



The Angelus

Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral • Kansas City, Missouri

Vol. 77, No. 12 • December 2008

Christmas is coming: ready or not

I consider it the triumph of hope over experience that each year I go into Advent thinking, “It’ll be different this year. This year I’ll do my shopping early. This year I WILL get Christmas cards written and mailed before Ash Wednesday. This year I’ll have neighbors over for coffee and cookies. This year I will employ my organizational skills so that preparations for Christmas are calm, deliberate, and yes, joyful.

Yeah, right. Oh, and that’s just the secular expectations I place on myself. There’s another whole laundry list of spiritual goals I set for myself that I have no chance of attaining either. Experience has taught me that Advent only gets more chaotic with each passing year. By the third Sunday of this brief season I’m all but panicking, thinking, “I’m not ready.”

It makes me think of playing hide-n-seek when I was a child, when whoever was It would call out, “Ready or not, here I come.” And no matter how clever I thought my hiding place was, I’d feel that momentary jolt as I would think, “Wait! I’m not ready yet. This place isn’t good enough. I need to keep on looking. Don’t come yet. I’m not ready.”

Seems that no matter how far in advance we know something is coming — be it a holiday, an upcoming wedding, the birth of a child, or the death of a loved one — we are still taken by surprise at the suddenness of it all. I have no doubt that Mary wasn’t ready for labor to begin, camped out as they were in a stable, for heaven’s sakes, in a strange city far from the comforts of home and a Nazarene midwife.

This was the child of promise, the one destined to be called the Son of the Most High, the one who would ascend the throne of his ancestor King David. If God could swing a miraculous conception, surely God could have arranged for a shorter pregnancy so that Jesus could be born before this ill-advised trip took place. Or if it was ordained that the Messiah must be born in the City of David, then surely God could have pulled some strings to get them a room at the inn. I wonder if Mary felt as some of us felt before our first-born was delivered: you’re more than ready to not be pregnant any longer, but you’re not at all sure that you’re ready for what lies ahead.

But part of the human equation is that the two great markers of existence life — birth and death — occur apart from calendar time. We don’t generally get to plan the

specifics around either of these two events. Birth especially happens not because we are ready but because God is.

They are holy moments because they occur in the fullness of time, when the eternal breaks in to the temporal. And though it does not always seem this way at the time, it is God’s great gift to us that our own personal readiness is not remotely a crucial factor. Any birth, but especially the birth we celebrate at Christmas, comes to us whether we are ready or not.

Thank God. Were the birth of the Savior left up to human time-tables, we would still be saying to God, “Wait! I’m not ready yet. I haven’t pursued all the avenues of Salvation-by-Self. I’m not done trying to do this on my own yet. I need more time to work a little harder, maybe bit a bit more deserving. Don’t come yet. I’m not ready.”

Suffice to say, I suspect I shall arrive at Christmas Eve breathless as usual, having left undone far too many things that I ought to have done, or at least believed I ought to have done. Perhaps some of you can relate. And yet in the stillness of a midwinter night, the gift of the Incarnation will be handed to us all by a God who is less interested in our readiness than in our faithfulness.

And part of the gift is that God asks only that we put down our unbaked cookies, our unwritten cards, our unwrapped gifts, our self-important busyness and hold out our arms that we might receive the newborn Christ Child given to us.

Ready or not.

—by the Rev. Canon Sue Sommer

Maison de Naissance’s busiest month ever

Babies come when they are ready. They don’t consider things like hurricanes.

September was Maison de Naissance busiest month ever. The staff came in through rain, wind and darkness, contending with a leaky roof and electronic equipment fried by lightning to deliver babies who were ready now.

In November, a work crew arrived from Kansas City with crucial supplies to make the necessary repairs.

Please keep the people of Haiti in your prayers in this time of preparation and celebration of our Savior’s birth.

