

THE BELOVED DISCIPLE

NEWSLETTER VOLUME 5, NUMBER 10 DECEMBER 2014

40 Fifth Street, Petaluma, CA 94952 www.saintjohnseiscopalpetaluma.org



ST. JOHN'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH
SINCE 1856

707-762-8872

Everyone Welcome!

O Come, O Come Emmanuel!



3rd Annual Advent Potluck Soup
Supper & Advent Wreath-Making

Sunday, November 30
5:30 pm in Cram Hall



Christmas at St. John's

*Almighty God, you have poured upon us the
new light of your incarnate Word:*

*Grant that this light, enkindled in our hearts,
may shine forth in our lives ...*

— BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20

6:30 pm Christmas songs with the
Petaluma Children's Chorus

7:00 pm The Shepherd's Play

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21

11:30 am - 2:00pm Decorating for Christmas

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24

5:00 pm Family Christmas Celebration
with Communion

10:00 pm Festal Christmas Eucharist

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25

10:00 am Christmas Day Service *this year
we welcome Elim Lutheran*

A Time of Hope

BY REV. DANIEL C. GREEN

Every year at this time I enter the season of Advent with mixed feelings. There is my own excitement of anticipation that once again we will tell the beloved stories, sing the old songs, and experience the sights and smells that call to mind a lifetime of Christmases, and still have the power to touch our souls. And at the same time, there is the unease and even disgust that I feel at the commercialization that threatens to overwhelm the holiness with chintzy, garish, mass-produced "joy." So I have to remind myself that even the orgy of consumerism is driven by hope—the hope that in the giving and receiving of gadgets and gewgaws and ill-fitting sweaters we will experience love. And that is what I'm hoping will happen in church, too—that the stories and songs and warm presence of friends and family and neighbors, praying and sharing in the Body of Christ together will be an experience of the love of God, who chooses to come and be with us with the gift of himself.

But I think sometimes we are so focused on the gifts that are coming that we don't appreciate the value of simply resting in hope. The four-week season of Advent gives us an invitation we rarely accept: to breathe deeply of the fresh cleansing air of hope, which, though not unrelated to desire and the expectation of its gratification, is not the same thing. The characters that we meet

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

A Time of Hope

BY REV. DANIEL C. GREEN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1 here—John the Baptist and Mary, especially—are people who live in the hope that God’s promises are about to come true. They are deeply, personally, invested in those promises, but they also exhibit reverence and humility before the mystery of the future. They are open and accepting of the grace and judgment that accompany an authentic partnership with the living God.

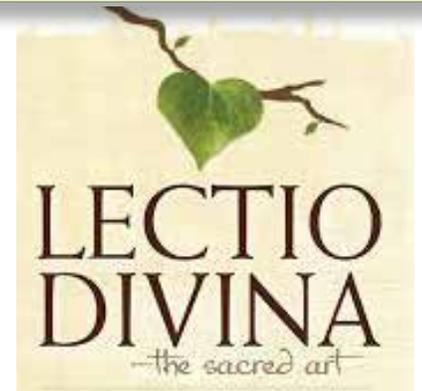
This year I’m trying something again that I did last year. I’m taking a few days between the second and third Sundays of Advent to go on a monastic retreat. I’m already thinking the same thing I did last year at this time—there’s no way I can afford to take time away to pray right now, with all I have to do. I must be crazy! But what I found a year ago in just a couple of days of silence and solitude is that in the midst of all the comings and goings and parties and concerts and preparations of the season is a very simple promise—that God’s hope for us and our hope for God are converging, coming together again to give birth to a new world. Resting for a brief interlude in that simple perspective of hope made it possible to arrive at Christmas with real joy, real celebration. So I encourage you, also, to find spaces in your schedule during these weeks before Christmas to open your hearts to hope, even if it is just a solitary walk in the park, or a quiet half-hour before bed.

