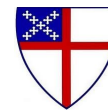


ALL SAINTS' E-LETTER



VOLUME 12 ISSUE 11 DECEMBER 2022

RECTOR'S MESSAGE

"But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days." – Micah 5:2

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"The world is full of bastards, the number increasing rapidly the further one gets from Missoula, Montana." – Norman Maclean, A River Runs Through It

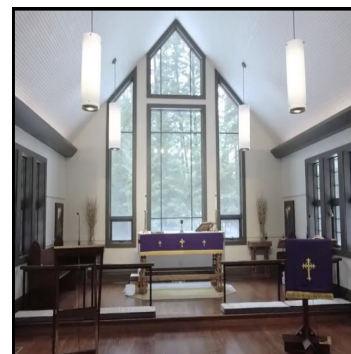
The prophet Micah is famous for tipping us off to the location of Jesus' birth. But with the benefit of hindsight and a whole bunch of Christmas songs extolling the "little town of Bethlehem," Jesus' natal city is no surprise to modern churchgoers. But to the people of ancient Israel, a savior from Bethlehem would have made absolutely no sense. Bethlehem was nowhere.

The location of your birth and upbringing has a huge effect on your life's trajectory. It determines your accent, the way that you speak. Social scientists say that our zip codes are more predictive than our genetics when it comes to health and income, and other studies have suggested that a good algorithm could accurately guess your age at death simply based on where you live. In twelve-step literature, attempting to solve a problem by relocating is derisively called a "geographical cure." Some people are from "the wrong side of the tracks," or, as is the case present-day Bethlehem, "the wrong side of the wall."

Some communities value their lifelong members--there's cultural cachet in being a "native Montanan," especially as this state grows by leaps and bounds. Personally, I've never lived in a place where the first question asked during introductions concerns how long you've lived there! It's kind of weird. So we shouldn't underestimate the present and future impact that our community of origin imparts.

A messiah born in Bethlehem, however, upends the hold that our hometowns can have on us. Whether we were born on the wrong side of the tracks, or with a silver spoon in our mouths, the place of our birth means *nothing* in the kingdom of heaven. "Do not presume to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our ancestor"; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham." And the same could be said of 5th generation Montanans!

No heavenly time is spent assessing your accent or who you're rooting for in the World Cup, and no divine algorithm is processing your zip code to determine whether you'll enter the pearly gates. That was certainly a revolutionary idea in an ancient world where gods had geographical jurisdictions. And in a modern world where your geography is given nearly deterministic power, it's still radical.



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AN INVITATION TO REMEMBER OUR FRIEND CARL SOBCZAK



The Sobczak Family wishes to extend an invitation to all parishioners to come to an OPEN HOUSE on Dec. 18th to celebrate and to remember the life of Carl Sobczak. It will be held at the family home (and barn), 316 Sandbox Ln, Columbia Falls (look for the blinking Christmas lights to guide you). Come anytime between 4:00 and 7:00 pm. We will share memories and stories, and of course food! with special treats that remind us of Carl (including potato pancakes and pork chops at a campfire and, yes, Borscht!)

Carl passed away on November 2, after battling cancer for over 2 years. Among other friends and family, he left behind his loving wife Heidi, sons Caleb and Micah, and a brand new little grandson, Finn. Carl considered All Saints' his church, though many of you may not have met him, because he wasn't one who attended services very often. However, he was a steady and faithful "servant behind the scenes" at this church and before that at St. Matthews in Columbia Falls. Just a couple examples are the Canyon community dinners, where he was a dishwasher extraordinaire, and his years spent doing a weekly cleaning of our church buildings.

