



Saint Francis Journal

December, 2023



A Loving Community, Serving God's Kingdom



“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was one with God, and the Word was God...And the Word became flesh and lived among us.” John 1:1,14 NRSV

Baby Jesus.

Every December we have the season of Advent. Advent is the beginning of a new liturgical year of which we have three in the cycle which are year A, B, and C. This year we cycle into year B. Advent also signals the expectant coming of Jesus which we celebrate for four weeks before celebrating the birth of baby Jesus on Christmas Day. The divine Word from the very beginning to the human birth of Jesus or the Incarnation. The Incarnation is the word we use to describe Jesus, the Word made flesh. God made flesh.

God emptying themselves to become quite literally one with God's creation. This perfect God is born human in a great big mess in a barn. This God, born a nobody, only to end up saving us all from sin and death after experiencing what it means to be a human. To be born, live, get hurt, cry, laugh, be hungry, be full, die, and in between feel all the feels and everything else it meant to be human...except sin. As the book *Walking in Love: Episcopal Beliefs and Practices* puts it, “We understand sin to be separation from God, and so Jesus Christ, who was God Incarnate, could not be separated from himself.” (Scott Gunn and Melody

Shobe, *Walking in Love: Episcopal Beliefs and Practices*; Ohio, Forward Movement, 2018; pp.285-286)

Not everyone always felt that way, about how Jesus was God and Human. It is interesting, the different ideas of how Jesus is both God and Human. Early in the Church there were a lot of ideas concerning that make up of Jesus. There was: Adoptionism, where the human Jesus was adopted as God's son; Docetism, where Jesus was purely divine and only seemed to be human; Nestorianism, where Jesus had two distinct natures being God and human; and Monophysitism, where Jesus was again purely divine. (<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/glossary/incarnation/>)

So what do we believe as Episcopalians? Just take a look at your 1979 Book of Common Prayer on page 864. There you will find the “Definition of the Union of the Divine and Human Natures in the Person of Christ” as defined by the Council of Chalcedon in the year 451 CE. Where we can read in part, “truly God and truly man . . . in two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation;” Clearly what is being described is a mystery, and it is one in which we may not know exactly how the natures exist as the same time, but fully believe that they do. I say this, just in case you were wondering, so I wanted you to know about the Incarnation and where we

were on that subject as Episcopalians. I also wanted to point out that there is a lot of good information in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer (<https://www.bcponline.org/>) and the online Episcopal Church Dictionary (<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/glossary/>) and the book, *Walking in Love: Episcopal Beliefs and Practices*.

God's Peace,
Mitch+



VESTRY

Lisa Kraus, Senior Warden (2024)
Jeremy Cole, Junior Warden (2025)

Todd Lestage (2023)
Paul Streufert (2023)
Doug Clark (2024)
Nancy Earls (2024)
Claire Hodges (2025)
Gipsy Schneider (2025)
Jane Johnson, Clerk

CHURCH STAFF

The Very Rev. Mitch Tollett, Rector
Dr. Cameron Rose, Director of Music
Hailey Matthews, Children/Youth Director
Carol Lanthrum, Parish Administrator
Susan Kohler, Treasurer
Alberto Cruz, Sexton



Christmas Eve Schedule

Music Prelude: 3:30 pm
Christmas Pageant & Eucharist Service
4:00 pm

Pageant Practice
Dec. 3rd & 10th at 9:30am (instead of Sunday School)
Sign up in the hallway for parts

Newcomer's Dinner
Sat. Dec 2nd *5:30pm
Parish Hall

If you are new to St. Francis, or want to find out more about us, or you missed the last dinner, come spend time getting to know Fr. Mitch and other members . Call Kathy Clark at 512-988-1155

SERENDIPITY DINNER

Sat. Dec. 9th 6-8 pm
Barat's Home

Bring an appetizers/side/dessert



Christmas Day

Prayer Service*10am
Potluck Brunch*11 am
Ham & Turkey Provided



Sign up in hallway for sides & desserts



Women's Christmas Tea
Sun. Dec. 10th 2-4 pm
Gagliano's Home
Bring sweet or savory snack
Bring a friend!

\$10 Ornament for Crazy Ornament Exchange
Come even if you don't have one* There are extras*

Men's Turkey Smoke

Thanks, Men!!

Turkey was great!!

Thanks for all your hard work setting up the luncheon!



Conversation on Race
*Sun * Dec 17 * Noon
Adult Ed Room
Lunch Provided

Out-to-lunch Bunch
Tuesday. December
19th at 11:30a
Jalapeno Tree



Betty Taylor is 100 years old Dec. 22nd
Congratulations!!



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Penny Streufert (12/2)

Carole Barnes (12/6)

Ethan Hartman (12/12)

Paul Streufert (12/13)

Connie Wilson (12/14)

Edward Tabri (12/15)

Jeff Streeter (12/17)

Betty Taylor (12/22)

David Hood (12/26)

Dan Amy (12/26)

Julie Yeargain (12/26)

Barbie Haynes (12/26)

Norma Gagliano (12/27)

Chance Lee (12/30)

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Dorothy & Rick Clutter (12/8)

Jeff & Julie Streeter (12/11)

Gerry & Polly Kuklewicz (12/28)

What is a CHRISMON Tree?

