

The Church of the Holy Family **Family Affairs**

December 2020

Deadline for January/February *Family Affairs*: **January 8**

Alleluia. To us a child is born: Come let us adore him. Alleluia!

I have two pieces of Good News to help brighten this coming season of Advent, a time when I know many of you have made the painful decision to spend the holidays apart from your loved ones. Rejoice and be glad, for the Kingdom of God is at hand!

Early in the pandemic, a group of clergy from a broad spectrum of Chapel Hill churches and the Kehillah Synagogue began to meet every Monday morning for mutual support and fellowship. I am among them. Together we found tremendous comfort as we all made the decision to “cancel everything.” A noted emergency physician was grafted in to provide us the most up-to-date information about the spread of the virus in our county and at the university. One of our most important accomplishments was the commitment we made together to have difficult conversations about racial unrest and what we could do about it. Knowing that the closing of our schools would burden families in different ways, we hatched a plan to provide a safe learning center for the most economically impacted children in our school system. To help the people we most wanted to help (those who tested lowest in standardized testing and people of color, while paying a living wage for those who ran the program) we knew we would have to pay for it ourselves. The price was steep, almost \$140,000 for full-time care and tutoring. Together we raised the money and, in partnership with the YMCA, the center opened in September on the campus of University United Methodist Church. All of the children attend free of charge. Holy Family was a partner from the beginning, sending an initial payment of \$7,000 with more to come—we hope—in the New Year. Privacy concerns for the fifty-odd children we serve prevent us from showing any pictures, but I have seen its operation and the center is remarkable. I hope you will take some joy in knowing that we are a part of this vital force for good in our community, welcoming the little children as Jesus calls us to do. They are in need of volunteers. If you would like to know more about that, please contact me.

The second bit of joy I would like to share is that our plans for Christmas have come together. Weather permitting, we plan to have three outdoor candlelight services on Christmas Eve (4:00 p.m., 5:15 p.m., and 6:30 p.m.) and one on Christmas Day (10:00 a.m.). If all the slots fill up—and I hope you will make a reservation without delay—we should be able to welcome as many as 120 souls to receive Holy Communion on the Feast of the Nativity. I’m excited. We have a plan for some choral music and carols sung by a small group of singers. We will have a Christmas video as well, with costumed parishioners telling the Christmas story in a kind of mini-pageant. Angela and Bill are working hard on all of this. A sermon will be included as well.

I would like to invite all of you to help make this Christmas merry and bright by sharing with us one or more of your family’s Christmas tree ornaments. We have ordered a large tree which will stand near the nave icon. With the marvel of low-temperature LED lights, I hope to have it lit day and night throughout the season of Advent. When I give the word, make a household pilgrimage to the nave and hang your ornament for all to see. I will post pictures on our Facebook bulletin board throughout the season. While you are in the nave, stop and stay awhile. Say a prayer for your church, your church family, and for all who will be lonely this Christmas.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Clarke French, *Rector*

from the Rector

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Directory update: Please mark the change in your directory.

Frances DeHart's address: Brookdale, 2230 Farmington Drive, Chapel Hill, NC 27517

Summary of Vestry minutes

AT ITS REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING ON **October 20** THE VESTRY:

