



# the NATIVITY Scene

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*Holy Nativity Episcopal Church • Panama City, Florida*

**December 2011 January 2012  
Volume 15, Issue 11**



## **Holy Nativity Episcopal Church - Christmas Season Schedule 2011**



### **December 4, 2011 A Morning with St. Nicholas at 9:15 am**

Join us for a special gathering in Battin Hall to celebrate St. Nicholas Day. There will be special music and activities for the children...and maybe a special guest!

### **December 7, 2011 A Festival of Lessons and Carols**

Please join us for this beautiful service of scripture and music for the season presented by soloists, string quartet, organ, piano and The Chancel Choir of Holy Nativity Episcopal Church.

5:30 pm Christmas Potluck Dinner begins. Please bring a holiday side dish to share.

Turkey and gravy will be provided.

6:30 pm Service begins.

### **December 9, 2011 Youth Sponsored Parent's Night Out 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm**

Parents....the youth will watch your children so you can go Christmas shopping or have a romantic night out!

Please call the church office (747-4000) or Judy Dickey (248-6624) to make a reservation.

### **December 11, 2011 Children's Pajama Party at 9:15 am**

Wear your best pajamas to church and bring a new set of pajamas for the needy to be presented at church at the 10:30 am service! If you miss the Hot Chocolate Party at 9:15 am, just bring the gift pajamas to church.

### **December 14, 2011 Youth Group Christmas Gathering at 6:00 pm**

All youth are invited to meet to shop and wrap presents for Holy Nativity's Advent Outreach families.

### **December 21, 2011 3:00 pm - Children's Pageant Rehearsal**

All children are invited to rehearse for the pageant and for final costume fitting!

### **December 23, 2011 Greening of the Church at 6:00 pm**

Everyone is invited to help decorate the church.

### **December 24, 2011 Christmas Eve Services**

4:00 pm Service Prelude Music begins

4:30 pm Christmas Eve Service with the Children's Christmas Pageant

10:00 pm Service Prelude Music begins

10:30 pm Christmas Eve Service

**December 25, 2011 One Christmas Day Service at 10:30 am (January 1, 2012 also one service at 10:30)**

## MISSIONS AND OUTREACH NEWS!

### CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS

Sales of our wonderful Nativity stained-glass window Christmas Ornaments were brisk last year!! They are again on sale. Don't miss out – they will make a lovely addition to your tree this year, as well as terrific gifts. Ornaments are available in Battin Hall on Sundays and in the Church Office during the week. Just \$20.00 each. All proceeds go to Missions and Outreach.

### SUPPER AT GRACE

Thank you everyone for your generous response to my plea last month for jackets, caps, and gloves to distribute to our guests at Supper at Grace. It was a particularly cold night on Thursday last month, and they were very grateful for the warm outerwear. We still have December, January, and February to look forward to colder weather, so I'm asking that you continue to donate these items. If you're at a yard sale, and find gently worn warm outerwear, pick it up; go through your closets and find that jacket that you keep saying you're going to wear someday (and don't). Ask your neighbors if they have jackets, caps, or gloves they don't wear anymore. Make it a school classroom project. Get creative! I can't tell you how much these donations are appreciated.

Gayle Ahrens

### Advent Outreach Outreach Families

Holy Nativity is collecting donations for our Advent Outreach families. Every year we help families in need in our community and parish. The youth will go shopping with the funds collected and wrap the gifts for Christmas. Make your check out to HNEC and put in the memo section "Advent Outreach". You can send it in the mail, place it in the offering plate, or bring it by the office.

### Holy Nativity's Angel Tree

Look for the Angel Tree located in Battin Hall. There will be ornaments with names from a local nursing home with a few items on each one. Just return the gifts by the deadline indicated.

*To The Members of the Altar Guild,*

*I want to extend my most heartfelt thanks to each of you for your support and faithful service. May you and your family have a very blessed Christmas and a truly happy and successful New Year.*

*God bless,  
Inge Churchill*

### New Acolytes!

A training session for all youth interested in becoming acolytes will be held at 9:30am on Sunday, Jan. 8<sup>th</sup>. New acolytes will learn the duties of their position, select robes, and learn how to vest. All youth who are in the fourth grade or older are encouraged to discuss with their parents joining this ministry in our worship services.

