

THE SAN JOAQUIN ANGLICAN

December 2011

Volume 1, Issue 1



ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF SAN JOAQUIN

www.dioceseofsanjoaquin.net

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ANGLICAN CHURCH
IN
NORTH AMERICA

Diocesan Calendar of Events

December 3rd

*Advent Clergy Quiet Day at St. Columba's, Fresno—All Day

December 10th

*St. Mark's, Shafter Ordination of Randy Messick—11:00 AM

December 13th

*Rural Deans Meeting— 11:00 AM

December 17th

*Diocesan Council @ Diocesan House— 10:00 AM

* St. Matthias, Oakdale Ordination of John Roberts—2:00 PM

December 23rd

* Diocesan Offices closed until 12/27

The Bishop's Corner

The Right Reverend Eric Vawter Menees

To all the faithful in the Diocese of San Joaquin, this is the first edition of the San Joaquin Anglican and it is a pleasure to be writing the first of what will certainly be a number of articles in future editions of this newsletter. It is being sent out to the diocese electronically but I am asking each congregation to make hard copies to be made available to those who do not have computers or printers or just have a hard time with electronic newsletters!

How appropriate it is to be writing this first article on the first week of the new church year—the first week of Advent. I cannot imagine a season in the church calendar where we are more out of step with the rest of the world.

The world has marked the “Christmas Season” as that shopping period between Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve. Black Friday was the lead story in all the news casts especially the story of the woman who used pepper spray in order to get what she felt belonged to her.

As I watched the newscasts that Friday evening I prayed for the Day when that many people would camp outside of our churches in order to have the best seat possible for our Midnight Candle Mass. Of course, rather than using pepper spray the excited worshipers would, in humility, offer their key positions to others as a way of encouraging them to meet the Incarnate Lord.

But alas I know that s only a dream for the present. Advent is a time of waiting and I will wait upon the Lord for him to inspire and challenge non-believers to encounter him in one of Christmas Services.

(continued on pg. 2)

Bishop's Schedule

December 3rd

Advent Clergy Quiet Day

December 4th

Pastoral Visit at St. Nicholas, Atwater.

December 10th

Ordination to the Priesthood for Randy Messick at St. Mark's, Shafter

December 11th

Pastoral Visit to Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe.

December 17th

Ordination to the Priesthood for John Roberts at St. Matthias, Oakdale

December 18th

Pastoral Visit to St. James Cathedral

December 24th

Christmas Eve Services at St. James Cathedral

December 31st

New Years Sensible Celebration at ECCO

The Bishop's Corner

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In the meantime Jesus invites us to **watch** and **wait** and **pray**! During this Season of Advent we **watch** out for the Second Coming of Christ and prepare to stand in the presence of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords!

Ever since the first century preachers have been predicting the day and hour of Jesus' return—despite Jesus' direct statement that... ***“But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.”*** (Mark 13:32 ESV) People like Harold Camping who recently predicted the 2nd Coming on May 21st & then October 21st has raised the level of skepticism to new heights among nonbelievers. As believers we need to watch with the expectancy of seeing Christ descend from the clouds today and live for his return tomorrow.

Advent teaches us to **wait** upon the Lord—lighting our Advent Candles and singing our expectant hymns... but that does not mean that we are passive in our waiting. Just the opposite for while we wait we are to work. On Christ the King Sunday the gospel admonished us to feed the hungry, cloth the naked and visit the sick and imprisoned. We do these things as Christians not because we want to earn anything from the Lord but simply because we want to respond to his love for us.

Advent teaches us to **pray**. As we wait we are active in our love of neighbor and active in our communication with our Heavenly Father. What a wonderful opportunity this is to re-double our efforts to take time alone and with others in prayer. What a terrific time for families to gather nightly to read the Advent prophecies in Scripture, to light the Family Advent Wreath and to intentionally share our faith within the family. What a wonderful time to gather with our brothers and sisters from church and form small prayer groups to support one another and hold each other accountable in our life in Christ.

