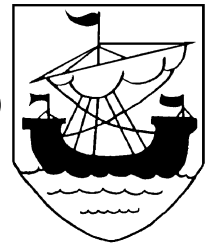


# Canterbury Tales



The Newsletter of St. Anselm's Church, Lafayette, California

December, 2022

## *From The Interim Rector*

### **HAPPY NEW YEAR! The Seasons of Advent and Christmas**

Happy New Year! That may seem to you an unusual thing to say at the beginning of December and not the end. Most of us save such an expression for January 1st. The Church year, however, unfolds in a different way, not with parties and celebration but with quiet anticipation. Like the secular year, it is marked by seasons and days of special interest. But instead of being driven by the rotation of the earth around the sun, the Christian calendar has its origins in the liturgical observances of Judaism, particularly as they relate to the events of Jesus in salvation history. Importantly, we experience the Church in two ways. First, we mark time historically, as we remember the events of Jesus' birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension, as well as the birth of the Church. Second, we live the Church year as a mystery through which we experience the events of salvation history as if we are a part of them. Just as in the Eucharist the Holy Spirit makes present events past and yet to come (re-mem-bering), so does our observance of the Church year.

Although the history and development of the Christian calendar are complex at best, the year itself is relatively simple. Just as the earth moves through a cycle of seasons, so does the Church year. We mark time and the cycle of Christian life by designated periods of waiting and preparation, penitence, celebration and mission.

The Christian year revolves around two observances. The first is the Feast of the Incarnation (Christmas). This fixed date (December 25th) determines the first day of the Church year (the first Sunday of Advent). That day is always the fourth Sunday before Christmas. The Feast of the Incarnation dictates the seasons of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany. The second observance is the celebration of Easter, a feast that moves around each year because it is set by the lunar calendar. That date is determined by the first full moon after March 21st. Easter Day is the first Sunday after the first full moon after that date. It was the celebration of Easter that generated the Christian calendar as we now know it, and was the first annual Christian observance. Easter Day dictates the season of Lent and the Feast of Pentecost.

That we might express outwardly what we believe we are doing inwardly and spiritually, seasons are indicated by liturgical color (with vestments, for example) and decor. They are also marked by changes in Scripture readings, music, and the Eucharistic Prayer. The seasons remind us that we are always moving through death and life, crucifixion and resurrection, and that we constantly end and begin again.

***Advent -- "Let every heart prepare him room..."***

The season of Advent begins the Church year on the fourth Sunday before Christmas, and is marked by the colors purple and blue. The word

*(continued on page 3)*

## *Anselm's Angels*

"Those who are happiest are those who do the most for others."

- Booker T. Washington

A huge thank you to **Eva Woo Slavitt** for all the shopping and volunteer coordination that made this year's hosting Winter Nights a tremendous success! Thank you to the many volunteers who helped: **Jeff Boero, Toni Bozym, Anne Brown, Linda May Cooney, Neva Flaherty, Angela Lucas, Peg Matson, Sati Mokherjee, Marian Mulkey, Vicki Pappas, Sally Roberts, Greg Rodolari, Denise Slavitt, and Sara Swimmer & family.** Special thanks to **Holly Higgins** and **Michael Lane Preschool** for their kindness and sharing the space with our guests.

Thank you to **Paul Witkay** and members of the Stewardship Commission for hosting the first stewardship breakfast since 2019! We enjoyed delicious quiche, sausage and pancakes thanks to: **Marty Fischer, John Powers** and **Sheila Wiegand.** Special thanks to **Sylvia Williams** for her support and **Evan Powers** for clean up duty.

**Chris Young** led a very successful Work Party on November 19th. Thank you to everyone who responded cheerfully to help with the many property tasks that needed attention: **Marty Fischer, Pam Green, Jon Martin, Peg Matson, Alex McDonald, Doug Merrill, Evan Powers, John Powers, Julie Rinkenberger, Dimitri Seletzky, Lee Seletzky, Allen Zhang** and **JP Zhang.**



### Joyful Greetings from Michael Lane Preschool!

With a short 3 weeks between our Thanksgiving Vacation and our Winter Break, we are certainly packing in lots of FUN!

Our current theme is Winter which includes weather, holidays, and clothing. The children are making a special holiday gift and card for their families, and many of our parent volunteers are bringing in special crafts and activities that they enjoy celebrating at home.

The rain has been very welcome these past few weeks, and the children come to school bundled in their jackets and boots. Rain walks, collecting water, and listening to the rain have been some favorite activities. Letting the children literally run in circles in Jackson Hall is an amazing gift for all of us on a rainy day!

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas!

Warmly,  
Holly Higgins, Director

### Coffee Hosts Needed

For those folks who have been attending in-person services, we have resumed holding coffee hour inside Jackson Hall. No huddling together for warmth in the courtyard this winter! We are in need of volunteers to host coffee hour for the first half of 2023. If you are willing to help out, please go to SignUp Genius and select a date or dates that will work for you.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c044bada722a2f85-coffee>

You may also contact Sylvia Williams at [sw94565@yahoo.com](mailto:sw94565@yahoo.com) or 925-586-0730 to reserve a date.