—by Debbie Marrs

Flower gifts for November

November 2

- in loving memory of our grandmother, Mary Gentry Shaw — *Page Branton Reed and Leslie Branton Hoffecker*

November 9

- in memory of Tom Wood and in thanksgiving for children, grandchildren and great children — *Sally Wood*
- in loving and blessed memory of my mother, Lillian Cozzi Pellet — *Tricia Pellet Lyddon*

November 16

- in thanksgiving — *Glen Wesne*

November 23

- in thanksgiving for the baptism of Olivia Lauren Michka — *Ron and Angela Michka*

Children's Formation Fellowship Breakfast

December
21
9:15 a.m.



All children and their families are invited to join us!

\$50 Fund

Thank you to all who have contributed to the \$50 Fund to date. We are less than \$5,000 away from our goal!

Donations may be received through December 31.

MUSIC NOTES

from Canon Musician John Schaefer

Advent Lessons and Music

Collegium Vocale is a recently formed choral ensemble that is on an artistic level with the Kansas City Chorale. Conducted by Dr. Ryan Board of the UMKC Conservatory of Music, Collegium Vocale will present two services of Advent Lessons and Music Sunday, December 14, one at 5 p.m. (instead of the customary service of Order for Evening and Eucharist) and the second at 7:30 p.m. Readings and music for the Advent season enlighten each other; the congregation will have ample opportunity to sing favorite Advent hymns. You are invited to attend either or both of the services.

Messiah Singalong

The annual *Messiah* Singalong will begin at 4:30 p.m. Saturday, December 13. A tradition in Kansas City since 1980, this year's Singalong will be conducted by Jack Ergo, who was long associated with the performances of *Messiah* at the Community of Christ Auditorium in Independence.

For those who have not attended a Singalong, Handel's oratorio is performed without cuts. A chamber orchestra and professional soloists are the accompanying musicians. When the time comes to sing a chorus, the audience stands and sings. The whole event takes about 2 hours and 45 minutes. It is a truly joyful experience.

While there is no admission charge, donations are joyfully welcomed.

Coming Soon

Beginning January 11, a choral ensemble drawn from the William Baker Festival Singers



With Sympathy

*Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.*

- Marian Kemp Hathorne Gillapp
(Gayle Hathorne's step-mother)
- Russell Swanson (Linda Yeager's father)

with Dr. Baker as the conductor will sing at the 8 a.m. service.

Dr. Baker has indicated that a number of his musicians, some of whom sing at other churches, want a spiritual as well as musical experience in a place which captures the beauty of holiness; hence, they are coming to the Cathedral.

The ensemble will offer motets and anthems while leading the congregation in its participation in the liturgy. They will add richness to our early morning worship.

Treasurer's Report

Oct MTD	Budgeted MTD	Actual MTD
Income	\$ 112,260	\$ 139,082
Expenses	\$ 153,530	\$ 165,547
Net Total	\$ (41,270)	\$ (26,465)
Oct YTD	Budgeted YTD	Actual YTD
Income	\$ 1,475,100	\$ 1,505,079
Expenses	\$ 1,515,218	\$ 1,522,006
Net Total	\$ (40,118)	\$ (16,927)

October 2008 at the Cathedral saw income \$26,800 over budget due to a withdrawal of \$35,000 from the Vestry Designated Fund authorized by the Vestry to help the Cathedral balance its budget. Expenses were \$12,000 over budget due to the timing of an insurance premium and several other small overages.

Year-to-date income is over budget by \$130,000 due primarily to the aforementioned transfer and expenses are close to budget at \$7,000 over budget.

—by Doyle White

The Angelus

A laypersons' newspaper published in the interest of Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral.

The Angelus Small Group Contributors:

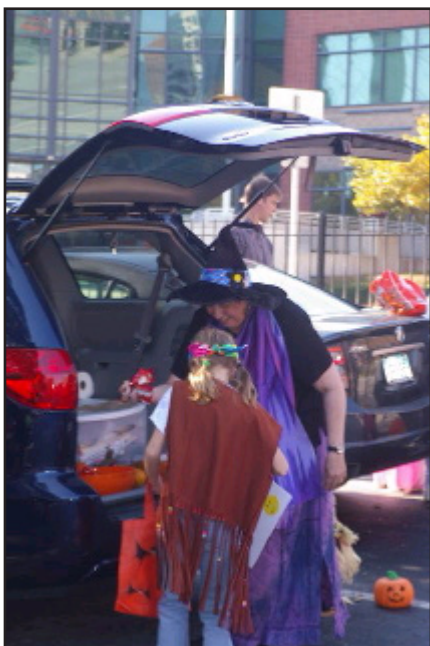
Emily Akins	Tom Atkin
Mary Byrne	Jan Frizzle
John Hornbeck	Geoff Logan
Chris Morrison	

Julie Toma, Editor

The Angelus Small Group is open to anyone interested in contributing (writing stories, taking photographs) regularly to *The Angelus*. No experience necessary.