Carl had a quiet but deep faith, honed by growing up in an extended Polish Catholic family and being taught by Franciscan monks at Catholic Schools in Buffalo, NY. The core values and beliefs he absorbed during those early years resonated with him, so much so he even considered becoming a monk. But, as he would say with a grin, he liked girls too much. So instead, he used them as a guide for living his life. These values included the belief that we are all equally endowed with the very life of our Creator; we are all of us brothers and sisters. We are called to extend love and to respect the dignity of each individual, and affirm every person's unique worth. We should strive to live a life of selflessness, and in service to others. Though he rarely if ever spoke out loud about his beliefs, it was clear to me that he was something special, and it was what drew me to his side 36+ years ago, and kept me there. Not because he lived these values and ideals perfectly (do any of us?). But because he really took them to heart, and always, always! tried his very best.

Heidi

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

By Cynthia Benkleman

It's time to get ready for the Christmas Pageant! As always, all kids are welcome to join in this. This will be a short, fun musical, with a performance at the 4:00 PM Christmas Eve Service. This year we will have a new play that will be a lot of fun, with parts for everyone. There are some original songs, so we will be learning some new music. All kids are invited and encouraged to join us, from toddlers to high school students.

Since Christmas Eve is on a Saturday, we have a shorter window for rehearsals, and we will have three practices.

Holy Moly Sunday School for 2-6th grade will still be on the second Sunday of the month, but we will start at 10:00 and go until communion.

It's really important to attend all of the rehearsals if possible, (although the younger ones or those with one or less speaking lines and lower attention spans can skip the read through at the first rehearsal or attend with a parent if you wish).

Please reply to me at cynthia@allsaintsmt.org ASAP and let me know who will be participating. I'll also need to know what kind of part they would like (a longer part, a few lines, one or two lines, no lines, would they like to sing a solo)?

Please include the following information in your email:

Name and age of child:

What kind of part would they like:

Any comments or questions:

REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

Sunday 12/11:

Holy Moly 10:00 AM Godly Play room

Christmas Pageant Rehearsal 11AM - 12:30 PM in the church. Read-through of script. We will go through the script this will be most important for older kids who will be reading a part, or who have larger parts. We can also go over some of the music. We'll get the music to soloists to practice. Nonreaders and smaller parts can attend with their parents if they wish, or they can choose to get the part by email and work on learning it for the next rehearsal

Sunday 12/18:

Christmas Pageant Rehearsal 11AM - 12:30PM Everyone please come, we'll learn the music, and then go through the play with blocking, and music and singing. Very young children can attend with parents and leave when needed. Soloists, please stay after in order to practice with Jenanne

Thursday 12/22

Dress Rehearsal and Subway sandwiches! 11AM - 12:30PM This is for everyone! We'll go through the entire play with costumes. We usually need to do this at least a couple of times. After we're done, join us for Subway sandwiches in the parish hall (or take some to go)!

Saturday 12/24 — Christmas Eve!

Meet in the parish hall at 3:30PM

If we feel like we need to read through the play one more time before our performance, we can assemble a little earlier.

ALL SAINTS' YOUTH GODLY PLAY FOR ADVENT

By Cynthia Benkleman

We'll travel the road to Bethlehem with Joseph and Mary in Godly Play during Advent! We'll hear a story for each traditional Sunday theme: Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love!

**CRECHE OFFERINGS**

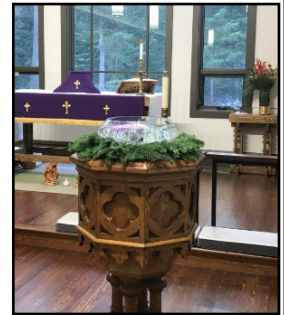
Advent began on November 27, and we are continuing our annual All Saints' tradition of bringing gifts to the altar/creche each of the 4 Sundays of Advent with some new recipients this year. Here is our schedule:

November 27: Shelf-stable healthy snacks, grocery store gift cards, and meals-in-a-can (Chili, Chef Boyardee, Soups) for the Flathead Valley Community College Food Pantry.

December 5: Stuffed animals for pediatric emergency room patients at North Valley Hospital. Stuffed animals need to be new and should be less than 12" tall.

December 12: Pet food for the Humane Society of Northwest Montana.

December 19: Diapers and feminine hygiene products for North Valley Food Bank (Whitefish) and Columbia Falls Food Bank.