Thank you!

### Christmas Poinsettias

To donate poinsettias (in memory of a loved one, in honor of someone or in thanksgiving) to decorate our sanctuary during the Christmas season, please email Cathy Witkay with the desired dedication no later than Monday, December 19th.

The cost is \$15.00 per plant and checks should be made payable to the St. Anselm's Altar Guild. Please note, the Altar Guild is unable to accept Venmo payments.

### Vestry Meeting Updates

At the November 21 Vestry meeting our primary discussion items included:

- 1) A discussion with Denise Obando, Diocesan Canon for Transition Ministries, about expected next steps in our Rector search.
- 2) A review of quarterly financial reports and a preliminary update on this year's stewardship campaign.
- 3) A decision, building upon an informational session held on November 14, to seek a buyout of the Verizon cell tower lease.
- 4) A brief discussion of budgeted outreach spending for 2022, with a decision to forego Outreach Sunday this year and to allocate outreach contributions in the same proportions used in 2021.



*Canterbury Tales* is the monthly newsletter of

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Editor: Cathy S. Witkay

In-Person & Virtual Sunday Service:  
9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

St. Anselm's Staff  
The Rev. Kathy Trapani, Interim Rector  
The Rev. Naomi Chamberlain-Harris, Deacon  
Cathy Witkay, Office Manager

“advent” means “coming,” and we use the season of Advent to prepare for the birth of Jesus at Christmas. We also use the time to remember and prepare for the fulfillment of Christ’s promise to return in power and glory at the end of time.

Advent, then, is a time of waiting and joyful anticipation. As we move deeper into the darkness of winter, we are reminded through symbols like the Advent wreath that the light of Christ is coming into and is already present in a dark and broken world, a light that cannot be either diminished or extinguished.

### *Christmas – “Joy to the world...”*

With the liturgical color of white, the Feast of the Incarnation celebrates the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem, when God broke into human history by taking on human flesh (the meaning of “incarnation”). Indeed, the Incarnation is at the absolute center of the Christian faith. Appropriately, the Gospel reading for this day is either Luke’s story of Jesus’ birth at Bethlehem or the Prologue to the Gospel of John (the Word becomes flesh).

Christmas is always celebrated on December 25th, although this date was not adopted until the fourth century. The season lasts for twelve days, beginning on Christmas Day, ending with the Feast of the Epiphany on January 6th.

I wish you a blessed Advent and a joyful Christmas, Kathy+



### *The Advent Wreath*

*Our King and Savior now draws near;  
Come let us adore him!*

When you come to church during the season of Advent, you will undoubtedly notice the Advent wreath which adorns our sanctuary. You may also have an Advent wreath at home. Have you ever wondered what is the meaning and symbolism behind it?

There are many Advent customs and traditions in the Church that help us to prepare for the coming of our Lord. One of these is the Advent wreath. Our Lord used simple, ordinary things to reveal Himself to us: a manger, a maiden, bread and wine. So, we use simple things like evergreen, ribbon, candles and pinecones to make the wreath that will help us to wait and prepare. The Advent wreath helps us to remember that this is a time to slow down, be quiet and make ready our hearts for our Lord and King to be born in us.

The Advent wreath is a circle, a symbol of eternity, just as God is eternal. God was then, is now and always will be. In the same way, we know that Christ was born in the past, is born again in the present, and will come again. We hold all of these things as one in this circle of eternity, and celebrate it at Christmas.

The wreath is made of evergreen, an ancient symbol of immortality. The evergreen is also a sign of life and growth, even in the dead of winter.

Seeds carry life from one generation to another. Jesus used seeds to explain the Kingdom of God and the planting and growth of God’s Word in our hearts. When the pinecones open and spill their seeds in the warmth of our homes, we are reminded of Good News that takes root in and bears fruit, so that we might scatter the seeds of God’s kingdom wherever we go.

Four tall candles, three purple and one pink, represent the four Sundays of the Advent season. Each week one more candle is lit. So, as we move deeper into the darkness of winter, the Advent wreath becomes increasingly brighter with the light of Christ that is coming into the world. Each candle has been given a specific meaning:

The first candle has been called the Prophecy Candle, announcing the period of waiting. Remember that the prophets announced the coming of the Lord, and that we should prepare his way.

The second is the Bethlehem Candle, symbolic of the preparation being made to receive and cradle the Christ child.