Submissions from parishioners and small groups are welcome and encouraged. All entries are requested by the 15th day of the month prior to publication by e-mail: communications@ghkc-kc.org or fax: 816.474.5856.

Cathedral children shine at Trunk or Treat



Grief, loss and Christmas

One side of the Christmas season not often talked about is how to deal with loss and grief even as the world celebrates the holidays with joy. The fact is, no matter how much time has elapsed, we miss those with whom we have shared past Christmases.

The first Christmas following the death of a loved one, or after a marriage or significant relationship has ended, especially invites us to change in some way how we celebrate.

- **Have reasonable expectations.** There will be times of great sadness, times when you prefer to be alone, and times when you very much need the company of others. These needs may change from day to day. You may find yourself suddenly overcome with feelings of grief that you don't expect. This is normal.
- **Do not try to do all the things you have done in the past.** Baking, decorating, writing cards, entertaining, and shopping can be too much in the best of times. Be aware of the energy you have, and allow yourself to do things differently. Be compassionate with yourself.
- **At special gatherings, name your loss in a healthy way, and talk about those you miss.** Some families offer a special toast to those who have died and now live in the nearer presence of Christ. This is a powerful time to share tears and fond remembrances. You put yourself and those around you at ease when you speak of those you miss. Others often are waiting for cues from you.
- **You may wish to begin a new tradition,** such as reaching out to a lonely neighbor, taking gifts to a shelter or food to the local fire station. In years to come, this tradition becomes known as, "What we began doing the Christmas after N. died." This celebrates the life of your loved one, and in succeeding years, makes it easier to name those who have died.
- **Pay special attention to children** who can be overlooked in the grieving process. More toys will not give comfort and hope. They need to know they are not alone in their sorrow, that adults, too, miss departed loved ones. Assure them of God's special care in the days ahead, and that the Christ Child is with them always.
- **Be regular in worshipping God and receiving the Eucharist.** There is no greater comfort in sorrow than the presence of the Risen Christ.

Hold fast to the promise in St. John's Gospel for Christmas Day: "The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness shall not over come it."

The Twelve Days of Christmas

December 24 – Eve of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ 4 p.m. Sung Eucharist with Christmas Pageant.

The first Eucharist of Christmas. The birth of Christ is interpreted by the young people of the cathedral. The Tallis Singers and the Grace Choraliers offer anthems, and the congregation joins in singing carols and the service music. The pageant and liturgy will be signed for the hearing-impaired.

10 p.m. The Prelude to the Celebration

Congregational carols and organ prepare us for the Liturgy. The Trinity Choir offers a prelude of a cappella anthems and motets.

10:30 p.m. Solemn Eucharist of the Nativity

The Right Rev. Barry Howe, Bishop of West Missouri, celebrant & preacher. With the fullness of sacred ritual, the Christ Mass is celebrated. Tonight the Trinity Choir sings anthems by Ralph Vaughan Williams and Gustav Holst. Other music includes beloved congregational carols and organ music.

December 25 - The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ: Christmas Day

10:15 a.m. Sung Eucharist with carols, choir and organ.

December 26 – Buildings & Office closed. No 12:05 p.m. Eucharist.

December 28 – First Sunday after Christmas

No formation classes or Children's Chapels.

8 a.m. Holy Eucharist

10:15 a.m. Sung Eucharist and carols with choir and organ.

5 p.m. Sung Eucharist and carols with organ.

December 29 – Feast of the Holy Innocents (*transferred*): Eucharist, 12:05 p.m.

