

ALL SAINTS' E-LETTER

VOLUME 11 ISSUE 12 DECEMBER 2021

CRECHE OFFERINGS



Advent Offerings brought to the Crèche

As is our tradition at All Saints', we'll bring gifts to the crèche for the most vulnerable in our community during the four Sundays of Advent.

First Sunday of Advent, November 28 - Teddy Bears

You are invited to bring teddy bears and other NEW stuffed animals, less than 12" tall, which will then be given to North Valley Hospital. Every year North Valley Hospital gave away thousands of stuffed animals to their young pediatric patients who came to the emergency room. Often that can be a frightening experience and a soft stuffed toy can go a long way to provide comfort.



Second Sunday of Advent, December 5 - Food for Food Pantries

We collect non-perishable food for local food banks as the offering for this day. A concerted effort to help well stock these vital ministries in our valley is important when the need is so great.



Third Sunday of Advent, December 12 - Pet Food

On this day we will collect dog and cat food in an effort to provide food for the pets of people having difficulty making ends meet. The food you donate will be transported to the Flathead Valley Spay and Neuter Task Force for distribution to those who can use such help.

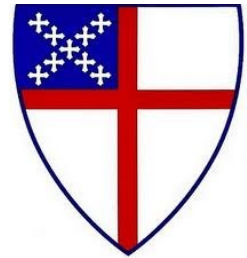


Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 19 - NEW Warm Clothing

For the last Sunday of Advent our focus is on warm clothing for the Warming Center, a low barrier shelter which provides a warm and safe place for unhoused individuals during the coldest months of the year. The Warming Center opened its permanent home in October of 2020 and completed some major renovations this year including showers, laundry, and lockers.



WE WILL NOT BE DELIVERING THESE GIFTS IMMEDIATELY AFTER COLLECTING THEM, SO IF YOU MISSED ANY OF THESE OFFERINGS AND STILL WANT TO CONTRIBUTE, FEEL FREE TO BRING THEM TO CHURCH THE FOLLOWING SUNDAY OR DROP THEM BY THE OFFICE DURING THE WEEK.



Merry
Christmas

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FROM THE RECTOR

Very rarely, does the Gospel of John get read at Christmas services in the Episcopal Church. John 1 is a big text. It's cosmic in scale, and theologically dense. And folks in the pews would rather hear about shepherds abiding in their fields and angels singing their glorias, and understandably so. I love that side of the story too.

But in John's prologue, we learn when, where, what, and who the Word was. My high school journalism teacher would be so proud! The structure of these first two verses of John are what are known as a *chiasmus*. In a chiasmus, the second half of a parallel sentence reverses itself. You can chart it with a big ol' "X".

"In the beginning was the Word, and the word was with God,"

X

"And the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God."

A chiasmus gets its name from the Greek letter "*chi*", which looks like an X. *Chi* became a popular symbol for early Christians since *chi* and *rho* (shaped like a p), were shorthand for Jesus' name: *Christos*.

Some medieval monks with tons of talent (and even more time) would painstakingly draw and embellish this symbol as they hand-copied the scriptures. The Book of Kells, on display at Trinity College Dublin, has a stunning example of a Chi-Rho. Give it a Google: "Chi-Rho Kells"!

At the basic structural level of these verses, symbols, and words, we see God cry out the truth of the Son. The Word became the name of a man: Jesus, "God saves". Words are very important in our tradition, and we're told that God created worlds with words. But while words are important, they alone cannot save us. No matter what stories we tell or what songs we sing on any given Sunday, there is only one power in the universe that brings us back to the beginning. And in the end, the *chi* becomes a cross from which Christ breathed out his last earthly words for our salvation.

The Gospel from the first week of Advent instructs us to be aware and to look for the signs of things that are coming to fruition. And by this Jesus means not just the end of things, and not just the joy of God coming to us as one of us, but our own salvation. He says, "raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

This Advent season, I pray that God will afford us all the space to contemplate these holy mysteries, not simply in the letters on the page, but in the litter and letter of our day-to-day lives. May your Adventide be luminous and purposeful.