I also suggest doing something to remember those who, like Mary and John the Baptist, have nothing to go on but hope. Some of us are able to volunteer time or make extra monetary gifts to charitable causes at this time of year and I encourage you to particularly consider organizations that serve our brothers and sisters who are very poor. In case you find the suggestion helpful, I would like to hold up three organizations as worthy recipients:

■ The **Committee on the Shelterless** (COTS), here in Petaluma, has set the national standard of excellence in helping people avert or recover from homelessness. Last month, COTS announced a new vision of collaboration with other organizations to end homelessness for veterans and families in Sonoma County. Donations can be made at cots-homeless.org or P.O. Box 2744, Petaluma, CA 94953

■ **Episcopal Relief and Development**, celebrating its 75th anniversary, delivers emergency relief and long-term amelioration of extreme poverty through low-cost, maximum impact programs the grass-roots development partnerships around the globe. Their Gifts for Life program is a way to honor a friends or family members with Christmas gifts in their name that help the poorest people in the world lift themselves out of desperation. To donate go to www.episcopalrelief.org

■ Finally, this year we will join with other congregations in the Episcopal Diocese of Northern California to celebrate **Episcopal Community Services** on the Third Sunday of Advent. ECS pools resources from all our churches and then makes grants to develop volunteer-led programs in communities like ours that feed the hungry and clothe the naked, make summer camp or music programs available to underserved children, give rides to seniors, and so on. Donations may be made to St. John’s, marked ECS, in the collection plate on Sunday, December 14, or directly at norcalecs.org or Episcopal Community Services, 350 University Avenue, Suite 280, Sacramento, California 95825



A Lectio Divina Small Group for Advent

An Advent lectio divina group will meet every Wednesday morning from 10:30 am until noon in the church library from **November 26 to December 17**. Facilitated by **Tom Rotella**, Lectio is a sacred way of reading scripture and letting it speak directly to you. In addition to the readings, group members will answer a simple question regarding their spiritual journey. There will be silent time for prayer. No registration is required. Simply show up at the library. During this busy season of year, consider taking some reflective time to remember and celebrate the arrival of the sacred one in our midst.

ST. JOHN'S is still seeking a loving, experienced

person to provide care for infants and toddlers in our nursery during Sunday morning worship. **Working hours are 9:30 to 11:30 each Sunday.** If you have any ideas prospective applicants, please contact **Father Daniel.**



NEWS FROM **ST. JOHN'S CHURCH SCHOOL**

DECEMBER 2014

BY

ALISON ADAMS

The Advent Season Begins

O Come, O Come Emmanuel!

Purple is the color of kings and queens. A king is coming, but it is not the kind of king people thought was coming. This King had no army, no great house, and no riches. This King was a baby who was born in a barn...." And so goes the Advent Godly Play story. The children take the journey to Bethlehem with the prophets, the Holy Family, the shepherds, the angels and the Magi—a journey that was "not just back then, it is also now."



St. John's Kids are also preparing a very special treat for those of you attending the 5:00pm service on Christmas Eve. We are very grateful to **Jonathan Hiller** for accompanying us on guitar to our song, "The Friendly Beasts". A couple of our children will be out of town for Christmas but they will still be able to learn this sweet song as we practice each Sunday for the next three weeks.

With the help of artist **Victoria Temple**, and the strong hands of **Heather Oehm** our cut-out beasts will be embellished by the children and then used to act out the words to the song.

May you enjoy this time of preparation and waiting.

Advent Potluck Soup Supper

SUNDAY, NOV. 30 at 5:30 PM

Make an Advent Wreath!

Special guest for the children!

WHAT TO BRING

- A pot of soup or bread and butter, or a finger food dessert (plus a beverage of your choice).
- Your own wreath frame, or purchase one at the dinner. Wreath frame and candles are \$10.00 and just candles are \$5.00.
- Garden clippers
- **Bring friends, family, and children!** This is a multi-generational event and perfect way to begin the Advent season.

We will need lots of holly, cedar, redwood, bay laurel and pine boughs to make our wreaths. If you have access to any, could bring them to church the morning of December 1? If you cannot bring them I would be happy to come and collect. Thank you! Contact Alison Adams at 559-5044 or alison_adams@comcast.net.