December 30 – Sixth Day of Christmas: Eucharist, 12:05 p.m.

December 31 – Seventh Day of Christmas. Eucharist 12:05 p.m.

4 p.m. Holy Eucharist. Eve of the Holy Name of Jesus.

January 1 – Buildings & Office closed. No 12:05 Eucharist.

January 2 – Ninth Day of Christmas: Eucharist, 12:05 p.m.

January 3 – Tenth Day of Christmas: Eucharist, 12:05 p.m.

January 4 – Second Sunday after Christmas

Formation Classes resume today

8 a.m. Holy Eucharist

10:15 a.m. Solemn Eucharist

5 p.m. Sung Eucharist

January 5 – Twelfth Day of Christmas: Eucharist, 12:05 p.m.

January 6 – The Feast of the Epiphany

The Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles:

12:05 p.m. & 5:30 p.m. Eucharist

Coping with holiday stress

Here it is, Advent again, with Christmastide just around the corner. As we live this Holy Season at church, the “Holiday Season” surrounds us. According to the images on Christmas cards, in advertising, and, sometimes, in the happy faces we show one another, we’re all having a wonderful time. But are we?

The annual celebration of the Word made Flesh is often, unfortunately, a time of significant tension and anxiety for many people. Preparation for Christmas and the holiday itself presents us with multiple tasks: gifts to buy and wrap, sometimes on a tight budget, decorations to be placed, meals to be cooked, and parties to be hosted or attended. Parish leaders, both clergy and lay, have many liturgies and special events to be plan and celebrate, and everyone must balance opportunities and commitments at the Cathedral with other seasonal activities.

Some other obvious sources of holiday stress include having too many things to do, the disruption of ordinary routines, financial worries, and difficult relationships. This last area can be especially difficult, given the unrealistic expectations we have that all is merry and bright within families and among acquaintances. This, of course, is not always true.

For many, the natural anticipation of this joyful season is undercut by concern about unpleasant situations or encounters. It is important to know that many people have some holiday anxiety, ranging from relatively mild concerns about how the cousins will get along at Christmas dinner, to facing the least talked-about issues, such as physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children or adults, alcoholism, or drug addiction.

People who are working hard to grow into new life and to change old patterns are often confused about what to do when planning to visit or be visited by difficult friends or family members during the holidays. Consider these suggestions if you are in this situation.

- **If it’s dangerous, don’t go.** Our families and our culture imply that one must be with one’s family during the holidays. This is simply not true. The only person whose presence is a necessity for Christmas is Our Lord Jesus. If you are considering visiting, or allowing to visit,

family members who have a history of physically, emotionally, sexually, or spiritually abusing you, it is fine to change your plans.

- **When you’ve got it, don’t flaunt it.** After having worked hard to gain insight into your own behavior or that of your family, it is natural to want to share your new awareness. In general, it is a good idea to resist this temptation. Your growth and change may seem threatening to some members of the family because it changes the family dynamic. Share your insight instead with someone you trust who is outside the family.
- **Try not to let old patterns upset you.** Family members relate to each other according to patterns, rather like a dance. Each family has its own dance, which gets repeated regularly. When you change your behavior, you change the dance. It is natural for others in the family to ask you to get back in step with the family dance. The best response to a “change back” message is to establish a healthy boundary with a clear “yes,” or “no,” and as little reactivity as possible. Striving to attain this response is, of course, something which all growing people do for most of their lives.
- **Stop wishing they’ll be different.** The most common way that people undermine their desire for a happy holiday is to spend time wishing that their family would be different than it is. For example, if Dad and Great Aunt Sarah have an intense and public conflict each year, then it’s a safe bet they will have that fight again this year; particularly if neither of them has worked on his or her own growth during the past year. To spend a great deal of energy wishing that this annual event not occur is to spend a great deal of energy setting yourself up for a disappointment. The only person whom you can change is you.
- **Embrace a new holiday tradition.** Allow yourself the time and space to do something that is peaceful, meaningful, or fun, just for you. It’s ok. Really. Enjoy.