- Heard the Rector's report, including: There are a number of initiatives underway, including Sunday School take home materials and a video Christmas pageant and Evening Prayer will be offered most days during Advent. The address of the website will soon change from chfepiscopal.org to **holyfamilych.org** and staff will be given new email addresses. The Diocesan Convention will be held in two parts. The first part will be in November and held online. The second part will be in March and in person. Every Member Canvass is going well, similar to previous years. There will be live Zoom services on the first Sunday of Advent, November 29, and the first Sunday of Christmas, December 27.
- Financial Report: The financial numbers through August and for the year to date are in good shape with receipts greater than expenses. The Vestry discussed the auditor's recommendation that an unrestricted reserve fund be established for emergencies. Currently an amount of \$90,000 to \$110,000 is being followed informally for an unrestricted reserve fund and the Vestry agreed this seemed appropriate. A motion to formally establish an unrestricted reserve fund of \$90,000-\$110,000 was passed by the Vestry.
- Ratification of Ordination Endorsement for the Rev. Joe Sroka. Because of the difficulty of obtaining signatures on a document during this time, vestry members provided emails endorsing this ordination and were printed and sent to the Diocese. The endorsement for the ordination of Joe Sroka passed unanimously.
- Bylaw Changes (second reading). The proposed changes in the bylaws adopted in September required a second reading. The bylaws adopted in September were unanimously approved.
- \$10,000 Donation Allocation: The rector reported that a parishioner has made a \$10,000 donation to be used for Outreach or discretionary purposes. The Rector proposed allocating \$7,000 of the donation to the YMCA safe learning center established at University United Methodist Church and the remaining \$3,000 divided equally between Holy Family community emergency fund and the Outreach Commission's emergency fund. A motion was made to adopt the allocations and passed unanimously.
- Formation of the 2021 Vestry Nomination Committee: Kim Gotwals and Sabrina Powell will serve on the committee to recruit nominees for the 2021 Vestry election. The Rector and the Senior Warden will each nominate one person to fill the remaining two positions on the committee.

Commission Meetings in December:

Outreach Commission will meet Wednesday, December 9, 7:00 p.m.

Finance Commission will meet Tuesday, December 15, 6:00 p.m.

Vestry will meet Tuesday, December 15, 7:00 p.m.



Small Groups at Church of the Holy Family

This summer, a group of lay leaders from Holy Family, Saint Matthew's (Hillsborough) and Good Shepherd (Asheboro) gathered for "Birds of the Air," a lay leadership training group, led by The Rev. Robert Fruewirth (Rector, Saint Matthew's) and Angela Compton Nelson, to discern what ministry might look like in our unique time. The result from this time of prayer and Scripture study are several small groups that will gather members of the parish around a common practice or discipline of the Christian life, for the sake of growing in friendship with God and one another. The goal of each group is common, but its focus is particular and was created by each group's leadership. These groups will begin this Advent with another on the horizon in 2021. For questions about small groups, or for help finding the right group for you, contact Angela (angela@holyfamilych.org) or the leaders listed for each group below.

Prayer and Contemplative Walking

Leaders: Ann Collins (annmillercollins@gmail.com) and Etienne Zantop (ezantop91@gmail.com)

Gathering Day/Time: First and Third Thursdays of the month @ 2-3:15PM, beginning 12/3

Location: Trails around Chapel Hill (hiking is low to moderate difficulty; all hiking abilities welcome, as the trails will have accessible trailheads)

Description: This group gathers for (socially-distant) walks and contemplative prayer with the aim of discovering a deeper sense of belonging to God, one another, and God's good creation. Beginning with prayerful attention to Scripture through listening and silence, this group will take time to savor Psalms and seasonal prayers from the lectionary cycle, take a 30-minute hike, and regather to share from their lives as each member is comfortable and to respond in prayer for one another. This group wants to fall deeper in love with serving Jesus Christ in the beauty of the ordinary day. Since this group will meet in person, the group will remain small through the Covid-19 pandemic.

Listening to God in the Lives of Others

Leaders: Lisette Bolduc and Peter Van Inwagen

Gathering day and time: TBA

Location: Zoom (Link TBA via Small Group E-Newsletter)

Description: This group begins from the assumption that none of us discerns, interprets, or journeys through the life of faith alone. The community of God's faithful people helps us make sense of the lives we have been given, receive them as a gift, and engage in mutual care for each other. To that end, this group offers a space for members to share stories from their own lives and to listen to those of their fellows, so that in hearing from one another, listening with intention, and praying together, we might discern and come to recognize the work of God in our own and one another's lives.