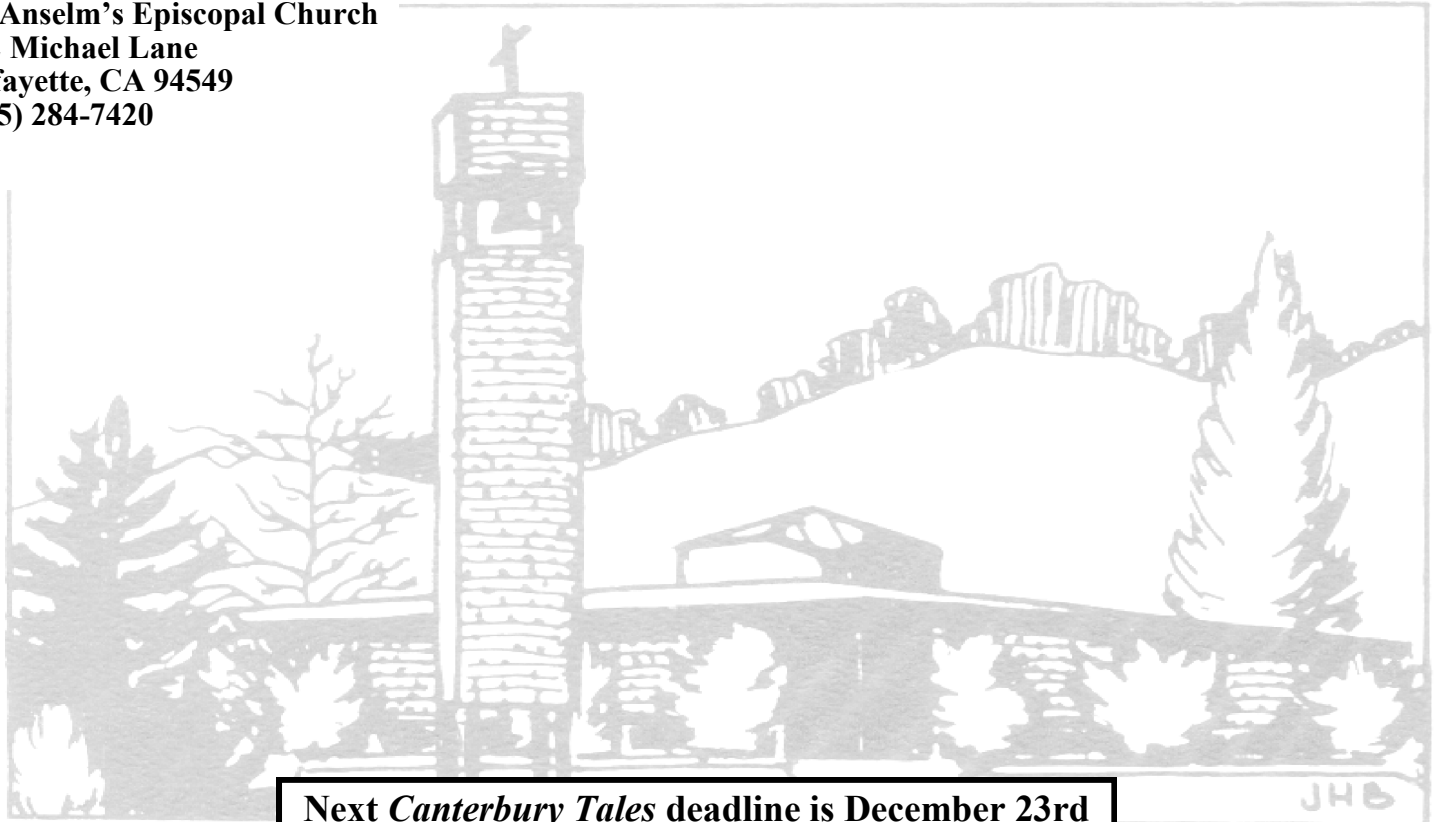
The third (pink) is the Shepherds’ Candle, recalling the sharing of Christ. The shepherds received the good news of the birth of the Messiah, and made known what had been told them by the angels. The pink (gaudete) candle is also called the “rejoice” candle.

The fourth is the Angels’ Candle of love and the second coming of Christ.

In the center of the wreath is a white Christ Candle, to be lighted on Christmas Eve.

Often, a purple or blue ribbon is placed on the wreath. Purple (and, more recently, blue) is the traditional color for periods of watching and preparation. The ribbon reminds us that we are preparing for the birth of the king of Kings.

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**Next *Canterbury Tales* deadline is December 23rd**

**December 1st and each Thursday in December, Evening Bible Study** will meet via Zoom at 7:00 PM. To be invited, email Deacon Naomi at [orchidsnrch@yahoo.com](mailto:orchidsnrch@yahoo.com).

**December 4th -- Cancer Support Group** will meet via Zoom at 11:30 AM. To be invited, email Julie Rinkenberger at [jrjpmaggie@hotmail.com](mailto:jrjpmaggie@hotmail.com).

**December 6th and each Tuesday in December — Morning Prayer** will be led by Deacon Naomi via Zoom at 9 AM. To be invited, email Deacon Naomi at [orchidsnrch@yahoo.com](mailto:orchidsnrch@yahoo.com).

**December 6th – Grief Support Group** will meet via Zoom at 12:00 noon. To be invited, email Deacon Naomi at [orchidsnrch@yahoo.com](mailto:orchidsnrch@yahoo.com).

**December 7th and each Wednesday in December, Rector Search Committee** will meet via Zoom at 7:00 PM.

**December 12th -- Vestry** will meet via Zoom at 7:00 PM. Vestry members will receive an email from Chris Young with the meeting link.

Merry  
Christmas & Happy  
New Year

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