Children’s pageant

All children are invited to explore their inner sheep or shepherd as we tell the story of the very first Christmas in our annual Christmas pageant, a part of the Christmas Eve Holy Eucharist, December 24 at 4 p.m. Pageant rehearsals will be held on the first three Sundays in December after the 10:15 a.m. service. Attendance at all rehearsals is mandatory for speaking roles but also strongly suggested for non-speaking roles. Sign up for the pageant via e-mail: dmctavish@ghtc-kc.org or the sign up sheet on the bulletin board in Haden Hall.

December 7 and 14: Pageant participants and their families share a quick lunch in Haden Hall followed by rehearsal in the nave. Children must be accompanied by an adult. All participating families are asked to assist with food purchase, preparation, serving and clean up.

December 21: Children’s Formation will have our first Children’s Fellowship Breakfast at 9:15 a.m. Children and their families will share prayers, pastries and good times as we take a moment to be together and be thankful for our Cathedral family. Children’s Chapel will begin at 10:15 a.m.

Pageant Rehearsal will begin immediately following the 10:15 service and lunch will not be served.

There are no Children’s Formation classes or chapels December 28. Children will accompany their parents to church on this day. There will be a Cathedral nave activity sheet for children on the back table.

Blessings to you and your loved ones in this holy time and prayers for health and happiness in the New Year.

—by DeAnn McTavish

Music of G.F. Handel

Messiah
JACK ERGO, *Conductor* SINGALONG

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13
4:30 P.M.

Admission is free.

THE AUDIENCE SINGS THE CHORUSES!

Bring your score or purchase one at the door.

GRACE AND HOLY TRINITY CATHEDRAL

Adult Formation

Sundays • 9:15 a.m. • Founders' Hall

November 30

Anglican Prayer Beads

Join Joe and Karen Behen in creating and learning about Anglican Prayer Beads. We'll have everything you'll need to make your own. While you work on your beads, we'll discuss the intent behind and the process of praying with the Anglican Rosary. Just bring \$5 per rosary to help defray the cost.

December 7 • Founders' Hall Documents of Witness

Dean White continues the study of Documents of Witness, a collection of original writings addressing issues in culture and the Church since 1782. We shall hear from our spiritual ancestors in their own words, as the Church confronted issues such as war, slavery, and the Great Depression. We will find wisdom for engaging present day issues in the Episcopal Church, the Anglican Communion and the world.

December 14 and 21 Nativity Narratives of Jesus

The Scriptural accounts of the birth of Jesus are some of the best known and best loved passages in the Bible. But Matthew's account and Luke's account are decidedly different in detail, trajectory, and source material, and find no parallels whatsoever in the other two gospels.

As we prepare ourselves in Advent for the coming of Christ, why not spend some time in contemplation of these sacred texts? Join Canon Sue Sommer these Sundays for a closer look at Matthew and Luke's accounts of the birth of Jesus. We'll compare these accounts to others of antiquity, including those found in Hebrew Scripture, notably the miraculous births of Isaac and Samuel. If time permits, we'll also compare the infancy narratives as found in the Gnostic gospels of Thomas and James.

Visit the Cathedral website
and see what's new!

www.ghtc-kc.org



A big Trunk or Treat thank you to Joe Behen and the Youth Group, Joan Bock, The Burns-Sprung Family, The Citro Family, The Finet Family, The Finnie Family, The Fortune Family, The Jeff and Valerie Johnson Family, The Lenette and Steve Johnson Family, the Schaefer Family, the Thomas Family, Sharyl Wallace, David White, The White Family, Kay Woolley and the Ushers, and all who brought food, desserts and candy!

A big Advent Workshop thank you to Ten Thousand Villages, Maison de Naisance, Women's Retreat Committee, Guild of the Christ Child and all those who brought food for coffee hour!

It's a cookie exchange!

Please join the Guild of the Christ Child (GCC) as we put some variety into our cookie platters! Yes, it's time for the GCC's Cookie Exchange and we hope you will help make this a merry event as we share our baked goodies with one another. It's a great way to take some cookies home to share with family and friends and to donate cookies to our guests at the Kansas City Community Kitchen.