Praying for One Another with Morning Prayer

Leader: Bryan Dougan (bmdougan@gmail.com)

Day and Time: Thursdays @ 9:30AM in Advent (except for Christmas Eve), with a discussion about January to follow

Location: Zoom (Link TBA via Small Group E-Newsletter)

Description: This group will grow in community and friendship by meeting together weekly (first in Advent) to share their lives and their prayers before praying the morning office from *The Book of Common Prayer*. Particular attention will be given to members' praying for one another as well as the concerns of the church and the world within the context of the morning office. Time for prayer will be followed by a short time of fellowship and connection.

Christian Education for Children and Youth

Angela Nelson, Minister of Christian Education (angela@holyfamilych.org)

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Advent Kits: Wreaths, Candles, and Stars

Advent wreath materials including wreaths, candles, devotionals, and Christmas stars, are available for pick up in the Narthex in advance of the Thanksgiving holiday and are marked with the household surnames of those who reserved wreaths in advance. We have a few remaining, so if you would like to claim one, please fill out the reservation form on the Facebook Bulletin Board.

Our Advent wreaths have been made for our households this year by Mike Smith, from felled willow oak, and pine trees in the Smith yard. Please join me in thanking Mike Smith for the incredible work that went into preparing these materials—sanding, finishing, and oiling--for the households of the parish.

The Feast of Saint Nicholas, December 6th

Materials for households are available when you pick up the Advent kits above. For all members of the parish, we invite your prayers and thanksgivings for the young people in our parish. When you come to pick up your Advent wreaths, be sure to pick up a gold wooden coin, a reminder from the story of Saint Nicholas, marked with the name of a young person in the parish. Then, commit to praying for that young person over the seasons of Advent and Christmas. Some who have done this in the past enjoy writing a letter to let the young person know that you are praying for them. If that feels like too much, your prayers are enough. Cards with the “Prayer for Children” found in the *Book of Common Prayer* will be printed and available to aid your prayers.

Spring Sunday School kits

At the end of December, we will have open-ended materials for Spring Sunday School lessons and items needed for special events available for pickup, including materials for an observance of Three Kings Day, Baptism of our Lord, Candlemas, and preparation for Lent. You do not need to reserve these in advance, but please use the sign out sheet to check out your materials. Pick up a few new books from the check-out library also in the Narthex to refresh your shelves for the liturgical events that mark the spring.

Potential Offering: Weekday Godly Play at Home

If you have children in elementary or preschool learning at home this spring, would you take a moment to connect with us and let us know if you have interest in signing your child up for a regular weekday Godly Play lesson? In your message (angela@holyfamilych.org or ndpowell12@gmail.com) please include interest levels, possible days, and times during the day that might work for you. We would like to assess the interest in offering a mid-week Godly Play and story time.

***The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe* audio recording**

Join us to hear the story of Narnia where it is “always winter and never Christmas” until Aslan returns and is on the move in the land. Several members of our parish will be reading C.S. Lewis’s greatly beloved novel for children (and adults!), *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*. Chapters will be available for listening on SoundCloud and sent out in bi-weekly Advent emails ala a serial radio program. Please join us for the fun.

Art Workshop #2 with Ann Collins

In November our Episcopal Youth Community welcomed Gracie Morbitzer, of *Modern Saints by Gracie*, who led us in an art workshop focused upon the saints. In December, we host our parish’s very own Ann Collins for a discussion of art, time, and the Christian liturgical year. You won’t want to miss this beautiful and thoughtful opportunity to ask the question “if all time truly belongs to God, what does that mean for *this* time?” Students can prepare by picking up EYC art kits from the Narthex at Holy Family (grocery bags), gessoing a page in their prayer books in advance of our meeting, and making sure they have a brush, felt tip black pen, and simple palette of acrylic paints.

