



September 2012  
Volume 16, Issue 8

# the NATIVITY Scene

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*Holy Nativity Episcopal Church • Panama City, Florida*



**Parish Luncheon  
(bring a dish to  
share!) after the  
10:30 am service  
in our new  
renovated space!**

## **Rally Day** *and* **Bring a Friend Sunday**

**Jumpy/  
Waterslide  
for the  
kids! Bring  
your  
swimsuit!**

**SEPTEMBER 9, 2012  
JOIN US FOR THIS  
SPECIAL ANNUAL EVENT OF  
HOLY NATIVITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH!**

**Displays will be setup about all our new Fall Christian  
Education classes and information on all our ministries!**

**We will welcome Fr. Steve back!**

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## **Steak and Bake For Wilmer Hall**

**September 30, 2012 at 5:00 pm      \$20.00 per person**

Join us for hot-off-the-grill hand-cut steaks, baked potatoes, and fixin's that you'd expect. Come on out to benefit a great cause, enjoy a great meal, and spend some quality time with your family and friends.

*Look for your order sheet in this newsletter!*

Wilmer Hall is our Diocesan sponsored Children's Home located in Mobile, AL. Go to [www.wilmerhall.org](http://www.wilmerhall.org) to find out more about this worth-wild cause!

### *Home Sweet Home!*

I've promised myself I wouldn't return from sabbatical and be like someone's crazy uncle who incessantly talks about his travels and makes sure everyone sees all his photos. But I do have to thank you all from the bottom of my heart for this incredible opportunity. Special thanks to Madge and Father Tom for their "above and beyond" work that has made this possible. My time away truly has been a balance of rest, study and rejuvenation. But I'm ready to be back. I'll return to the office the day following Labor Day and my first Sunday will be Rally Day and Bring a Friend Sunday. I look forward to it.

My time traveling across country was everything I'd hoped it would be. I was in awe of the beauty of our country and I had to stop several times just to take in the incredible changes in the landscape. In a single five hour drive, I began in Las Vegas with a temperature of 106 degrees. An hour and a half later the temperature was in the 80's. Crossing the Sierra Nevadas, the temperature was in the upper 60's and on the other side in Bishop, California, it was in the upper 90's. I arrived at Mammoth Lakes, California (my destination) and the temperature was in the low 50's. Quite a day!

I know we are a diverse country, but I'm not sure how prepared I was for how diverse. We spend a lot of time lamenting how divided we are as a country. I was struck by how we can ever agree on anything, considering the diversity of the cultures I visited. From Texas, to the Navahos to the Northern California coast, each region had their own identity and customs based on their life stories. Just like us. Perhaps we shouldn't define our country by our divisions but rather marvel at our greatness because of our unity in diversity. (Good lesson for the Church). It's a big country out there. We are who we are because of where we come from. Listening to those stories has been a gift.

I visited a number of Churches on my travels and each time was reminded there's no place like home. I purposely chose to attend different "styles" of worship. There's a lot of diversity there as well. Some worship styles were so formal as to be uncomfortable. I attended a "contemporary" service at a grand cathedral. I attended one congregation where not a single person spoke to me. (Maybe it was because I hadn't shaved in four days). And I attended a congregation that seemed like home. All these experiences reinforced my belief that Holy Nativity is one of the great congregations of the

Episcopal Church. But I did pick up a few ministry ideas and look forward to sharing them with you.

The fellowship I received to Princeton University was the greatest continuing ed opportunity I've ever participated in. You could not help but walk through those arches of a place where Aaron Burr was once President and where Einstein once taught and not be in awe (and feeling a little out of place). Princeton boasts the largest theological library outside the Vatican and I was able to take advantage of that incredible facility. The faculty was top notch and the course selection was wonderful. I was surprised to find out I was the only Episcopalian among my fifty fellow classmates. That too, was a gift. It gave me the opportunity to hear about the ministry experiences of those from different traditions and how much we have in common. We worshipped together twice daily and Wednesday evening's service was led by the National Presbyterian Commission on Liturgy. They had built up Wednesday's service to be quite the event. Once I entered the chapel and received my bulletin, I understood why. They were going to actually celebrate the Eucharist (not part of a regular Presbyterian service). From their excitement you would have thought they invented sliced bread. I sat in the chapel with a somewhat smug smile on my face knowing the joy of celebrating communion every week with each of you.

