

# Trinity Tidings

## December, 2011

✱ Monthly Newsletter for Trinity “Old Swedes” Episcopal Church ✱

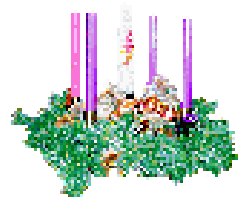
### ADVENT

**T**his year (2011) ADVENT begins **Sunday, November 27, 2011**, and ends **Saturday, December 24, 2011**. How are the dates determined? [Advent](#) begins on the fourth Sunday prior to [Christmas](#) Day, or the Sunday which falls closest to November 30, and lasts through Christmas Eve, or December 24.



**Today**, Sunday, November 27, we will light the first candle of the Advent Wreath. Since it has been a whole year since we last did this, I think that a review of the meaning of the Advent Wreath is in order.

**The Advent wreath** is an increasingly popular symbol of the beginning of the Church year in many churches as well as homes. It is a circular evergreen wreath (real or artificial) with five candles, four around the wreath and one in the center. Since the wreath is symbolic and a vehicle to tell the Christmas story, there are various ways to understand the symbolism. The exact meaning given to the various aspects of the wreath is not as important as the story to which it invites us to listen, and participate.



The **circle of the wreath** reminds us of God Himself, His eternity and endless mercy, which has no beginning or end. The **green of the wreath** speaks of the hope that we have in God, the hope of newness, of renewal, of eternal life. **Candles** symbolize the light of God coming into the world through the birth of His son. The **four outer candles** represent the period of waiting during the four Sundays of Advent, which themselves symbolize the four centuries of waiting between the prophet Malachi and the birth of Christ.

The **colors of the candles** vary with different traditions, but there are usually three purple or blue candles, corresponding to the sanctuary colors of Advent, and one pink or rose candle.

One of the purple candles is lighted the first Sunday of Advent, a Scripture is read, a short devotional or reading is given, and a prayer offered. On subsequent Sundays, previous candles are relighted with an additional one lighted. The pink candle is usually lighted on the third Sunday of Advent. However, different churches or traditions light the pink candle on different Sundays depending on the symbolism used (see above on [Colors of Advent](#)). In Churches that use a [Service of the Nativity](#), it is often lighted on the fourth Sunday of Advent, the final Sunday before Christmas.

The **light of the candles** itself becomes an important symbol of the season. The light reminds us that Jesus is the light of the world that comes into the darkness of our lives to bring newness, life, and hope. It also reminds us that we are called to be a light to the world as we reflect the light of God's grace to others (Isa 42:6). The progression in the lighting of the candles symbolizes the various aspects of our waiting experience. As the candles are lighted over the four week period, it also symbolizes the darkness of fear and hopelessness receding and the shadows of sin falling away as more and more light is shed into the world. The flame of each new candle reminds the worshippers that something is happening, and that more is yet to come. Finally, the light that has come into the world is plainly visible as the Christ candle is lighted at Christmas, and worshippers rejoice over the fact that the promise of long ago has been realized.

The **first candle** is traditionally the candle of **Expectation** or **Hope** (or in some traditions, Prophecy). This draws attention to the anticipation of the coming of an Anointed One, a Messiah, that weaves its way like a golden thread through Old Testament history. As God's people were abused by power hungry kings, led astray by self-centered prophets, and lulled into apathy by half-hearted religious leaders, there arose a longing among some for God to raise up a new king who could show them how to be God's people. They yearned for a return of God's dynamic presence in their midst.

And so, God revealed to some of the prophets that indeed He would not leave His people without a true Shepherd. While they expected a new earthly king, their expectations fell far short of God's revelation of Himself in Christ. And yet, the world is not yet fully redeemed. So, we again with expectation, with hope, await God's new work in history, the second Advent, in which He will again reveal Himself to the world. And we understand in a profound sense that the best, the highest of our expectations will fall far short of what our Lord's Second Advent will reveal!

The **remaining three candles** of Advent may be associated with different aspects of the Advent story in different churches, or even in different years. Usually they are organized around characters or themes as a way to unfold the story and direct attention to the celebrations and worship in the season. So, the sequence for the remaining three Sundays might be Bethlehem, Shepherds, Angels. Or Love, Joy, Peace. Or John the Baptist, Mary, the Magi. Or the Annunciation, Proclamation, Fulfillment. Whatever sequence is used, the Scripture readings, prayers, lighting of the candles, the participation of worshipers in the service, all are geared to unfolding the story of redemption through God's grace in the Incarnation.