**END OF YEAR ARTICLE**

First of all we would like to thank everyone for their support of the mission and ministries of All Saints' Episcopal Church. This week a mailing will be sent out updating people on their 2022 operating pledge status. As the year quickly draws to a close and some parishioners are still prayerfully considering a 2023 pledge, many have requested an update on the status of their pledge from this year. For those of you who have completed your pledges and those who are continuing to complete your pledges, we are extremely grateful for your support. If your records differ from ours, please contact Shawn Sloan, Parish Administrator. As always, if your circumstances have changed and you wish to amend your pledge, please contact Cynthia Benkelman, Treasurer. In January of 2023 you will receive a statement of your 2022 contributions for tax purposes. **Remember that to be credited to your 2022 taxes, any contributions need to be received or postmarked by December 31, 2022.** Should you wish to transfer appreciated stock to complete your pledge, it needs to be received in our account before December 31, and it is recommended that these be initiated no later than December 21, 2022 in order to be recorded for 2022.

The office is usually "officially" closed the week between Christmas and New Year's (which this year is December 26-30), however at some point during the week Shawn will be in the office taking care of end of year financial paperwork. If you need to drop off a contribution you'd like to have credited for the 2022 tax year, please call or text her in advance, to make sure she's in the office or to arrange a time to meet her in the office.

Once again, thank you for your continued support of All Saints'.

DECEMBER 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Springs Service 11:00 am Book Group 6:00-7:00 pm	2	3
4 SERVICE HOURS PAGE 6 Adult Sunday School 11:30 Stuffed animals to creche	5	6	7 Bible Study Live and on Zoom 10:30-11:30	8 Springs Service 11:00 am Book Group 6:00-7:00 pm	9	10
11 SERVICE HOURS PAGE 6 Holy Moly! 10 am Pageant rehearsal 11 am Pageant rehearsal Pet food to creche	12	13	14 Bible Study Live and on Zoom 10:30-11:30	15 Springs Service 11:00 am Book Group 6:00-7:00 pm	16	17
18 SERVICE HOURS PAGE 6 Adult Sunday School 11:30 Pageant rehearsal 11 am Diapers and fem. products to creche	19 VESTRY 5:00 pm live and via Zoom	20	21 Bible Study Live and on Zoom 10:30-11:30	22 Springs Service 11:00 am Book Group 6:00-7:00 pm Pageant rehearsal 11 am	23	24 Christmas Eve Children's Pageant 4 pm Evening Ser- vice 8 pm
25  SERVICE HOURS PAGE 6	26	27 Prayer School (maybe)	28 Bible Study Live and on Zoom 10:30-11:30 (Maybe)	29 Springs Service 11:00 am Book Group 6:00-7:00 pm (Maybe)	30	31

SUNDAY SERVICE HOURS

8:00 am-service only, no music

10:00 am-service with hymns



10:00 am service is streamed live on Facebook & YouTube



11:00 am-coffee hour

7:00 pm-contemplative service, no hymns

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

4:00 pm– Children’s Pageant

8:00-Evening Worship

(Additional services may be added closer to Christmas Eve)



ALL SAINTS’ EPISCOPAL CHURCH ORGANIZATION

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Parish Administrator: Shawn Sloan
Email: allsaintsmt@gmail.com
Cell: 406-291-3613

Christian Formation Minister/Children and
Youth: Cynthia Benkelman
Email: cynthia@allsaintsmt.org
Cell: 406-261-9636

*Glory to God, whose power, working in us,
can do infinitely more than we can ask or
imagine: Glory to him from generation to
generation in the church, and in Christ
Jesus forever. and ever.*

Find us here:

Just click on the link!

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www.facebook.com/allsaintsmt](https://www.facebook.com/allsaintsmt)

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Webpage link:
<http://www.allsaintsmt.org>

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Senior Warden: Suzanne DeVore
Junior Warden: Carl Thomas
Treasurer: Cynthia Benkelman
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