Advent Work Party

On Saturday, **December 6**, between 10:00 and 2:00 pm, at our monthly build and grounds work day, we will prepare the church for the Advent and Christmas season. The Altar Guild will be polishing silver and brass, and your help is needed to vacuum, dust, polish wood, iron wax off the cushions and otherwise prepare our beautiful sanctuary for this most blessed time of year.

Christmas Decorating

After the 10:00 am service beginning at 11:30 am on **December 21**, everyone is invited to help decorate the church and parish hall for Christmas. We'll hang evergreen garlands, string lights, arrange our traditional poinsettias and more.

Everyone Welcome!





WISDOM of the Ancients

From the December 1902 edition of *The Instructor*, the monthly newsletter of St. John's, Petaluma, along with an advertisement from Hale Bros. & Co. for "L'etoile," the new \$3.50 shoe for women: "Correct in style and workmanship."

A new Church Year! With the Church the year does not begin with the first of January, but with Advent Sunday. The new round of festivals and fasts begin today and bring with them offers of blessing to Christian souls. Mother Church comes at this time and says to us her sleeping children—Wake! children, wake! Soon the sun will be up, and the day begun with its round of duties, so no more sleep, no more dreaming away the hours. Awake!—the night is far spent, the day is at hand! The time of drawing near to God, the time of gathering precious fruit to eternal life, the time of molding our lives after the likeness of the Savior, the time of earning grace and working in the vineyard is here, for "now is our salvation nearer than when we believed."

AN INVITATION TO LEAD AND SERVE

Come Meet Your Vestry!

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, 11:30 AM

Everyone is invited to join the St John's Vestry on Sunday, December 14, at 11:30 am in the Library for an "up close and personal" opportunity to meet your Vestry members.

Have you ever wanted to ask what motivated them to serve on the Vestry? Do you wonder what qualifications are required to be a member of the Vestry? What do they accomplish as representatives of St. John's congregation?

Join us in the library for coffee, coco and cookies for an opportunity to share with you our reasons for becoming a member of your Vestry. For further information please contact **Kathryn Dayton** at 707-538-1821.

Victoria Temple, Sr. Warden *

Connie Prim, Jr. Warden *

Monty Sullivan, Clerk *

Joanna Buttler

Kathryn Hardt Dayton

Susan Hadenfeldt

Kristin Ikola

Tom Rotella *

Joanne Woodland *

* These members will be rotating off the vestry in January

ST. PAUL'S HEALDSBURG INVITES YOU

Celebration of Our Lady of Guadalupe

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13, 5:30 AM

The congregation of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Healdsburg invites you to a service and celebration of Our Lady of Guadalupe on Saturday, December 13 at 5:30 p.m. The **Very Rev. Daniel Green**, Rector of St. John's, Petaluma, will preside at a service in the church followed by a candlelight procession around the town Plaza, which will return to the Church Hall for more music, dancing, and a festive meal of pozole. St. Paul's is at 209 Matheson St. in Healdsburg. For more information contact 707-433-2107 or office@stpauls-healdsburg.org



Have You Heard About Cursillo?

Are you curious about it? Several members of St. John's have been to Cursillo and are available to answer any questions you have. They are: **Connie Prim, Frank Prim, Bill Reid, Joanna Butler, Allison Adams, Dennis Adams, Walter Helmuth**, and **Dolores Helmuth**. You can also check out: www.svdpc-community.org for information about the Redwood Empire Cursillo community.





Thank You to Patty Graham!

The renewal of St. John's, Petaluma has been the work of many people, all of whom have contributed generously in support of their vision of a thriving Episcopal parish blazing a trail into the young century, guided by the hope that is in Christ. But few have given more, or more consistently, over a longer period, than Patrecia Graham. Patty began leading the music for the congregation shortly after regular worship services began at Elim Lutheran Church in 2007, and continued as the Music Director of our 10 a.m. Rite II service after we returned to the historic parish property in 2009.