The **third candle**, usually for the Third Sunday of Advent, is traditionally Pink or Rose, and symbolizes **Joy** at the soon Advent of the Christ. It marks a shift from the more solemn tone of the first two Sundays of Advent that focus on Preparation and Hope, to a more joyous atmosphere of anticipation and expectancy. Sometimes the colors of the sanctuary and vestments are also changed to Rose for this Sunday. As noted above, in some churches the pink Advent candle is used on the fourth Sunday to mark the joy at the impending Nativity of Jesus.

Whatever sequence is adopted for these Sundays, the theme of Joy can still be the focus for

the pink candle. For example, when using the third Sunday to commemorate the visit of the Magi the focus can be on the Joy of worshipping the new found King. Or the Shepherds as the symbol for the third Sunday brings to mind the joy of the proclamation made to them in the fields, and the adoration expressed as they knelt before the Child at the manger. If used on the fourth Sunday of Advent, it can symbolize the Joy in fulfilled hope.

The center candle is white and is called the Christ Candle. It is traditionally lighted on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. However, since many Protestant churches do not have services on those days, many light it on the Sunday preceding Christmas, with all five candles continuing to be lighted in services through [Epiphany](#) (Jan 6). The central location of the Christ Candle reminds us that the incarnation is the heart of the season, giving light to the world. Dennis Bratcher Copyright © 2011 CRI/Voice, Institute

### The Episcopal Church celebrates Advent online

The Office of Communication of the Episcopal Church is offering new ways to enjoy, share, and actively participate in observing the seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany.

The Episcopal Church's Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/episcopalian](http://www.facebook.com/episcopalian)) and Twitter presence ([twitter.com/iamepiscopalian](http://twitter.com/iamepiscopalian)) feature special Advent and Christmas postings inviting readers to share their thoughts and answer questions such as, "What's your favorite Christmas pageant memory?"

**Help us set up the Candelabra: Sunday December 4, right after the 10am worship service we will need helpers to put up the candles in the church windows. Please plan to stay for a few minutes to give us a hand. Our more youthful members will be needed to go up and down the stairs of the tower to retrieve the candelabras for us.**



### **Our Traditional St Lucia Festival of Lights and Christmas Pageant**

Rehearsals for St Lucia and the Christmas pageant will be organized through the Sunday School which meets at 9:45am every Sunday. Please have your children come to Sunday School so that they can participate in these beautiful traditions.

The Annual Swedish St. Lucia and The Festival of Lights will at Trinity "Old Swedes" Church on December 11th at 6 PM. The old story is also about Tomte (the Swedish Santa), the Star Boys who tell of the Wise Men, and St. Lucia herself, who wears a crown of candle lights as she carries her tray of saffron buns. She symbolically heralds the return of light to the earth on the darkest day of the year and the beginning of the Christmas season.



# Christmas

will be celebrated at Trinity Church on Saturday, December 24<sup>th</sup> (Christmas Eve) with a Candlelight Family Worship at 5pm, Traditional Carol Singing at 10:30 pm and Candlelight Festival Eucharist at 11:00 pm. And on Christmas Day, Sunday December 25, Holy Eucharistic will be at 11am.



**Our annual “Greening of the Church” will be on Sunday, December 18, after 10AM service. Please pause from your own Christmas preparations at home and spend about 1 hour with us as we put up the Trinity Christmas trees and garlands. The fellowship is fun and results are inspirational!**



[View Our Latest News](#)



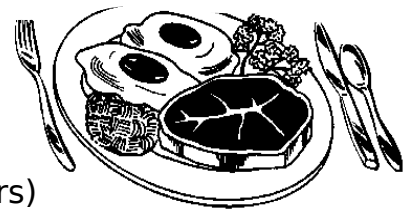
**Bring a friend** to Our Candlelight Christmas Pageant on Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24<sup>th</sup> at 5pm. The Children will be rehearsing their parts in Sunday School. They will need to be at the Church no later than 4:30pm.