My self-study focused on hospitality, curriculum development and strategies for transitional sized churches. I was able to learn more about the radical hospitality of the gospel and ways we can incorporate that into contemporary parishes. I was able to begin developing a curriculum for our middle school religion classes at HNES. Our focus will be on scripture for our sixth graders, application of scripture for our seventh graders and the implication of the great commission for eighth graders. My study of transitional sized churches morphed into a study of emerging churches and the need to continuously find non-traditional ways to "do church" while not abandoning our purpose and traditions. I was especially struck by a section in one of the books I read from the Alban Institute. The author contends that well over 1/3 of those who attend a Church for the first time, do so because of the physical appearance of the facilities. "The building and its condition has an effect on whether a stranger will come to explore further . . . The state of a facility's upkeep and maintenance determines its attractiveness in important ways. Deteriorating, unkempt and unsafe buildings are significant 'turn offs' to those unfamiliar

(continued from page 2)

with the warm and loving people inside.” Sound familiar? Well, those days are behind us at Holy Nativity. I haven’t seen the finished product and we all know there’s more to do. But I can’t wait to walk through those doors on September 4<sup>th</sup>. Many thanks to all who have made this possible.

It’s a new day at Holy Nativity. I’ve never been more encouraged about our future together. I’m thankful for

this parish family; for the ministries that make us who we are and reflect the loving and living God we worship. Let’s rally together on this new day. Come to Church and bring a friend with you on September 9<sup>th</sup>. Let’s finish what we’ve begun. Let’s start a “new year” off with the enthusiasm and thanksgiving that make us who we are. I look forward to once again being a part.

God love you, Steve+

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### From Fr. Tom *Through the Garage*

First let me say that there is no way I could express how grateful I am to Father Steve for trusting me to serve as your Summer Priest while he was away on Sabbatical. It was rewarding to feel that I was one of many here in the parish who helped make his time away feasible, even possible. It was challenging and fun, but I got off light, because all I did was the priestly parts of the job. Everyone else on staff, and volunteers, served so very faithfully, and together we made the summer work successfully so Steve could be away. Maybe there will be a slideshow presentation or something soon, perhaps at one of our Wednesday evening gatherings: I would appreciate seeing and hearing what all Steve was up to while we were keeping him safely covered with prayer, as I do not do Facebook much at all. Ten-thirty worshipers, don’t tell the Rector that I made you say that strange Nicene Creed all summer long.

September upon us, we resume our Fall Season of Adult Christian Education, and I hope everyone is ready and looking forward to it as much as I am. We have bountiful offerings:

EfM (Education for Ministry) resumes Wednesday evening, September 5<sup>th</sup> in my office *Through the Garage* at the Office/Parish House, 1011 W. Third Street. Mike Dickey is mentor and has communicated with everyone who has signed up. I will be available to advise and assist as called on, and to fill in for Mike as needed, and hoping to be invited to any parties and special feasts!

Tuesday Morning Bible Seminar begins a new Fall Season on Tuesday, September 4<sup>th</sup> in my office *Through the Garage*. Gather between 9:30 and 10:00 for coffee, fellowship and a light morning snack of some sort. We convene at 10:05 sharp and adjourn promptly at 11:15. Our first study will be the Letter of James. Folks who are interested in joining us should let me know by email at [twellerpc@gmail.com](mailto:twellerpc@gmail.com) or [twellerpc@knology.net](mailto:twellerpc@knology.net) so I know

how many to expect. But if you can't let me know ahead of time, or if you don't do email, come anyway. Bring a friend.

Wednesday Afternoon Bible Seminar will be offered for the first time at a beach location. This is because many of the folks who have been coming in the past have been driving in from the beaches, as far west as Walton County, and asked if we could do this. The senior warden at St. Thomas by the Sea, Laguna Beach, has graciously offered their facility for our meetings. This will be a trial session for September, continuing if class members wish and if six or more people sign up and come faithfully. The Wednesday Afternoon session will be identical to the Tuesday Morning session, and will convene Wednesday, September 5<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m. sharp, adjourning at 2:15, at St. Thomas. Again, I need to know how many are coming, so appreciate an email letting me know; but come anyway!

Adult Sunday School cranks up again on September 9<sup>th</sup>, the Sunday after Rally Day, in the Mary Stuart Poole Library. Our study topic will follow the Sunday Lectionary, and will begin with the Letter of James. We meet from 9:15 to 10:15 every Sunday between services, but there are always folks who arrive late, and that is *never a problem*. *Just come!* As well as James and the Lectionary, there may be other topics, including discussion of the recent General Convention 2012 authorization of a liturgy for pets, including death and burial of pets. If class members want to discuss Convention's authorization of trial liturgies for blessing the union of same-sex couples, we will do that also. But the main focus will always be Bible study. Everyone will be as pleased as I am that there is a brand new brick walking path from the church building across the grounds to the Library. The Library has new chairs, and looks very nice for the beginning of our Fall 2012 season. Come. No registration required. If you have a Bible, especially a Study Bible, do bring that.

Tom Weller+

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# youth group

**SCHEDULE**

Welcome Back!

Wednesday night is back in full swing from 6 to 8 pm in the upstairs room. If you haven't been yet, you are missing out on a whole lot of stuff. We would love to see you there for eating, playing, and talking.