ADVENT/CHRISTMAS OUTREACH

During this holiday giving season please consider making a donation (online at the parish website or by check) to the Advent/Christmas Outreach Fund as an alternative gift for your loved ones. All donations to this fund will be divided among three important ministries: ChildReach Africa, a long-time mission partner with CHF based in Uganda, offers education to young children and marketable skills training and education to their mothers and has recently expanded into farming; Episcopal Farmworker Ministry is a joint ministry of our diocese and the Diocese of East Carolina serving the needs of migrant and seasonal farmworkers in eastern North Carolina; and the Rio Grande Borderlands Ministries of the Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande offers a compassionate response to the needs of people living in the borderlands of New Mexico and far western Texas. They are dedicated to understanding and identifying needs and implementing solutions. Food, clothing, blankets, habitat, education, medical and legal assistance are just some of the needs addressed.

Thank you for taking part in Holy Family's long-held tradition of reaching out to our neighbors – near and far – in love during Advent and Christmas!

Here are some recent outlays made by the Outreach Commission on behalf of the parish. They include an additional \$1,500 the vestry recently tithed to Outreach:

- **\$500** Episcopal Farmworker Ministry annual Christmas drive-through party on Dec 12 for 400 kids. They will receive coats, gloves, food, and treats
- **\$500** Meals for Molas lunch program to supplement sales of coffee and chocolate
- **\$500** (pending) St. Ambrose Episcopal Church (Raleigh) for its environmental justice ministry and/or to assist with its struggle with the Downtown South development
- **\$300** The Presiding Bishop Michael Curry is promoting church-wide the 1000 Days of Love campaign to support this Episcopal Relief and Development initiative for global programs to improve the lives of young children
- **\$500** IFC Holiday Meals. This money had been set aside in our budget for grocery cards for Clarke and Sarah to distribute as needed and was re-assigned to a similar use since Covid19 disrupted the original intent
- **\$250** Food for the Hungry for hurricane relief in Guatemala and Nicaragua (former parishioner Karen Calani and her husband Rodolfo work for this organization).

Share a Holiday Meal

It's not too late...to sponsor a **Holiday Meal** for a local family who would not otherwise have a turkey or ham with "the fixings" to cook for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Your \$25 contribution will cover one of the holidays for a family; \$50 will cover both holidays. Please either send a check made out to IFC with "Holiday Meal" in the memo to 100 W. Rosemary St, CH, 27516 or contribute online at www.ifcweb.org.

Coffee and Chocolate Arrive!

The Meals For Molas coffee and chocolate sales will be distributed Sunday, December 13, and Sunday, December 20. Please plan on coming by the upper (Parish Hall) parking lot between 11:45 a.m. and 12:45 p.m., and bring payment (check or credit card) at that time. You will not need to get out of your car - but please wear a mask.

There will also be a small amount of chocolates available for last minute purchase if you did not order enough.

Good News to Report

Church of the Holy Family is part of the faith-based Orange County Bail/Bond Justice Project formed in early 2019. OCBBJ has some good news to report associated with two main goals: (1) to work to change unjust bail practices in Orange County (they do this by training and organizing volunteers to observe and document what is happening in court at first appearance hearings when judges set bail); (2) to provide assistance to people who cannot afford to pay their bail. This is from the organization's quarterly report in October 2020:

Thanks to the work of reform-minded Orange County criminal justice stakeholders and non-profits (including OCBBJ), and the measures taken to address COVID-19, there has been substantial progress made on our high priority recommendations, leading to a drastic reduction in detention this year. According to the Orange County Criminal Justice Resources Department, comparing the period of August 15- September 15, 2019 with the same period this year, there has been a 68% reduction in pretrial individuals entering the Orange County detention center. Given that many of these new measures were implemented during the COVID pandemic, we need to ensure that the progress made-to-date is sustained after the COVID pandemic crisis subsides, and that more reform steps are taken.

How much money you have shouldn't determine whether you sit in jail.