Anyway you cut it Advent is an exciting time in the life of the Church and I pray each and everyone of you a Blessed Season of Advent!

Announcements

Anglican 4th Day-

The Anglican 4th Day Movement in our Diocese is alive and growing. We are eager to spread the word about this ministry which so enriches one's life with Christ by providing both practical and powerful tools that equip us to be His disciples in this world. Please come join us!!!!

Anglican 4th Day #3 – will take place August 2-5 with the theme of “Christ Lives In You” – Galatians 2:20

Watch for more information to come in following issues of the Anglican.

Advent Lessons & Carols—

All are invited to St. John's, Stockton, to participate in a special service of Lessons & Carols on 12/18 @ 4:00 PM.

Winter Family of God Camp @ ECCO

Jan. 6-8. Register Now and join the fun!
www.ECCOYosemite.org or 559-683-8162

Food for Thought

Missionaries from the Diocese of San Joaquin are making serious headway in bringing the lost and alone into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Fr. Martin Bunsy's ministry in Laos is beginning to tip the scales in that Communist government towards allowing Christianity to be openly practiced and observed!

God has called Fr. Bunsy to a ministry in his home country of Laos. Where has God called you to ministry? All believing Christians are called by God to serve... some locally and some abroad. Where is God calling you to serve and how are you doing in responding to that call?

If, God is not calling you to the mission field perhaps he is calling you to be a mission sender rather than a missionary. Every missionary needs a team of supporters back home providing logistic, financial, spiritual and emotional support. Please pray on how you might be called to the mission field. For more information contact the Diocesan Mission Board and Fr. Derek Thomason the Chair.

Parish Report

Each month a different parish will be highlighted in the San Joaquin Anglican. This month we look at All Saint's in Bakersfield. All Saint's has a number of terrific things going on, not least of which they are supporting Fr. Don Cleave and his family as they set out to plant not one but two new congregations on the coast in San Luis Obispo and Cambria.

On November 5th All Saints' held a Gala celebrating the ministries at All Saints, one of which is called the Barnabas Ministry:

"When he (Barnabas) arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts." Acts 11:23

"...Barnabas (which means son of encouragement)
Acts 4:36

The Barnabas Ministry is one of prayer and encouragement. An adult "Barnabas" prays for one of our kids for a portion of the school year. Besides daily prayer the Barnabas sends at least one encouraging card or note a month, remembers their youth at holidays, special events, and their birthdays. We encourage the youth to write their Barnabas with prayer requests, and stress writing thank you notes...our Barnabas prayers love hearing from their kids. All of this is done in secret which adds fun and mystery to the entire period of time until the unveiling in May when the youth finds out who their special prayer partner has been. This ministry has been a blessing to both adults and our youth. We even have prior 'youth' as Barnabas' after they've gotten older! A real testament to the meaning and value of this ministry.

News from St. Martin of Tours and St. James in Fresno

On All Saint's Sunday Fr. Sam Vongsanit at St. Martin of Tours baptized several adults during the Sunday morning Service. This is one of the characteristics of the Anglican Church in North America—adult converts!

Recently Archbishop Duncan stated, "According to the data submitted in the Annual Parochial Reports there were, in the year 2010, 987 baptisms of adults over thirty, 424 baptisms of young people aged sixteen to thirty, and 1647 baptisms of children in the ACNA dioceses, not including the congregations of our Ministry Partners. What is so stunning about this data is that the number of baptisms of those 16 and older is almost equal to the number of children baptized. What this says is that we are reaching adolescents and adults who have never known Christ, never been part of a church. This is to reach North America with the transforming love of Jesus Christ, one sign among many that something quite extraordinary is unfolding."

St. Martin's is following in the trend of ACNA and so is much of the Diocese... On December 18th three adults are scheduled for baptism in the Cathedral's new immersion baptismal font!