Just **bring 4-5 dozen of your favorite cookies (the more the merrier!) Tuesday, December 9 at 6:15 p.m. in Haden Hall.** Also, bring a container for your 'new' batch of cookies to carry home. Details of how this exchange works will all be part of the fun!

Check out our hot chocolate bar, coffee and teas that will warm your hands and holiday spirit that will warm you up for the season ahead! It's all in the spirit of giving and receiving, sharing and caring. Contact Valerie to RSVP or if you have questions: johnson_jb@hotmail.com or 913-302-0379. RSVP for nursery care.



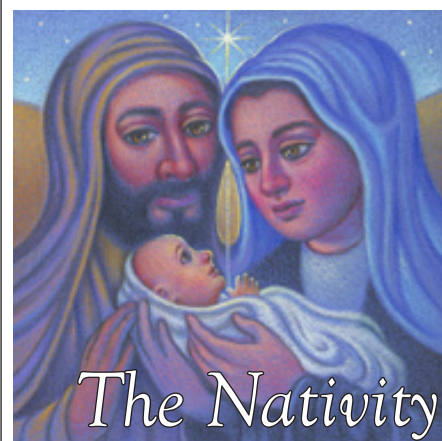
Women's Retreat

February 20-22, 2009

Marillac Center in Leavenworth

This year's Women's Retreat is a celebration of the joyous gifts that abound in our lives.

For more details, pick up a brochure from the information rack near the Tower or visit www.ghtc-kc.org/pages/womensretreat.html.



The Paul Mesner Puppets
present *The Nativity* at GHTC
December 19-21, 2008.

Performance dates and times

Friday, December 19 • 10 a.m.

Friday, December 19 • 7 p.m.

Saturday, December 20 • 3 p.m.

Saturday, December 20 • 7 p.m.

Sunday, December 21 • 3 p.m.

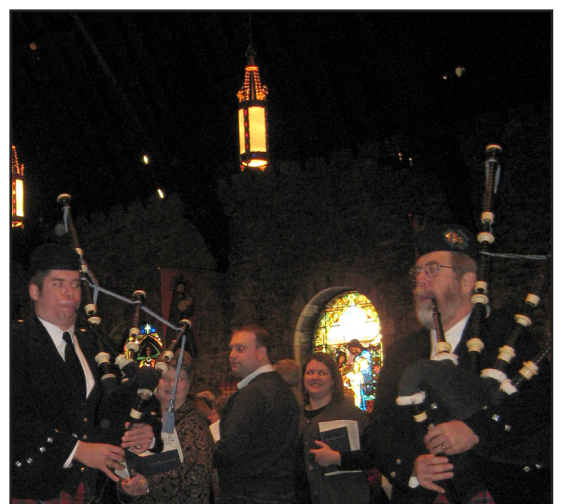
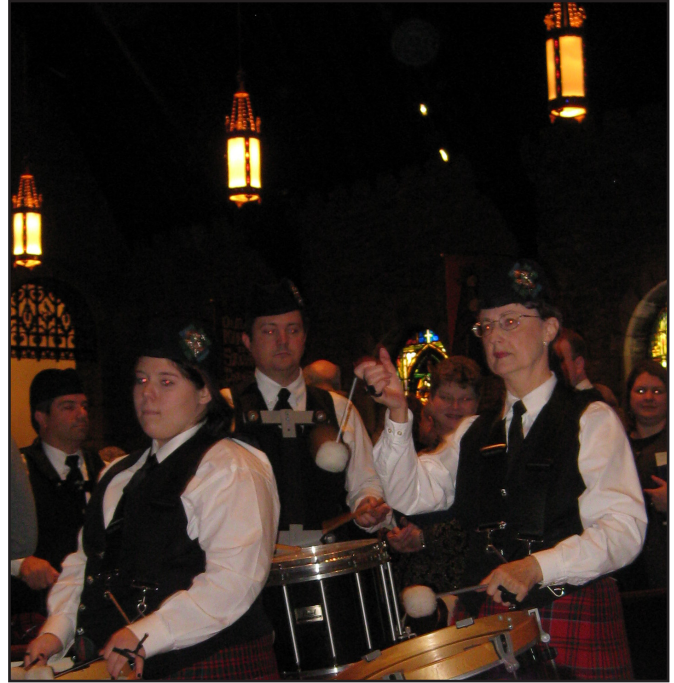
For tickets:

Central Ticket Office
816.235.6222

or

www.PaulMesnerPuppets.org.