Current acolytes are invited to the meeting to welcome our new servers!



## BACKPACK MINISTRY

Next month, Holy Nativity Church and School will join with others in our community by sponsoring a backpack ministry at a neighboring public school. Each week, we will send a child home with a backpack filled with nonperishable food items so the child has something to eat over the weekend, and the child will then return the backpack on Monday so we can re-fill it during the week. This new ministry is a result of the alarming increase in numbers of children who participate in school funded breakfast and lunch programs and the corresponding fear of school administrators that many of these children have nothing to eat on weekends.



To make the program a success, we need your help! There are two ways you can participate. First, your family, perhaps in tandem with another family, may sign up to sponsor an individual child's backpack (or more than one, if you are so moved). You'll receive a list of items to fill the backpack each week, and bring those items with you to church on Sunday. We will pack the backpack when we receive it back from the school during the week, and send it home with the child on Friday. The other way you can participate is simply by bringing individual items from the checklist to church, and we will use your contributions to ensure we meet our commitment to the children if some backpacks come up short.

Sign-up sheets for this ministry are located in Battin Hall during Advent. If you have any questions, please feel free to give Mike Dickey a call at 867.2550 or email at [mdickey@barronredding.com](mailto:mdickey@barronredding.com). This project provides a great hands-on ministry for those looking for ways to meet Christ's mandate that we feed the hungry, and a way for us to share the Good News outside the walls of the church.

## YOUTH GROUP SCHEDULE!

**Dec. 7: Festival of Lessons and Carols.** This is a great church service, followed by a potluck, so we will not be holding EYC. Please join me to listen and eat, though!

### Dec. 9: Parents' Night Out.

We are once again giving the parents of Holy Nativity a night away from their children. This is a Friday night fundraiser for us in youth group, and is also our unofficial Christmas party. We will play, eat, and make ornaments with the kids from 6pm to 10pm in Battin Hall. The more of you that show up, the better time we will all have.

### Dec. 14th: Shopping for the Advent Families

For this Wednesday night, we are meeting at the Target at 6:00 pm on 23rd Street instead of at the church. We will use Holy Nativity contributions to buy presents for a local family or two. Seriously, would you miss out on shopping with other people's money? I will bring all of you back to the church in the van to wrap and have pizza. Adults are also welcome!

**Dec. 21st:** Too close to Christmas to have a standard EYC meeting, so once again - Enjoy your holiday!

**Dec 28th: This one is up to you.** If enough youth are in town and interested, we will get together. Details to follow as we get a little closer.

**In January** we will meet regularly on Wednesdays at 6:00 pm!

Lots of information, please join us in the upstairs room. We are having fun!

[Judy/248-6624/judydickey@gmail.com](mailto:Judy/248-6624/judydickey@gmail.com)



## Adult Christian Education - Father Tom

While everyone else eagerly anticipates Christmas and our celebration of Bethlehem, angels and the Holy Family, Advent in Adult Sunday School will be an exploration of the credulity stretching doctrine of the Second Coming. "Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again" is our memorial acclamation in Eucharistic Prayer A, which we celebrate for Advent. Christ will come again? When?

Later, during Epiphany we'll discover the epiphanies the church means us to perceive each Sunday of the Season. Mary Stuart Poole Library 9:15 to 10:15 Sunday mornings. No class on Christmas Day or New Years Day.

Tuesday morning Bible study continues with Saint Paul, finishing up with Second Corinthians. Before our Fall Term ends we'll have a session in the Apocrypha. Our final seminar for the season will be December 13. Lent Term schedule and plans will be announced after Christmas.

### Children's Ministry in December by Beverly McDaniel

December is a glorious and joyful time to be with children, and it is a meaningful and fulfilling time in our church calendar. The Advent season begins the church year as we prepare for the coming of Jesus. In our Sunday gatherings...Sunday School at 9:15 and at Children's Chapel during the 10:30 worship service...we are hearing Bible stories of Jesus's ministry and also about the church tradition of the advent wreath guiding us to focus on the meaning of the season.