Communications in the Diocese of San Joaquin

Bishop Menees has made it a priority to communicate with the diocese—this first edition of The San Joaquin Anglican is an example.

In addition lots of additions are being added to the Diocesan Website (dioceseofsanjoaquin.net). Be sure to check it out for up-to-date information on news & events in the diocese.

Bishop Menees is putting out a weekly teaching known as "The Bishop's Note" along with a log of his weekly activities known as the "The Bishop's Log."

Did you know we have a blog site dedicated to news & events?
sanjoaquinsoundings.blogspot.com

Beloved in the Lord:

May the Grace and Peace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ be yours in abundance. We are two-and-one-half years into our life as the North American Province. The word I use most frequently to describe what God has done with our kingdom efforts is favor. Reminiscent of the words the angel Gabriel speaks to the Virgin Mary, we have been highly favored in virtually every aspect of our life.

We have dioceses from coast to coast and from the Arctic Circle to the Caribbean. We have increased from 700 congregations to over 1000. We called for 1000 church plants, and already there are nearly 200. (And remember that church plants increase geometrically!) Mission partnerships abound with Anglicans and other Christians at home and abroad. Faithful worship texts in the great Prayer Book tradition are beginning to appear. Ecumenical dialogues have been opened, almost always at the request of others, those who see us as their potential allies in promoting Christian orthodoxy and strengthening a voice in the public square. Giving has matched the need. Read what follows in this report and join me in gratitude and thanksgiving. The challenges ahead have to do with captivating disciples, multiplying congregations and transforming communities. These three challenges will give us focus for Assembly 2012, where we propose to gather the whole Church in 2012, for the first time since Bedford/Plano in 2009. Leaders will come from all over the Province and all over the world. This gathering will give us evidence of the strides in these areas of our day in and day out labors at every level of Church life.

Finally, we have the challenge of stewardship in these very difficult economic times. As we have had God's favor, so we need yours. My conviction is that there is no investment any one of us can make where dollars are better stretched or the product more effective for life transformation than in what you give to the Anglican Church in North America.

Thanks for your part in the movement these pages chronicle.

*The Most Rev. Robert Duncan
Archbishop and Primate,*

The Discipline of Worship by Fr. Dennis Kelly

The Seasons of Advent & Christmas are filled with such wonderful and awesome worship... but it begs the question: What is Worship. "To worship is to get caught up in the acknowledgment of God," said Father Duane Thibeu. To worship is to touch reality, to break into the Shekinah of God. Worship is the human response to the divine initiative. Forms, rituals, and liturgies do not produce worship. They are tools available to us to enhance our worship.

Importance of Worship. If the Lord is to be the Lord in our lives, then worship must have its priority in our lives. True service comes out of true worship. Worship provides a group-sized firehose which the same number of individuals, worshipping apart, cannot provide. Worship should place us before God, so that he can transform us.

Preparing for worship. Worship requires us to gather with a holy expectancy. Cultivating holy expectancy consists in our practicing the presence of God on a daily basis. We must live throughout the week as an heir to the Kingdom of God. We must listen to and obey God. It would be well to arrive 10 minutes before the service to open oneself up before the Lord, to lift up those who will be conducting the worship, and to otherwise lift up those who need it.

Who Is the Leader? Human leadership is necessary and must not be shy. Yet, Jesus is the leader worship because he is present by his Holy Spirit to teach, guide, rebuke, and comfort. Whatever he teaches he gives power to do: healings should be common within the context of worship.

Other Suggestions. Vary your worship experiences (Holy Eucharist, Daily Offices, a Prayer and Praise Meeting etc.). Go to bed on time the night before worship. Be yielded to being gathered in the power of the Lord. Cultivate a holy dependency on God.

The San Joaquin Anglican is published monthly by The Anglican Diocese of San Joaquin, California.

Submissions will be accepted for consideration anytime; Contributions must be received by the 20th of the month for possible inclusion in the newsletter in the following month.

Please send these to june@sjoaquin.net

Thank you!