A **Chrismon tree** is an evergreen tree often placed the chancel or nave of a church during Advent and Christmastide. The Chrismon tree was first used by North American Lutherans in 1957, although the practice has spread to other Christian denominations, including Anglicans, Catholics, Methodists, and the Reformed. As with the ordinary Christmas tree, the evergreen tree itself, for Christians, "symbolizes the eternal life Jesus Christ provides". However, the Chrismon tree differs from the traditional Christmas tree in that it "is decorated only with clear lights and Chrismons made from white and gold material", the latter two being the liturgical colors of the Christmas season.

The Chrismon tree is adorned with Chrismons, "ancient symbols for Christ or some part of Christ's ministry: the dove descending down, fish, Celtic cross, Jerusalem cross, shepherd's crook, chalice, shell, and others." Laurence Hull Stookey writes that "because many symbols of the Chrismon tree direct our attention to the nature and ultimate work of Christ, they can be helpful in calling attention to Advent themes."



Join your St. Clare Chapter of the Daughters of the King to decorate the St. Francis Chrismon tree!!

ALL INVITED to Decorate the Chrismon Tree

December 2nd at 9am in the Parish Hall

Come to 'Breakfast for All' at 8:30am



Sat. December 2nd

***Breakfast for All * 8:30a
DOK Tree Decorating * 9a
Parish Hall**

***CUB Lunch Prep *
* 10a * Ed Bldg***

Young-at-Heart Food Deliveries

Young at Heart picks up food from pantries and delivers to folks who do not have transportation or are unable to carry food into their homes. We currently deliver to 20 people each month and have served some of our folks for nearly three years. This has been a wonderful way to get to know our neighbors. We have been able to request services from Adult Protective Services and the Area Agency on Aging for folks whose utilities have been turned off or homes have been damaged. We are blessed to be participating in a ministry cohort through the Episcopal Health Foundation, and they are funding us to work with consultants from the Baylor Collaborative on Hunger and Poverty. This an exciting opportunity to improve upon and expand our ministry. We currently receive federally-funded senior assistance boxes from the Tyler Family Assistance Center and assorted items donated to Food Finders.

We are collecting non-perishable items to supplement our pantry boxes. We prefer items that do not require additional ingredients—No Hamburger Helper—requires hamburger All donations must be shelf-stable items.

- Mac & cheese with cheese in pouches, as dry mix requires butter & milk
- Canned vegetables, especially beans, as they are high-protein sources
- Canned soups and fruit
- Canned or pouched meats; canned pasta
- Shelf-stable milk is especially helpful to put on cereal
- Small containers of instant coffee; tea bags; hot cocoa mixes

There is a container in the narthex for these items.

Lisa Kraus
Coordinator



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facebook

www.facebook.com/StFrancisTyler



Office Closed
December 25th thru
January 2nd



Celebration of Life
Catherine (Cathy) Lynn Munson
November 1, 1948 - November 20, 2023
Funeral held November 27, 2023

Conversation on Race

Conversation on Race will meet in the Adult Ed Room on Sunday December 17th right after the 10:45am service.

We will be discussing the plans for the
Martin Luther King Walk and Celebration * Downtown Tyler Monday * January 15 * 2024

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."
- *Matthew 6:21 NRSV*

When it comes to stewardship we all pledge the time, talent, and treasure that we know we can give. For what you and I pledge to support the ministries of St. Francis, we are thankful.

Please continue to give an extra \$5-\$10-\$20 in the offering plate for I do believe it has been an integral part of sharing out of our abundance.

So bring a friend: George, Abraham, Alexander, Andrew, Harriet, and some of their friends. Together we can continue to fully support the ministries of St. Francis!

Peace,
Mitch+

WEEKLY RECURRING EVENTS FOR December

Sunday

- 8:30 am: Rite I—No music
- 9:30 am: Adult Gospel Lectionary Discussion
- Children/Youth Sunday School
- 10:45 am: Rite II—Traditional Music
Live-Stream on FaceBook & YouTube
- 6:00 pm: Yoga—Children's Ed Room

Nursery available from 8:00 am—12:00 pm

Wednesday

- Noon: Rite II Eucharist Service
- 12:30pm: Bible Study—Parish Hall
- 2:00 pm: Grief Support Group—Parish Hall
- 2:00 pm: God's Grace—St. Clare's
- 7:00 PM: Choir Rehearsal—Sanctuary

Thursday

- 5:00 pm: Handbell Practice—Music Room

December Special Events

Sat. December 2, 8:30am
Breakfast for All

Sat. December 2, 9:00am
DOK Chrismon Tree Decorating

Sat. December 2 10:00am
Church Under a Bridge Lunch Prep

Sat. December 2, 5:30pm
Newcomer's Dinner

Sat. December 9, 6:00—8:00pm
Christmas Serendipity at Barats

Sun. December 10, 10:45am
Baptism Drahem Infant
Light Lunch with Family Follows

Sun. December 10, 2:00-4:00pm
Women's Christmas Tea

Sun. December 19, 12:00pm
Conversation on Race

Tues. December 19, 11:30am
Out-to-Lunch Bunch
Jalapeno Tree

Tues. December 19, 6:00pm
Vestry Meeting

Sun. December 24, 3:30pm
Christmas Eve Music Prelude

Sun. December 24, 4:00pm
Christmas Eve Pageant & Service

Mon.. December 25, 10:00am
Christmas Day Service & Brunch