Over the more than four years since I have arrived I have been grateful for Patty's passionate commitment to church music and her creativity, her willingness to collaborate and try new things, disciplined hard work, and her faith and love. Week after week she has selected hymns and anthems, rehearsed the choir and accompanists. She has put together special musical events for Christmas, Easter, and other occasions involving our Sunday school children. She has done all of this expertly, and without complaint, even though at times she has met with resistance from others around differences of musical taste. And she has done all of this as a freewill offering, without asking or expecting anything in return.



Our deep gratitude goes out to Patty for her artisty, generosity and faithful service at St.John's.

So it is with very mixed emotions that I am announcing that Patty will be taking a break from her Sunday morning responsibilities at St. John's. On the one hand, she richly deserves a change, and on the other hand, it is difficult to imagine not having her in her customary position behind the lectern with the choir. One way or another, we will sing and have music at our 10 am Sunday service, but it won't be the same. Patty's final service as Music Director, at least for now, will be the 5 p.m. service on Christmas Eve. Her last Sunday will be December 23. I hope you will take the opportunity in the coming weeks to give her your personal appreciation for all that she has given through her ministry

Help purchase poinsettias, evergreens, and other materials to decorate the church for the Christmas season. Donations of any amount are welcome, and may be accompanied by a dedication in memory of a departed loved one or in celebration of a blessing. You may clip the

donationform below, or find one at church in the narthex. They can be returned in the offering plate, along with payment to St. John's marked "Christmas flowers," or delivered to the office. To be included in the Christmas service bulletins, dedications must be received by **December 18.**



ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, PETALUMA Christmas Flowers Donation

Name _____ Amount _____

Dedication (please print legibly) _____

Please place completed form in the offering plate on Sunday along with your payment. Write "Chrstitmas flowers" in the memo line. You may also deliver the form and payment to the Parish Office. The deadline for dedications to be included in the Christmas service bulletin is Thursday, December 18.



Petaluma Children's Chorus



WINTER CONCERT

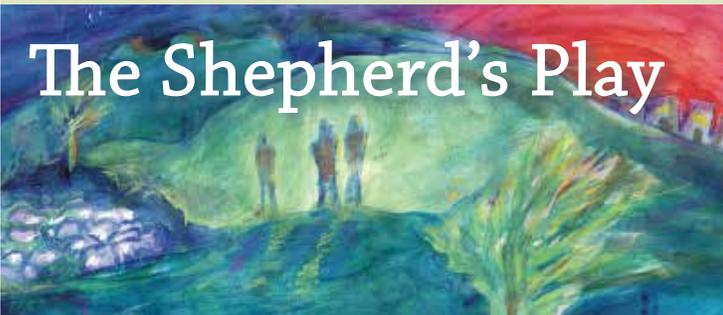
Monday, December 8 at 6:30 pm
Parish Hall

Come Celebrate the end of our
Fall Semester! Admission \$10

Enter into the Christmas Season of 2014 with the **St. John's Community Players** and sing along with a choir of angels and those boisterous, kindhearted shepherd boys, on Saturday, December 20, at 7:00 pm at the fourth annual presentation of **The Oberufer Shepherds' Play**.

Someone who has seen the play several times spoke of the performance in this way: "This play creates an atmosphere of reverence, humility and love – as well as bringing the joyful high spirits of the shepherds! For a brief moment, it shines like a long ago candle amidst what can often be a hectic, commercial miasma of the modern holiday season."

The **Petaluma Children's Chorus** will open the program with a short concert of carols for the season, sure to be a delight for family and friends.



The Shepherd's Play

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20 7:00 PM PARISH HALL

FROM KATHRYN DAYTON

A Report from the Convention

EPISCOPAL DIOCESES OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

Friday, November 14, I picked up my Delegate badge and was greeted by one of Bishop Beisner's staff. The hallway of the Hyatt Hotel was lined with representatives from Camp Noel Porter, The Belfry, a UC Davis campus ministry, the Diocesan Partners in Ministry of Health, the Episcopal Relief Development, Human Trafficking Task Force, the Episcopal Community Services and the Disaster Preparedness and Response Advocate.