KIRKIN' o' the TARTAN



Christmas Cookies

For guests of the Kansas City Community Kitchen, Christmas is without many of the special traditions that most of us take for granted. Very few of us are equipped to bake 500 cookies, but many of us can certainly combine our talents. To that end, please bring three or four dozen (or more) cookies to church Sunday, December 14. We will enjoy some of them at coffee hour that day and send the balance to KCKK to serve during the week before Christmas. Bless all your holy hands in advance for this bit of sharing.



Homemade is wonderful, but it is the thought that matters.



Grace and Holy Trinity Cathedral

The Episcopal Diocese of West Missouri

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December 2008

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

The Right Rev. Barry R. Howe
Bishop of West Missouri

The Very Rev. Terry White
Dean

The Rev. Canon Susan Sommer
Canon Pastor and Subdean

The Rev. Carol Sanford
Priest Associate

The Rev. Joseph Behen
Clergy Assistant

The Rev. Bryan England
Deacon

The Rev. Bruce Hall
Deacon

The Rev. Dr. Michael Johnston
Scholar-in-Residence

Mr. John L. Schaefer
Canon Musician

Weekly Activities

Sunday

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist
9:15 a.m. Christian Formation
10:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist
5:00 p.m. Order for Evening/Holy Eucharist

Monday

12:05 p.m. Holy Eucharist

Tuesday

9:15 a.m. EfM
12:05 p.m. Holy Eucharist
1:30 p.m. Tuesday Afternoon Bible Study

Wednesday

12:05 p.m. Holy Eucharist
5:45 p.m. The Tallis Singers
6:00 p.m. Grace Choraliers
7:00 p.m. Trinity Teens Youth Group

Thursday

7:00 a.m. Men's Bible Study
12:05 p.m. Holy Eucharist
6:00 p.m. Cathedral Bell Ringers
6:30 p.m. EfM
7:30 p.m. Trinity Choir

Friday

12:05 p.m. Holy Eucharist

Activities for the Month of December

5 • FRIDAY

7:30 p.m. Fine Arts Chorale

6 • SATURDAY

9:00 a.m. Altar Guild Workday
5:00 p.m. Recital: Julie Hudik, Oboe

7 • SUNDAY

11:30 a.m. Pageant Rehearsals
11:45 a.m. Music Committee
11:30 a.m. Women's Retreat Planning Committee

9 • TUESDAY

6:15 p.m. Cookie Exchange
6:15 p.m. Cancer Support Group

10 • WEDNESDAY

7:30 p.m. Recital: Robert Detjen, French Horn

11 • THURSDAY

8:30 a.m. RAMP Program

12 • FRIDAY

8:00 p.m. Baker Festival Singers

13 • SATURDAY

4:30 p.m. Messiah Singalong

14 • SUNDAY

11:30 a.m. Pageant Rehearsals
2:00 p.m. Baker Festival Singers

5:00 p.m. Service of Lessons and Carols

7:30 p.m. Service of Lessons and Carols

15 • MONDAY

12:00 p.m. City Come Again

17 • WEDNESDAY

7:30 a.m. Finance Committee Meeting
6:00 p.m. Charitable Needlework

18 • THURSDAY

5:00 p.m. Vestry

21 • SUNDAY

11:30 a.m. Pageant Rehearsals

24 • WEDNESDAY

4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service with Pageant
10:00 p.m. Prelude to the Celebration
10:30 p.m. Solemn Eucharist of the Nativity

25 • THURSDAY • Christmas Day

10:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist
Office and Buildings Closed.

26 • FRIDAY

Office and Buildings Closed.

31 • WEDNESDAY

4:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist: *Eve of the Holy Name of Jesus*

Please verify times and dates of the events listed with the appropriate person(s) or by contacting the Cathedral Office.