On December 4th at 9:15, we will celebrate "A Morning with Saint Nicholas" as we hear his story of kindness and generosity, enjoy special activities and refreshments, and have the blessing of the candy canes. There will also be opportunities to have a picture made with St. Nicholas, who somehow resembles both Santa Claus and Ray Wishart. Parents, please bring bags of wrapped candy (no gum please) for filling the children's shoes.

Who wears pajamas to Sunday School and church??? Our children may when we have a Sunday School Pajama Party on December 11th. Wearing their favorite pajamas and/or robes will be fun, and certainly different, and thus will be a reminder for each to bring a pair of new pajamas for a child at Bethel House, the Rescue Mission's division for abused women and children. The children will be invited to bring forward their gift pajamas during the 10:30 worship service. What a great opportunity for us to practice St. Nicholas's example of generosity and giving to those who are in real need!

On Sunday mornings, we will use some of our time together to prepare for the Christmas Pageant that will be presented on Christmas Eve at 4:30. The children are deciding what roles they want and some very talented mothers will be putting together their costumes. Everyone is welcome to participate. Because this is such a busy time for parents, we hope to limit practices to during Children's Chapel on Sunday, Dec. 18th, and a full rehearsal at 3:00 on Wednesday, Dec 21st. Please call me at the church office or at home (265-8033) if you have questions, comments, or suggestions. And please help us get the message out that any children attending the service will be invited to participate. We will have shepherds' robes, lambs' ears, and angels' halos ready for our new cast members. If you know that you will have children visiting, please let me know so we can look for them. We want our portrayal of the holy nativity at Holy Nativity to be especially meaningful and memorable for everyone.



## Children's Ministry December 2011

December	Sunday School 9:15	Children's Church 10:30	Nursery 10:15
4	"A Morning with St. Nicholas" Many volunteers Photos by Matt Cole	Katie Bradford 819-6277 Candace Leebrick 522-9240	Sandy Ciccarelli 265-9276
11	"Pajama Party and Hot Chocolate" Tom Hairston 784-6319 Beverly McDaniel 265-8033	Presentation of Pajamas "A Blanket For The Baby" Ashley Eaton 769-8533 Judy Bennett 215-1579	Nancy Reeder 596-9538
18	Tom Hairston 784-6319 Beverly McDaniel 265-8033	Practice music for Christmas Pageant-Finalize costumes Trey Hutt 814-7934 Judy Bennett 215-1579	Kaew Sumpton 872-3782
21	<b>3:00 pm Pageant Rehearsal in the church</b>		
24	<b>Christmas Eve 3:45 pm Meet in Battin Hall 4:30 pm Christmas Pageant</b>		Pat Spangler 215-5247
25	NO PROGRAMS!	Christmas Day Service at 10:30 am	
Jan. 1	NO PROGRAMS!	New Years Day Service at 10:30 am	Sandy Ciccarelli 265-9276



We are so  
thankful that  
Mr. Tom  
is well and  
back with  
us!





### The Chancel and Rite One Choirs

Rehearsal evenings in December will continue to be quite busy for the Chancel Choir as we practice and continue to pray for the healthy return of several members. The entire month of December will be filled with special musical offerings and we are working hard to prepare music for Advent, as we 'prepare' for the birth of Jesus. In addition to our rehearsals for the four Sundays of Advent, there will be a service of Lessons and Carols on December 7th. We will also offer a half an hour of seasonal music prior to each service on Christmas Eve as part of the prelude music. That means the music starts at 4:00 and 10:00 PM! After the first of the year we will be able to catch our breath a little and start learning new anthems for 2012.

The Rite One Choir will sing during Advent on Dec. 4<sup>th</sup> and then we will take a brief break until after Christmas. Look for rehearsals to resume on January 12th. We hope our early morning choir has inspired more people to join us. You are always welcome. Weekly rehearsals are Thursday evenings from 5:30 – 6:30 PM in the church. Come and join us!

We are very grateful for all of our dedicated choirs who give so much of themselves throughout the year to provide the music for our worship services week after week. God bless them! We always welcome new voices and would love to have you join us too.

### Festival of Lessons and Carols – Wednesday, Dec. 7<sup>th</sup>

The Chancel Choir will present our annual Festival of Lessons and Carols on Wednesday evening, Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> starting at 6:30 pm. This year we will be blessed with several soloists and instrumentalists who will be sharing their musical gifts with us. For the first time we will have a String Quartet playing with us that evening. Their glorious music will resonate within our sacred space and hearts as they play on their own and accompany many of the anthems and carols.