To alpha, omega, and back again.

-Charlie+

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of All Saints' will be held on Sunday, January 23rd, 2022. At the meeting the annual reports from the Rector, the Parish Treasurer, and all organizations and activities of the Parish will be received by the congregation; new members will be elected to the Vestry as well as delegates and alternates to the Diocesan Convention; and any other business that needs to come before the parish shall be conducted.

There are at least 3 vestry positions up for election, so if you are interested in becoming a member of the vestry, or a delegate to Diocesan Convention, feel free to talk to any member of the Vestry for more information.



CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

By Cynthia Benkelman

Christmas Pageant planning is underway!

We always do a short, fun musical, and perform at the 4:00 PM Christmas Eve Service. This year we will have a play that will be easy to learn, with letters and scrolls that characters will read, so no memorizing. There are some original songs, and a couple of familiar Christmas carols. It usually lasts 15-20 minutes.

If you have not already done so, please let me know if you have a kid interested in participating in the pageant. I need to know what size part they would like (reading a longer part? reading one or two lines? no lines?) and/or if they would like to sing a solo? There are songs for the whole group and songs that have parts where individuals can sing a verse.

All kids are invited and encouraged to join us, from toddlers to high school students. This year's play is "Christmas Letters," which involves kids reading a letter to a person in the Christmas story, and then that biblical character answers their letter by reading from a "scroll". Costumes will be pretty minimal, with kids wearing "Christmas outfits" and biblical characters will have a robe to indicate their part. For the littlest actors, we'll have fun things for them to wear if they choose, like angel halos, star wands, or even animal hats.

We have three practices. It's really helpful if your child can go to all of them, but if they cannot, let me know and we will work around your schedule.

Practice will be:

Sunday Dec. 12, 12:30 - 2:00 PM We will learn some of the music that the kids will sing together. We'll read through the play so that each character can see how their part fits in. Any soloists will be able to work with our accompanist, Jenanne Solberg towards the end of rehearsal if they wish. We've found that the littlest kids get restless and a little bored (and we certainly understand!) so I try to have their participation at the beginning, and parents can take them home afterwards if they don't want to stick around for the whole rehearsal.

Sunday Dec. 19, 12:30 - 1:30 PM Jenanne will only have a short time this Sunday because of a symphony performance, so this rehearsal will be a little shorter also. We'll go through the play once, with group songs, and then any soloists can spend a few minutes with Jenanne to practice their parts.

Tuesday Dec 21, 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM This is the Dress Rehearsal! We'll go through the play several times, with music, and distribute any costumes.

Friday December 24, 3:15 PM Meet in the parish hall, to get ready to go over to the service!

This is so much fun every year, and we're excited to be able to do this, especially since we have a new space and larger church now! Kids can do as much or as little as they like. Please let me know as soon as possible, how your child would like to participate.



SAMARITAN HOUSE

By Vera Smith and Amy Peterson

We are happy to share that the Giving Tree has returned this Christmas for the benefit of the guests at Samaritan House.

This year though, their needs have changed. Their Underwear Closet is desperately low for new men's and women's underwear, so the tags on the Christmas Tree will indicate sizes and gender. As is our usual custom, please return your gifts unwrapped along with the tag taken from the tree and we will do the wrapping and delivering.



There will also be several tags on the tree for families with children. These tags will list the children's wishes for Christmas presents if you would like to assist with that.

If you prefer to donate a gift card from Walmart or Target, we will be sure Samaritan House will use them appropriately.

Finally, if you would like to donate a usable one or two-person tent, it would be greatly appreciated. Samaritan House offers these tents when they and other facilities are unable to shelter those looking for a room for the night. And, of course, the tents can be used over again when the unsheltered find themselves without any other option.