Rock The Universe, our annual trip to Universal Studios in Orlando, is the weekend of Sept. 7-9. As of August 21st, I had two slots open in the rental house. If you have decided at the last minute that you want to come along (kids or grown-ups), please come talk to me!

Sunday School kicks off on Sept. 16th at 9:15am in the upstairs room. We will go over each week's New and Old Testament readings, and have had some VERY interesting discussions about them in the past. This year should be even better, since we will be folding in the youth lectors and helping each other get ready to read during the service.

I can't wait to see you all in the upstairs room!  
Judy 248-6624 [judydickey@gmail.com](mailto:judydickey@gmail.com)

## ***Are you ready for Rally Day?***

The Mary Stuart Poole Library is! Last year the Mary-Martha Circle of Holy Nativity moved the Library from the Parish House to the original library. We replaced all the books, redesigned the reading and meeting areas, and painted the inside of the building. Now, with a new coat of paint on the outside, it has taken on a whole new look.

Now that the children are back in school, this would be a perfect opportunity for the Moms and Dads of our church to check out a book from the library for either leisurely or informational reading. There are some fascinating books available and all it will cost you is the time it takes to find something that peaks your interest. Please visit the library during Rally Day while we have an open house to introduce you to the new and improved Mary Stuart Poole Library.

Dear Church Members,

Klothes for Kids helped 438 families and 985 children. Thank you for giving a child confidence and dignity when they go back to school.



Our very own, Jane Burkett preached Aug. 26th!

## Children's Ministry September 2012

Sept.	Sunday School 9:15 In our Chapel Room in the two-story building	Children's Church 10:30 In Kids' Kingdom after the children's ser- mon at the beginning of the worship service. They return to "big church" for communion.	Nursery 10:15 Younger children enjoy being in the nursery with Megan or Molly Thompson and our wonderfully faith- ful nursery volunteers.
2 Brunch 12 noon @ G. Foley's' Nursery Cleaning at 1:30 -4:30	Not yet....	"Barnabas and Paul are Sent" Kathy Brust 265-3172 Amy Russell 960-5263	Sandy Ciccarelli 265-9276
9 RALLY DAY	Not until next Sunday	Creation 1: Light Ashley Eaton 769-8533 Casey Cole 215-3727	Nancy Reeder 596-9538
16	Tom Hairston 784-6319 Beverly McDaniel 265-8033	Creation 2: Sky Jenny Collier 215-6554 Candace Leebrick 522-9240	Kaew Sumpton 872-3782
23	Tom and Beverly	Creation 3a: Earth and Oceans Charlie Commander 265-4400 Trey Hutt 814-7934	Pat Spangler 215-5247
30	Tom and Beverly	Creation 3b: Plants and Seeds Tom Hairston 784-6319 Karen Shores 867-1084	Katy Bradford 819

Summer Sundays have been fun at Holy Nativity...from Shell Island Sunday to Blessing of the Backpacks and now soon-to-come Rally Day and the return of Fr. Steve. Won't he be happy with the changes to our church building! Everything looks great, but getting there has been a bit messy. So, we are calling for a "Come Clean the Nursery" party on this Sunday afternoon from 1:30 until 4:30. The incentives are a sparkling clean nursery for our precious babies AND noon brunch at G. Foley's for us worker bees. We will gather in the nursery after church to go to the restaurant on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street. Just bring your working clothes and gloves with you to church so we can change and get to work after we return from brunch. Call me if you want to help so I can reserve your place at the brunch table.

Again speaking of the nursery, there is bad news and good news. Our darling Thompson girls, Megan and Molly, can no longer serve as nursery attendants due to college; however, I am pleased to let you know that our darling Callie Mills is the new nursery worker. I know that you join me in appreciation of Megan's and Molly's work with our youngest children, and also in welcoming Callie as we confidently entrust our babies to her care each Sunday.

Sunday School at 9:15 will resume on the Sunday after Rally Day. Tom Hairston will be working with me again as we explore our faith, our beliefs, our church and our traditions. We will meet in our mini-church room in the two-story building. It is very convenient for parents who are attending Fr. Tom's Sunday School class held in the Mary Stuart Poole Library. We are looking forward to a good year ahead and hope you will join us. Please call me if you have questions, comments, and/or suggestions.

Beverly McDaniel



## The Rite One Choir

Currently "The Rite One Choir" sings once a month at the 8:00 service.

Rehearsals are held every Thursday from 5:30 - 6:30 PM in the Church

All interested adults are welcome to join! Please consider sharing your musical gifts with us. Interested high school and college students are also welcome.

## Holy Nativity Church Chancel Choir

All adults are welcome to join us.

Weekly rehearsals are in the Church every Thursday evening 6:30 - 8:30 PM and Sunday mornings at 9:30 .