A welcome reception was held for all attendees. The large hall set up for Holy Eucharist was filled with delegates and parishioners as far away as Nevada City, Redding, Sacramento, Yreka, Lakeport and the Central Valley.

The uplifting song "Down by the Riverside" ushered in the vibrant celebrants who participated in the processional. Several Deaneries were represented. Among those attending were Sierra Deanery, Wingfield, Alta, Capital, Central as well as our own Russian River Deanery.

The Reverend Dr. **Linda Claden** gave the Homily and the Rt. Reverend **Barry L. Beisner** our Celebrant. Following the sermon the Reverend Canon **Andrea Mc Millin** was recognized as the Canon to the Ordinary.

As everyone received communion we sang *The Breaking of the Bread*. I truly felt the presence of the Holy Spirit surrounding us. What a beautiful experience. It was an honor to have been part of that wonderful greater congregation of the Episcopal Diocese of Northern California.

The agenda for the 15th began with Morning Prayer. The business of the convention followed with reports from committees and nominations of individuals. A few of the resolutions that carried were: New Program Staff Assistant Exemption, The partner with the Charter for Compassion by the Episcopal Diocese of Northern California and the Resolution on Marriage Equality.

Bishop Beisner's address to the convention was inspiring. His focus was on "Raising up Saints." He referred to James 3:17 and also spoke about "people chosen and organized by God". He also addressed St John's overcoming their past challenge and becoming a productive congregation.

The entire convention gave Fr. **Daniel Green** a wonderful
CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

www.saintjohnsepiscopal.org

St. John's goes into the new year — 2015 — with an improved website. It is now well organized with updated text about all things having to do with *Bringing Christ to Life* at St. John's Petaluma. Filled with photographs and the latest news about the growing opportunities for celebration, study, service and creative community life, the website is also an archive of Father Daniel's sermons and back issues of *The Beloved Disci-*

pline newsletter. There are links to all things Episcopalian and information about the rental of space at the church. Take a look!

Thanks to the Communication Team that stewarded this process and to **Victoria Temple** who coordinated the project over the past year.

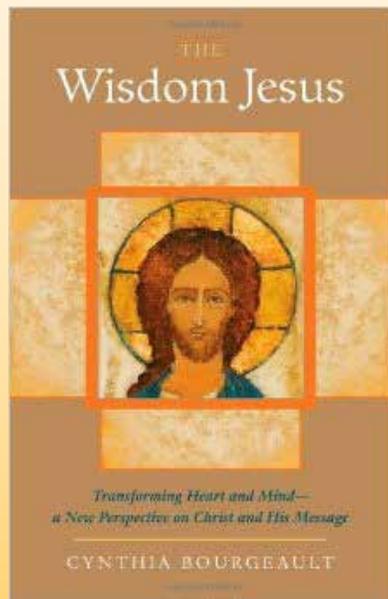


ADVENT BOOK STUDY

The Wisdom Jesus

by Cynthia Bourgeault

Out of consideration for all the demands on our time during the Advent season, and desire to give the book the consideration it deserves, I have decided to postpone the adult book study on Cynthia Bourgeault's *The Wisdom Jesus* until January 2015. The book marks a transition between our 2014 theme, *Who is Jesus?*, and the theme for our 2015 book study course, *Bringing Christ to Life*, so it will serve equally well for a beginning as it would have for an ending. Please contact the office at office.sjecz@gmail.com or call 762-8872 to register. **The course will begin on Sunday, January 11 and run through February 15.** Books will be available on January 4 for registered participants to begin reading. — Daniel+



Convention Report

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6 round of applause on the announcement of his permanent position as St. John's Rector.

In the afternoon session everyone was assigned a table of people from different parishes. Everyone participated in a form of Mutual Invitation Table Talk, which consisted of three topics. Each participant was given the option of sharing or passing.