Our Samaritan House Giving Tree will be located under the portico on Sundays until all tags are gone. If you miss picking up a tag on Sunday, you can give Shawn a call (406-291-3613) to coordinate a time to pick up a tag or she can let you know if all tags have been taken. If you would kindly return your gifts by Sunday, December 19th, to Memorial Hall, there will be a specially designated area near Shawn's desk for the drop off.

With deep gratitude for your participation in this very special, if not a bit unusual, outreach! Blessings to you, your families and to our brothers and sisters in Christ who will benefit greatly from your generosity.

NATE CHUTE FOUNDATION

It is a Christmas tradition at All Saints' Church to give away to the community, the loose offerings of currency and checks designated as "Christmas Community Offering" we receive from the 4 Christmas services. This year our Christmas offerings will go to the [Nate Chute Foundation](#), a nonprofit dedicated to reducing suicide in western Montana through education, outreach, and training. NCF offers evidence-based training and education to area schools and organizations to help identify suicidal behavior and build resiliency. They also provide financial assistance for professional counseling to those at risk of suicide. For all age groups, Montana has ranked in the top five for suicide rates in the nation, for the past thirty years. The NCF has been working vigilantly the last few months with area schools as they seek to address the rash of teenage suicides seen in Flathead County high schools. As we celebrate Christ's coming among us as one of us, this seems like a particularly timely way to express love for God and for our neighbors.



**Merry
Christmas**

ABBIE SHELTER

Covid has obviously affected the lives of not only individuals, but also some of the organizations All Saints' has supported over the years. The vestry started a Covid relief fund last year and has given away money to help individuals and families impacted by Covid, but we have not forgotten one of the organizations we have partnered with for many years, the Abbie Shelter. The Abbie Shelter is a remarkable agency which directly serves victims and survivors of domestic violence. Although "Shelter" is part of their name, they are much more than just that. They also provide court advocacy and can help with Orders of Protection; they offer counseling which can treat all mental health needs and have specialized training in domestic violence and sexual assault; they staff a 24 hour helpline providing a nonjudgmental listening ear and the gateway to their other services. They are there to support victims of violence through the process of getting safe. This Christmas, All Saints' Covid Relief Fund will be sending a donation to the Abbie Shelter to support their mission.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR TREASURER

First of all I would like to thank everyone for their support of the mission and ministries of All Saints' Episcopal Church. Recently two separate mailings were sent out. The first informed parishioners who made a pledge to the capital campaign, where they stand on their pledge, as well as an update on the status of offices (for the rector and parish administrator) which were part of the capital campaign. The second contained an update on parishioners 2021 operating pledges. As the year is quickly drawing to a close and parishioners are determining their 2022 pledges, many had requested an update on the status of both those pledges. 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 email me or give me a call. In January of 2022 you will receive a statement of your 2021 contributions for tax purposes. Remember that to be credited to your 2021 taxes, any contributions need to be received or postmarked by December 31, 2021. 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 22, 2021 in order to be recorded for 2021.

Thank you for your continued support.
Best Regards,

Cynthia Benkelman
Treasurer, All Saints' Episcopal Church

BOOK STUDY

After a short hiatus, book study started back up on December 2nd. Their new book is Sara Miles' *Jesus Freak*. Since this book is out of print, Fr. Charlie purchased as many used copies as he could find. Book study meets Thursdays at 6 pm in Memorial Hall and via Zoom. Contact Fr. Charlie if you need the Zoom link, a book, or to get the study questions.

Book study will take a break on December 23rd as well as during the week the offices are closed (December 30).



KAY LORENZ

A Memorial Service and Holy Eucharist will be held for Kay Lorenz at 12 noon on Thursday, January 6, 2022, the Feast of the Epiphany.