**Bring a friend** to see our church at our most beautiful and inspirational time of the year: Our Midnight Christmas Eve worship beginning with carols at 10:30pm and Holy Eucharist at 11pm. Every year our church is lit with over 100 candles bringing the light of Christ to our Community of Faith on Saturday, December 24<sup>th</sup>.



## December Notices

- Sunday, Dec 4 Set up candles in church, after 10AM Service  
St. Lucia practice, after 10AM Service
- Sunday, Dec 11 St. Lucia practice, after 10AM Service  
St. Lucia festival, 6PM
- Sunday, Dec 18 GREENING OF THE CHURCH after 10AM service
- Saturday, Dec 24 Children's candlelight pageant & holy eucharist  
5PM  
Carol sing 10:30PM  
Candlelight Holy Eucharist 11PM
- Sunday, Dec 25 Holy Eucharist 11AM
- Sunday, Jan 1 New Year's Eucharist celebrated at 10AM service



Dining Club (an evening out with adult parish members)  
- No dining club this December.

## FROM THE VESTRY

### You May Have Heard

You may have heard through the "grapevine" that we are talking with St. Stephen's, Mullica Hill on possibly establishing a priest sharing arrangement between our two parishes. St. Stephen's long-time pastor, Reverend Valerie Balling, left during the summer.

We held our first meeting on Sunday, October 16. This initial meeting was to see how serious both of us are in pursuing this arrangement and how willing both parishes can work together to set up such an arrangement. Attending were Dave Poponi, Senior Warden, and Sheila Raman, Junior Warden, from St. Stephen's; Tom Matteo, Bob Fredd, and me represented Trinity. I am pleased to tell you that the meeting went well. I am also pleased to tell you that one area where we all agreed, and it was made perfectly clear, was that both churches, although willing to share the priest, we will continue as individual churches, like we are today. This is **not** a merger, by any means.

If you read my article in November's newsletter regarding our financial situation, this is an area that the Vestry wants to look into, as it would help us out financially. St. Stephen's is looking at this as a financial benefit, also. - Carol Sibley, Senior Warden

# OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY



## A message from our Out Reach Mission Programs

**Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.**

During Advent, as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus, perhaps we can put aside the sentimentality that pervades Christmas – the happy Virgin in a beautiful blue gown, the glowing Christ child in a tidy manger – and consider the probable circumstances of Jesus' birth: no prenatal care, no birthing room, no midwife, no pediatrician on call, no postpartum care for Mary, who gave birth in a strange town after a 70-mile ride on a donkey, then had to flee to a foreign country. Circumstances today are better, yes, but 26,000 children under five die every day, many from preventable diseases, and approximately 500,000 women die every year from complications due to pregnancy and childbirth. Episcopal Relief & Development calls on us to help heal this hurting world by fulfilling our commitment to achieving MillenniumDevelopment Goals, of which the fourth and fifth are to reduce child mortality and to improve maternal health.

To learn what you can do to help achieve the MDGs and give the mothers and children of the world a brighter future, visit the web sites off Episcopal Relief and Development ([www.er-d.org](http://www.er-d.org)) and the Episcopal Public Policy Network ([www.episcopalchurch.org/eppn](http://www.episcopalchurch.org/eppn)). Visit the web site [www.er-d.org/giftsforlife/](http://www.er-d.org/giftsforlife/) to learn how you can, with a simple gift, change the lives of individuals and families around the world. Gifts range from mosquito nets to goats and chickens and other livestock to drought-resistant seeds to clean-water systems. And please, PRAY, ADVOCATE, GIVE to achieve the MDGs.



## **KINGS THINGS ANNUAL CHRISTMAS GIFT/FOOD DRIVE**

**Please have your donations at the church by Sunday, December 11**

**Once again we are asking for your generosity in helping Kings Things in our mission of helping the needy in our community. Your donated items of food and gifts will go a long way in helping to make Christmas a better holiday for those that are less fortunate than we are. Last year, with your help, we provided food and gifts to 126 families, including 204 children. This year the numbers are expected to be much higher.**

## Kings Things

1404 Kings Highway  
Swedesboro, NJ 08085  
856-467-1796

Thrift Store Operations

Several new volunteers have been added to our ever growing group of men and women. In addition to them, High School Students are volunteering to complete their service hours for school projects. We thank them for their time and efforts. Clothing and Household Goods donations are arriving daily, sorted and placed on our shelves for sale. Stop in and see the new merchandise for sale. You will be surprised. Speaking of new merchandise, the Fall and Winter merchandise is on display. There is a nice assortment of winter coats for sale. Halloween and Thanksgiving merchandise is for sale. Take a look in the windows and see our display. If you can't come into the store and are driving by, just give us a wave to say hello.