The first topic was: Name two special, sacred areas or items in your church building that have meaning for you and how you feel in that space.

The second topic read: Name a moment in the past month that was meaningful, when you felt the love of God and sense of the Holy Spirit.

The last was: How has your church community been a source of transformation for you in your life? Who do you know, personally, who might long for this kind of experience in their life?

Later in the afternoon we heard from the following speakers, wonderful presentations and too much material to detail in this report.

1. Episcopal Church Officer for Global Relations and networking, the Rev. **Ranit Mathews**
2. Episcopal Foundation, Dr. **Jeanne George**
3. Episcopal Community Services, the Rev. **Lucretia Jevne**
4. Jubilee Minister, Mr. **Warren Dunning**
5. Total Ministry Group, the Rev. **Kay Rohde**

The convention concluded with closing prayers and a beautiful blessing from Bishop Beisner.

I know my fellow delegates **Susan Hadenfeldt, Laurie Warren, Bill Rhoads** and I fully enjoyed this honorable and spiritual experience serving for you, St. John's Episcopal Church.

FROM THE SENIOR WARDEN

"the blessed company of all faithful people..."

A Year to Remember!

It's the day after Thanksgiving. I'm wrapping up production of the December 2014 edition of *The Blessed Discipline* newsletter and trying to write my last Senior Warden column. If I can pull it off, it will be the ninth one since 2013 when, as Junior Warden, I set the intention to "challenge a few stereotypes about 'church people,' about what is 'contemporary,' and about what its like to be an out-Christian in our world today."

I'm not sure I've accomplished that goal. Perhaps I've learned a different path than "challenge." But I have had my stereotypes softened, become my own version of a "church lady," and found ongoing refuge in the blessed company of a Christian community.

December marks the end of my year as Senior Warden and my tenure on the vestry. As I write that sentence I'm filled with deep emotion, and its not "Thank heaven's that's over!" Far from it.

Serving as Senior Warden has been an honor and 2014 has been an incredible year. It will go down in the archives as the one in which we called Father Daniel C. Green as our rector! The year we passed a significant way-station in our journey out of religious schism. The year the way of Christian Discernment became a living experience within our congregation.

2014 has also been a significant year for me personally. In addition to the joy of friendships grown from the soil of rewarding work, I've also received the gift of protection and solace during a dark night of the soul. With the coming of Advent, I can see that glowing light at the end of tunnel.

Drawing out the themes of old columns has helped me get a handle on what I want to say in farewell. It's about how grateful I am for being in the blessed **company** of all faithful people — finding a place of **sanctuary** for body, soul and spirit — **belonging** in the broad church where everyone is welcome — gaining a glimpse of the sainthood born of self-less **service** — weekly remembrance of the ever-present **help** of the choirs of heaven — **guidance** from Father Daniel on the mystery road to Galilee — **inspiration** from the Holy Spirit through the conscious process of discernment — and experiencing the possibility of **co-creating** a healthy social life. I look forward to the opportunities to carry on in new ways in 2015! — **Victoria Temple**

Music Voice Exploration

ST. JOHN'S U

SATURDAY

DECEMBER 13

2:00 - 5:00 PM

Singing with **Linda Manuilow**



Starting with voice opening practice, Linda will skillfully lead us through musical voice exploration, with the second half of our afternoon lifting our spirits with sing along music to piano accompaniment, just right for the season.



BACH CHURCH

with Kayleen Asbo, Ph.D.

Sundays at 5 pm St. John's Episcopal Church
40 Fifth Street, Petaluma, CA

Monthly interfaith candlelight gatherings of poetry,
meditation and the music of J.S. Bach

JANUARY 25

The Season of Epiphany: Following the Light

FEBRUARY 22

The Season of Lent: The Return to Simplicity

MARCH 22

The Annunciation: Welcoming the Unexpected

APRIL 19

The Season of Easter: Opening to Joy

MAY 17

The Everyday Sacred