The Chancel Choir sings every Sunday during the 10:30 worship service.

Please consider sharing your musical gifts with us. Interested high school and college students are also welcome.



## HOLY NATIVITY CHURCH CHILDREN'S CHOIR

ALL CHILDREN IN GRADES 1-6 ARE WELCOME!

WE REHEARSE EVERY WEDNESDAY, DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR, STARTING SEPT. 12, 2012 IN THE CHOIR OFFICE FROM 4:00 - 5:00 PM

COME AND LIFT YOUR VOICES IN SONG AND PRAISE. ENRICH YOUR CHILD'S LIFE MUSICALLY AND SPIRITUALLY!

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:  
MARQUA BRUNETTE, DIRECTOR - 747-4000



- Sept. 1 Tony and Helen Hill  
Tommy and Torri Bishop
- Sept. 12 Doug and Susan Messer
- Sept. 14 Lou and Inge Churchill
- Sept. 16 Aaron and Karen Shores
- Sept. 17 Greg and Amy Russell
- Sept. 18 Ron and Ann Yessman
- Sept. 19 Michael and Joanne Mallary
- Sept. 27 Henry and Nancy Breland
- Sept. 29 Doug and Caroline Smith
- Sept. 30 Terry and Donna Jangula



- Sept. 1 John Durgan, Chad Gall
- Sept. 3 Jo Bruhn, Julia McLane
- Sept. 6 Bayne Collins, Kaitlyn Kelly, Al Lawrence, Shelby Roberson, Stevens Roberson
- Sept. 7 Pat Spangler
- Sept. 8 Casey Cole
- Sept. 9 Harvey David
- Sept. 10 Bill Ethridge, Gene Wicker
- Sept. 12 William Ethridge, John McLendon
- Sept. 14 Tom Weller
- Sept. 16 Midge Mellen
- Sept. 17 James Coper
- Sept. 18 Richard Bruhn, Jennifer Gailfoil, Jackie Rahn, Victoria Williams
- Sept. 20 Anne Harris
- Sept. 21 Judy Dickey, Ron Yessman
- Sept. 22 Michael Mallary
- Sept. 24 Janice FitzSimons
- Sept. 25 Donna Jangula
- Sept. 26 Olivia Clemons, Holly Kuster, David Smith
- Sept. 27 Hannah Dye, Mary Frances Hutt
- Sept. 28 Chuck Coley
- Sept. 29 Mia Carroll, Denis Healey, Oliver Pettis, Carson Shores
- Sept. 30 Judi Lawrence



Thank you to everyone to contributed to our Kitchen Shower! Our new kitchen will be well stocked because of your wonderful generosity!

Thank you to Nancy Breland and Mary Bonham for picking out our selection from Bed Bath & Beyond!



*Join the Book/Kindle Club  
this month!*

They will meet September 24, 2012.  
5:30 pm at Panera Bread Restaurant  
6:30 pm at the Parish House

They will be reading "Sea Change"  
by Karen White

Upcoming months will be:  
October -- "Mama Makes Up Her Mind"  
by Bailey White



**HOLY NATIVITY**  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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*The Nativity Scene is the newsletter of Holy Nativity Episcopal Church.  
The deadline for announcements and articles is the 15th each month prior to publication .*

**DIOCESE OF THE CENTRAL GULF COAST**

*The Rt. Rev. Philip M. Duncan II - Bishop  
The Rev. Steven B. Bates - Rector  
The Rev. Tom Weller, Associate*

**CHURCH STAFF**

*Youth Director - Judy Dickey  
Children's CE Director - Beverly McDaniel  
Administrative Assistant - Madge Smith  
Director of Choirs - Marqua Brunette  
Church Organist - John Durgan  
Church Bookkeeper – Kathy Mills  
Sexton - Lawrence Long  
Weekend Sexton - James Rahn  
Nursery Attendants - Megan Thompson, Molly Thompson*

**THE VESTRY**

*Fr. Steve Bates - Rector  
Gayle Ahrens 10-13 Sr. W.  
Charles Bonham 10-13 Jr. W.  
Edyth Brown 12-15  
Carolyn Cramer 12-15  
Mike Dickey 11-14  
Richard Doran 11-14*

*Mark Godwin - Treasurer  
Michele Hahn 12-15  
Jim Hixson 11-14  
Betty Grammer 12-15  
Brian Leebrick 10-13  
Mary Ellen Pettis 11-14  
Madge Smith - Clerk  
John Thompson 10-13*

**SCHEDULE OF WORSHIP SERVICES**

*8:00 a.m. - Holy Eucharist - Rite I \*  
9:15 a.m. - Adult and Youth CE, Children's  
Sunday School (Aug. - May)  
10:30 a.m. - Holy Eucharist - Rite II\*\**

*\*Nursery Provided  
\*\*Children's Church and Nursery Provided*