldin**, **Barbara Clayton**, **Margaret Zaice**, **Alisa Chilton**, **Brian Fitzgerald**, **Joshua Carter**, **Evan Willis**, **Beth Pawluk**, **Peter Joffrion**, **Glynn Below**, **Virginia Crump**, **James Graham**, **Leslie Avant**, **William Avant**, **Connor Gossage**, **Logan Freeman**, **Kelli Conover**, **Ryann Roberts**, **Carson Tinsley**, **Bill Lightfoot** and **Bryan Dodson***

## **NEWS FROM AROUND**

# **Nuts & Bolts: A Christian Formation Toolbox**

**Date and Time**      **Starting:** Saturday 10 January 2009 - 09:00 AM

**Ending:** Saturday 10 January 2009 - 03:00 PM

**Location**      **St. Stephens Episcopal Church**  
3775 Crosshaven Drive  
Birmingham, AL 35243-06

[Map](#)

**Description**      Save the date for "Nuts & Bolts: A Christian Formation Toolbox," formerly "All Under One Roof." The day-long event is jointly sponsored by the Department of Christian Formation and the Province IV Christian Formation Committee.

The Department has developed a **Christian Formation Scope and Sequence** that will assist educators in selecting appropriate curricula for specific age groups. This Scope and Sequence will also allow you to review your current curricula and determine what areas, if any, need further reinforcement. Manuals will be sent to each parish and a DVD is also available. Click [here](#) to download the document.

A specific design team spent 18 months developing a **curriculum**

**for youth and adult confirmation.** Each parish was given a copy of both documents at the 2005 Diocesan Convention. You are welcome to download a copy of each here. For the youth confirmation curriculum click [here](#). For the Adult Anglican Essentials click [here](#).

## 39th Trinity Institute Conference Webcast

<b>Date and Time</b>	<b>Starting:</b> Thursday 22 January 2009 <b>Ending:</b> Friday 23 January 2009
<b>Location</b>	<b>St. Luke's Episcopal Church</b> 3736 Montrose Rd. Birmingham, AL 35213-38 <a href="#">Map</a>
<b>Description</b>	<p>As we rethink how to grow, build, supply, consume, dispose, and recycle everything in our lives, we often fail at partnering with the marginalized and powerless, and thus adversely affect them. Building sustainable communities goes hand-in-hand with thoughtful building of infrastructures and physical spaces. Is there a theological basis for living abundantly while striving for justice and sustainability?</p> <p>January 22-23, 2009, Saint Luke's Episcopal Church in Birmingham, Alabama will host the 39<sup>th</sup> Trinity Institute by video simulcast. The Institute will explore sustainability through the lens of liberation theology, which views Jesus not only as redeemer but also liberator of the oppressed. It posits a vision of Christians working together toward social justice by considering all people as full partners in healing our planet and our communities, regardless of their social or economic status. Only in striving for sustainable relationships, rather than accumulating and consuming more for ourselves, can we discover true abundance.</p> <p>Through keynote speeches and panel discussions by leading theologians and grassroots activists, this three-day conference will consider radical ideas about abundance, sustainability, and well-being. Interactive reflection groups throughout will enable you to share your own experiences and solutions with fellow attendees.</p> <p>Trinity Institute takes place at Trinity Wall Street Episcopal Church in New York City, and Saint Luke's Episcopal Church will again host the conference via video webcasts. The cost per day is \$10 which includes lunch. Contact Barbara Vandergriff, parish</p>

secretary, 205-802-6207 or Joyce Lanning, 205-870-0808.

For additional information on the conference visit the [Trinity website](#).

**Contact**

Contact Barbara Vandergriff, parish secretary, 205-802-6207 or Joyce Lanning, 205-870-0808.

**WORSHIP**

Sunday's scripture: Isaiah 61:10-62:3; Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7; John 1:1-18 ; Psalm 147 13-21

**LAY MINISTERS SERVING DECEMBER 28**

	<b>8:00 AM</b>	<b>10:30 AM</b>
<b>Eucharistic Ministers</b>	Elaine Poplin, Ted Evans	Gretchen Mauldin, Bob Harwell
<b>Lector</b>	Garry Griffith	Peigi Leach, Larry Meyer
<b>Acolytes</b>	Tyler Harvey, Alex Taylor	Jacob Atkins, Camille Atkins, Travis Redfield, Julia Erwin, Cade Atkins
<b>Ushers</b>	Cricket and Helen Grilliot	Ellery May, Karen League
<b>Greeter</b>	Cricket and Helen Grilliot	Shirley Kittle
<b>Vestry on Duty</b>	Latham Thurber	Bryan Dodson

**Breakfast Cooks:** Continental Breakfast will be served

**Altar Guild:** Ann Bayruns, Brenda and Horton Smith, Doris Boyer

**Flower Guild:** Libby Strickland, Gretchen Mauldin

**Meals on Wheels:** Horton and Brenda Smith, Jim and Nancy Teasdale, Lisa Ambrose, no Meals delivered on January 1-2, Thursday and Friday

**St. Thomas Episcopal Church**

**INFORMATION**

OFFICE 880.0247

12200 BAILEY COVE ROAD

HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA 35803

WEBSITE [www.stthomashuntsville.org](http://www.stthomashuntsville.org)

OFFICE HOURS M-F 9 AM - 4 PM

**SERVICES**

HOLY EUCHARIST

SUNDAY 8 AM & 10:30 AM, CHURCH

WEDNESDAY 6 PM, CHAPEL

HOLY EUCHARIST & HEALING SERVICE

WEDNESDAY 11 AM, CHAPEL

**BREAKFAST**

SUNDAY 8:45 AM

**SUNDAY SCHOOL**

SUNDAY 9:30 AM

**CLERGY**

THE REV. W. DEXTER BENDER  
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**WARDENS**

BOB HARWELL  
SENIOR WARDEN

CINDY ATKINS  
JUNIOR WARDEN