Visit their website for more information on how you can help:
www.ocbailbondjustice.org

My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.

—Mark 11:17

Your prayers are invited for the people of our parish and of all nations,
and for the extension and establishment of the kingdom of God.

Almighty and everliving God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth, hear our prayers for this parish family. Strengthen the faithful, arouse the careless, and restore the penitent. Grant us all things necessary for our common life, and bring us all to be of one heart and mind within your holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*

house of prayer

Intercessory Prayers on behalf of specific individuals or groups can be recorded in the notebook kept on a lectern in the Narthex. Intercessions are offered at Morning and Evening Prayer during the week. To have a prayer included in the parish prayer list, please call the church office: 919-942-3108.

The e-mail listserv is a means of inviting the community to join in praying for particular concerns or thanksgivings. To make a prayer request in this way, contact either the Rev. Clarke French (cfrench@chfnc.net) or the Rev. Sarah Ball-Damberg (sballdamberg@chfnc.net).

Confidential requests for prayer may be made directly to one of the clergy.

This month, please pray for:

- **The victims** and perpetrators of violence, and the victims of war and natural disasters.
- **Those who lead the nation**, especially Donald Trump, our President, and Roy Cooper, our Governor. Please pray that they may serve justice, and promote equality and peace.
- **Those who risk their lives** in the service of their country, especially members of the armed forces and the diplomatic corps.
- **Our sick, homebound, and recovering**, especially Lee House, Dave Worster, Lisa Worster, Dick Forbis, Bill and Mary Harrison, Mary Hunter, Marie Carotenuto, George Bloomer, Sara Smith, Aileen Womark-Montes, Celia Lata, Mary Anne Kendall, Molly Summerlin, Carolyn Parker, and Cynthia Baker.
- **Those who have died.**

- **Those expecting children**, especially Michelle Sroka.

- **Those in any need or trouble**, especially Billy Ray, James, and Ray in prison; Eddie on Death Row; incarcerated men and staff of Orange Correctional Center and those recently re-entering society from prison.

- **Our bishops**, The Most Rev. Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury; The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry, Presiding Bishop; the Rt. Rev. Samuel Rodman, Bishop of North Carolina; the Rt. Rev. Anne Hodges-Copple, Bishop Suffragan of North Carolina.

- **Our seminaries**, especially the University of the South, Sewanee, the Anglican Episcopal House of Studies at the Duke Divinity School, and the Seminary of the Southwest.

- **Our mission partners**, Gyani Thapa in Nepal (Kirtipur Christian Fellowship), Catherine Piwang in Uganda (ChildReach Africa), and Karen Calani in Guatemala (Food for the Hungry).

- **L'École de Notre Dame** in Molas, Haiti, its students, teachers, and staff, and priest-in-charge Père Jean Jonas Laborde.

- **The Augustine Literacy Project** students, tutors, staff, and board members.

- **Our clergy**: Clarke, Sarah, and Paula.

- **The staff of our parish**: Tom, Gary, Julie, Bill, Angela, and Nicole.

Family Affairs

The Church of the Holy Family (Episcopal)
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Chapel Hill, NC 27517
(919)942-3108

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Comings and goings

*The Lord shall watch
over your going out
and your coming in,
from this time forth for
evermore.*

—Psalm 121:8

New Address:

The George Family, 3007 Buckingham Road, Durham, NC 27707

Canonical Crime Squad will meet via Zoom on Monday, December 14, at 7:00 p.m., to discuss Maan Meyers' "The Dutchman's Dilemma." Pieter Tonneman was a successful New York merchant in 1675, but his previous occupation as sheriff under both the Dutch and English means that he gets pulled into a bizarre mutilation case that turns into murder. Racquel, ostracized by the small Jewish community for marrying outside the faith, finds herself entangled in her husband's investigation. Join the Canonical Crime Squad for a journey back to Old New York. Zoom link will be available in the weekly email Saturday, December 12.