**OFFICE CLOSING**

After Christmas, the staff will be taking a little break over the holidays. The office will "officially" be closed from December 27 - January 1, but Shawn will be in and out of the office to take care of end of the year financial paperwork. Remember, if you would like to make a donation to All Saints' and have it credited to your 2021 taxes, all contributions must be postmarked by December 31 or be given to Shawn, in the office, by then. Since Shawn may not be in the office during her "regular" Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday times, it's best to call or text her (406) 291-3613 to ensure you can coordinate a time to meet her there.

CHRISTMAS SERVICE HOURS REMINDER**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24TH**

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT 4:00 PM

THE SPRINGS 6:00 PM

ALL SAINTS' 8:00 PM

ALL SAINTS' 10:00 PM

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 25TH

ALL SAINTS' 10:00 AM

ALL SAINTS' YOUTH

All Saints' middle school/high school youth had a fun meeting with the Christ Church youth group! They joined us for pizza, and the Christ Church Youth Minister, Janelle Willett, led games. Fr. Charlie played a "Question" game with the kids, and then we all attended the contemplative service at 7 PM. We will be going to Christ Church next on January 16.



Contact Cynthia for more information about the next youth group get together.



DECEMBER 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Bible Study Live and on Zoom 10:30-11:30	2 Springs Service 11 am Book Group 6:00-7:00 pm Live and on Zoom	3	4
5 Creche offering: food for food banks Service Hours on page 9 Adult Sunday School 12:20	6	7	8 Bible Study Live and on Zoom 10:30-11:30	9 Springs Service 11 am Book Group 6:00-7:00 pm Live and on Zoom	10	11
12 Creche offering: pet food Service Hours on page 9 Adult Sunday School 12:20	13	14	15 Bible Study Live and on Zoom 10:30-11:30	16 Springs Service 11 am Book Group 6:00-7:00 pm Live and on Zoom	17	18
19 Creche offering: warm clothing Service Hours on page 9 Adult Sunday School 12:20	20 Vestry 5pm Live and on Zoom	21	22 Bible Study Live and on Zoom 10:30-11:30	23	24 Christmas pageant 4:00 pm The Springs 6:00pm All Saints' 8:00pm All Saints' 10:00pm	25 All Saints' 10:00 am
26 Service Hours on page r	27 Office closed	28 Office closed	29 Office closed	30 Office closed	31 Office closed	

2022
HAPPY NEW YEAR

SUNDAY SERVICE HOURS

7:30 am-service only, no music

9:00 am-service with hymns



9:00 am service is streamed live on Facebook & YouTube



11:00 am-service with hymns

7:00 pm-contemplative service, no hymns

HOME COMMUNION AND VISITATIONS

If you have had to take some time away from church, but would like to receive the sacrament, please let us know! While the bishop has requested that clergy refrain from scheduling home visits, (hospitals and senior living facilities won't allow them either!), Fr. Charlie would be more than happy to bring you the sacrament/say prayers with you on your doorstep, the hospital parking lot, or at the church.



ALL SAINTS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH ORGANIZATION

Church location:

2048 Conn Road
Columbia Falls, MT
Phone: 406-862-2863

Church mailing address:

PO Box 1923
Whitefish, MT 59937

Rector: Reverend Charlie Knuth
Email: cknuth@allsaintsmt.org
Cell: 801-635-5162

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!

Facebook link: [https://
www.facebook.com/allsaintsmt](https://www.facebook.com/allsaintsmt)

YouTube link: [http://
www.youtube.com/channel/
UCPZ_oAI6n1GwSPS5dIAkzdA](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPZ_oAI6n1GwSPS5dIAkzdA)

Webpage link: [http://
www.allsaintsmt.org](http://www.allsaintsmt.org)

Vestry Members

Rector: Reverend Charlie Knuth
Senior Warden: Leif Peterson
Junior Warden: Grace Benkelman
Treasurer: Carl Thomas
Clerk: Kathy Thomas
Cynthia Benkelman
Betsy Paugh
Heidi Sobczak
Henry Stamm

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