### *Christmas Carols – Did you know?*

#### *The "Silent Night" Story*

*It's difficult to distinguish myth from fact when searching for the origins of the classic carol "Silent Night." The widely accepted story is that the curate of St. Nicholas church in the Austrian mountain village of Oberndorf was appalled to discover the the organ wouldn't play as he was making last-minute preparations for midnight mass on Christmas Eve, 1818. According to some versions, the organ has rusted, although it's difficult to imagine how that might have happened since the church was in regular use. Others say it had simply died of old age, while still other accounts suggest that mice or squirrels had been gnawing away at its bellows. Whatever the case, the curate, Joseph Mohr, had the equivalent of a panic attack. The flock would be arriving in a few hours and there would be no music.*

*In desperation, he grabbed a Christmas poem that he had written a couple of years earlier from his desk and rushed to the home of the church's assistant organist, Franz Gruber. He implored Gruber to set his simple words to music in a form that could be quickly learned by the choir and played on a guitar. Some chroniclers*

*credit divine intervention for Gruber's ability to compose the classic melody in the space of only a few hours. Whatever his inspiration what was destined to become one of the world's favorite carols was performed for the first time that night in the small church and the mass was saved.*

*However, one of the most scholarly works on the history of carols suggests this lovely story is "more fable than fact." Hugh Keyte and Andrew Parrott, authors of The New Oxford Book of Carols, say that in their research they could find no contemporary accounts that confirmed there was any problem with the church organ and this in reality it remained in use for many years afterward.*

*The story doesn't end there. For many years, the true origin of "Silent Night" was shrouded in mystery. Because Joseph Mohr did not sign his name to the original music, it became accepted throughout the region that the carol was a Tyrolean folk song. According to one story it was only when the king of Prussia, who had been deeply moved by the beauty of the song, sent a team of investigators to the region that the true authorship was revealed.*

*However it came about, it was several decades before Mohr and Gruber were officially recognized as the real writers of the lovely hymn that has become a standard in Christmas celebrations around the world.*

Now test your knowledge of Christmas music:

1. How are the plains described in the second verse of "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear"?  
a. flat and desolate, b. sad and lowly, c. broad and boundless, or d. rich and fertile
2. How are the skies described in the second verse of "If Came Upon a Midnight Clear"?  
a. darkening b. cloven c. golden, or d. bright'ning
3. What great American poet wrote the words to "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day"?  
a. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, b. Walt Whitman, c. Edgar Allan Poe, or  
d. Robert Frost
4. In the second verse of "O Little Town of Bethlehem," what is said to "proclaim the holy birth"?  
a. angels, b. heavens above, c. morning stars, or d. meek souls
5. Based on the modern calendar, the Three Kings of the carol arrived on January 6. What is the religious name of the day?  
a. Advent, b. Ascension, c. Epiphany, or d. Assumption
6. What is the literal English translation of "O Tannenbaum"?  
a. "O Christmas Tree", b. "O Fir Tree", c. "O Green Tree", or d. "O Eternal Tree"
7. "Silent Night" was originally played on which musical instrument?  
a. organ, b. piano, c. spinet, or d. guitar
8. In the third verse of "Once in Royal David's City," all Christian children are told to follow Christ's example by being what?  
a. cheerful, happy, laughing, b. mild, obedient, good, c. trustworthy, helpful, king, or d. respectful, docile, silent
9. What is the city that is referred to in the nineteenth century Irish Christmas carol "Once

in Royal David's City”?

a. Nazareth, b. Bethlehem, c. Jerusalem, or d. Jericho

10. The chorus of “We Three Kings of Orient Are” contains a line that begins: “Star of wonder .....” There are several versions of what follows. Which one is recognized as a correct by *The New Oxford Book of Carols*?

a. star so bright, b. star of night, c. star of right, or d. star of light

Footnote: “Quizmas Carols” by Gordon Pape and Deborah Kerbel.