Many years ago, this beautiful service originated based upon the medieval vigil service. A Dean of King's College Chapel, in Cambridge, England, later modified it. This service is traditionally sung there on Christmas Eve. Later, still, an Advent service of Lessons and Carols was begun. While we will still officially be in Advent as we present our Lessons and Carols, we have elected to follow the King's College format. The service will consist of a procession, bidding prayer with the Lord's Prayer, Invitatory, nine lessons with appropriate carols and hymns sung by the Chancel Choir and/or congregation, closing prayer, benediction and a hymn. There will also be anthems sung by the Chancel Choir. This seasonal presentation provides a wonderful opportunity for you to invite your friends to visit us at Holy Nativity and share in this evening. We sincerely hope that you will appreciate this special musical offering from the Chancel Choir.

The Annual Christmas Holiday Dinner will begin in Battin Hall starting at 5 :30 PM. Please call the church office to make your reservations. There is always plenty of food but we would hate to run out ! Everyone is encouraged to bring a side dish to share.

### Children's Choir

The Children's Choir continues to grow – musically and spiritually. Their enthusiasm and energy abound and the excitement is contagious and praying with these children each week warms my heart.

This year the Children's Choir will sing on December 11<sup>th</sup> at the 2<sup>nd</sup> service for 'Pajama Sunday,' when they wear their PJ's and slippers and robes to church and bring a set of new pajamas to donate to needy children. In keeping with this theme, the Children's Choir is learning a 'social-consciousness' song which makes reference to all kinds of children; from spoiled children to hurt children and old children, with the theme resounding asking that 'This year, Christmas come for everyone.' The discussions surrounding learning this song have been beautiful and powerful. When we first sang the song and I was explaining what it meant, it was a child who commented that it would be great for "Operation Christmas Child." Realizing that offering had a deadline for November, we together chose to sing and share this very special song on 'Pajama Sunday.'

Currently they are also busily rehearsing their musical selections for the early service on Christmas Eve. They will also play an active role in leading all of the children in the Christmas Pageant in songs and are quite excited about the music they will be singing this year. We hope that it will make the service more meaningful for you. Following our musical offerings on Christmas Eve, we will take a break from rehearsals while school is out and return to practice on January 11th. If your child (grades 1-6) is interested, please have them join us weekly on Wednesday afternoons in the Choir office from 4:00 – 5:00. We guarantee some hard work and lots of fun! If you have any questions, please contact Marqua Brunette, Director of Choirs.

### Music Tips and Reminders

During Advent, the service music we have been singing will change. This means that all of those selections preceded by the letter "S" will be found in the front of your hymnals, in the "Service Music" section. We encourage you to open up your hymnals to these pages and refresh your memories until you are confident of them again. We usually change service music for Advent and Lent so be prepared. The music used as the doxology changes too. This also means that service music will change again at Christmas and for January. You will want to read your bulletins carefully.

Don't forget about our large-print hymnals placed in the back of the church. You are welcome to use one. We ask that you return it following the service. They will come in very handy for aging family and friends who might be visiting during the holidays. I'm sure they would appreciate you offering the bigger print for them to participate in singing of all those beautiful carols on Christmas Eve! They are also ideal for assisting children learning to read and following along in the service. There are a couple of large-print prayer books in the back too. Let's put them to good use.



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## HOLY NATIVITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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*Merry Christmas*

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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*

*The Rev. Bob Dean, Deacon*

### 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*

*Charles Bonham 10-13*

*Max Dannecker 09-12*

*Mike Dickey 11-14*

*Richard Doran 11-14*

*Mark Godwin - Treasurer*

*Donna Hairston 09-12*

*Jim Hixson 11-14*

*Brian Leebrick 10-13*

*Mary Ellen Pettis 11-14*

*Amy Russell 09-12*

*Madge Smith - Clerk*

*Stewart Sumpton 09-12*

*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  
Chapel (Aug. - May)*

*10:30 a.m. - Holy Eucharist - Rite II\*\**

*\*Nursery Provided*

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