Answers: 1. b, 2. b, 3. a, 4. c, 5. c, 6. b, 7. d, 8. b, 9. b, 10. b

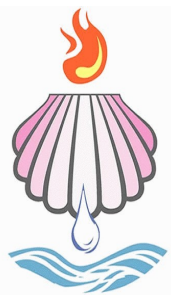
## PARISH OFFICE SCHEDULE

Jury Duty. Our Church Secretary, Sandy Strudwick, is on Jury Duty during this month so the office schedule will be very unusual. So please phone in before you plan to come . Mother Anne will be in the office Sunday - Wednesdays. Phone and email messages are checked regularly. Mother Anne’s home phone number is 856 829-4760. Our email address is [trinityoldswedes@comcast.net](mailto:trinityoldswedes@comcast.net).

**Our Bishop, THE RIGHT REVEREND GEORGE EDWARD COUNCELL**, has announced his retirement effective in October of 2013. Our Convocation Representatives, Carol Sibley, Edith Loigman, Linda and Bob Fritz, Lynn Randall and Joanna Becker Lippincott will attend an organization meeting in St John’s Episcopal Church on Sunday Dec. 11 at 3pm to elect members to the Bishop’s search committee. Please keep them and the representatives from all our Episcopal Churches in your prayers as we seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit

**Our Altar Flowers:** The flowers that grace our altar each Sunday represent the beauty of God's presence in the natural world as we celebrate the Sacrament of our Lord Jesus Christ. The parishioners of our church offer these flowers to the Glory of God and in memory of loved ones or in thanksgiving for a special blessing. You may offer a memorial or thanksgiving donation of (\$30) for the flowers on a particular Sunday by filling out our Altar Flower Envelopes These envelopes can be found in the church pews, by the front door of the church or in the church office. If you have a question or if you would like to make special arrangements please contact Bob Fredd, our Jr. Warden, at 241-0617. Your memorial or thanksgiving will be record in our Sunday bulletin.

**About weddings and baptisms:** The very best way to arrange for a wedding or a baptism is to speak to our priest, The Rev. Anne Wrede, immediately after any worship service. She will then arrange for a private meeting with you. Arrangements for baptisms are made in person with the priest by a parent or the person to be baptized if he or she is over the age of 16. In some cases a legal guardian can make the arrangements. The Baptism may take place after a formal preparation meeting with the priest, which usually takes place the week before the Baptism with the parents, God-parents and person to be baptized. Weddings can be scheduled only after the first formal meeting with the priest. Officiating at a wedding or a baptism is one of the most blessed experiences of being a member of the clergy. Mother Anne is more than happy to do both.



**About funerals:** When a loved one is near death or dies you are encouraged to phone our priest right away, day or night. She will meet with you and your family privately for vigil prayers. And she will go with you to the

funeral home to make arrangements if you wish. She will also meet with you to make arrangement for a funeral service. You can reach her through the church office at 856-467-1227 or her home phone at 856 829-4760.

**About Illness and Hospital visits:** Our priest will arrange to make hospital or home visits to say specific prayers for healing and to bring Holy Communion. In urgent situations she usually can meet you in a hospital emergency room. You can reach her through church office at 856-467-1227 or her home phone at 856 829-4760.



*The Episcopal Church welcomes you!*

Sunday Worship Service Schedule beginning September 11, 2011  
8:00 A.M. – HOLY EUCHARIST  
10:00 A.M. – RITE II - HOLY EUCHARIST with Music

Please phone the church office to arrange to have Communion brought to the homebound or for hospital visits. 467-1227

The Rev. Anne Wrede, Interim Vicar, (856) 829-4760  
Mrs. Edie Rohrman, Music Director, Parish Historian  
Ms. Karen A. Scepansky, Interim Organist  
Ms. Sandy Strudwick, Church Secretary, (856-467-1227)

The **TRINITY TIDINGS** will be published monthly starting again in September. Articles are appreciated. I would appreciate receiving material by the 20th of each month. **Please, plain text - no formatting!** You can drop articles off at the Church office or e-mail at (justfolkshere-edieloigman@yahoo.com). If you have suggestions for items to be included please let me know.

Thank you – *Edith & Barry Loigman, editors*



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(founded 1703)

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