



the Epistle

December 2017 Advent
Issue XIV Volume 12

A Monthly Publication of St. Paul's-on-the-Plains Episcopal Church
1510 Avenue X Lubbock TX 79401 • (806)762-2893 Phone • (806)762-8986 Fax

WE HAVE TO ASK FOR YOUR INDULGENCE WHEN IT COMES TO THIS ISSUE

Kathi is still recuperating from brain surgery and is not back in the office yet. So much of the "normal" content of a standard issue of this newsletter is not here.

Please keep Kathi in your prayers, and thanks for your understanding.

+ + +

FROM THE RECTOR

When you watch old western movies that are purportedly set in Texas, you often see the actors riding their horses through the countryside with saguaro cacti in the background.

Of course, we Texans know that there are no saguaros in Texas—you've got to go to southern Arizona to see them. And yet, because so many old movies which were set in Texas were actually filmed on location in the Tucson area, many people in our country and around the world mistakenly think that we've got saguaros here, which of course, we don't.

As the musician, "Reverend" Horton Heat sings,

There ain't no saguaros in Texas / it's not the kind of cactus we've got / but somehow we're stuck with this image / and changing it is gonna take a lot...

(By the way, if you like Rockabilly music, he's got a great album of Christmas music called, *We Three Kings: Christmas Favorites.*)

Of course, Hollywood also influences the way we think about Christmas, and like the "saguaros in Texas" there are some things that have crept into our picture of Christmas that don't come from scripture, but are rather from movies (or songs, or paintings, or Christmas cards...).

So here's a **SHORT QUIZ** about the accounts of Christmas as found in the Bible:

Ten questions all **true or false**—which things are true **according to what is said in the Gospels?**

1. Jesus was born on December 25, 1 A.D.
2. Joseph took his wife, Mary, with him from Nazareth to Bethlehem.
3. Mary rode a donkey to Bethlehem.
4. Jesus was born in a stable and laid in a manger.
5. Various animals, among them an ox and an ass, were present at Jesus' birth.
6. The shepherds brought sheep with them as gifts for the baby Jesus.
7. The Magi/Wisemen rode camels to Bethlehem.
8. The Magi/Wisemen showed up at the stable to visit right after the shepherds.
9. The Magi/Wisemen were Kings from the East.
10. There were three Magi/Wisemen who brought gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. *(answers on next page)*



+ *Worshipping God in the Beauty of Holiness* +
+ *Welcoming and Growing in Faith and Fellowship* +
+ *Serving our Neighbors in Jesus' Name* +

FROM THE RECTOR (continued)—CHRISTMAS QUIZ—ANSWERS:

All ten statements are FALSE from a strictly scriptural point of view.

1. *Jesus was born on December 25, 1 AD*

We have no idea what the date was—December 25 has a 1-in-365-chance of being correct. Also Jesus was most likely born between 7 BC and 4 BC.

2. *Joseph took his wife, Mary, with him from Nazareth to Bethlehem.*

They were betrothed/engaged, and not yet married (Luke 2:5).

3. *Mary rode a donkey to Bethlehem.*

Who knows? Scripture is silent. Maybe they didn't own a donkey and she had to walk. Either way, by foot or by donkey, it'd be a tough nearly-100-mile journey when you're ready to give birth.

4. *Jesus was born in a stable and laid in a manger.*

Could be, but the word stable is never used. Luke 2:7 says, "(She) laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the *kataluma*." *Kataluma* = Guest Room. The same word is used for the "Upper Room" later in Luke 22:11: "Where is the quest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?" So Jesus could have been born in a cave-stable, or on the bottom floor of a (relative's?) house where they would often keep livestock, or in a courtyard where travelers could camp out—those are all places where you might find a manger when a "guest room" was unavailable.

5. *Various animals, among them an ox and an ass, were present at Jesus' birth.*

The Gospels are silent. People may have gotten that idea from reading Isaiah 1:3 "The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master's crib; but Israel does not know, my people do not understand."

6. *The shepherds brought sheep with them as gifts for the baby Jesus.*

Scripture is silent. Luke 2:15-16 says, "The shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went..." But it doesn't say if they took any sheep with them.

7. *The Wisemen rode camels to Bethlehem.*

The Gospels are silent. Horses are also a possibility. People may have gotten the idea of camels from reading Isaiah 60:6 "A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold

and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD."

8. *The Wisemen showed up at the stable to visit right after the shepherds.*

That only happens

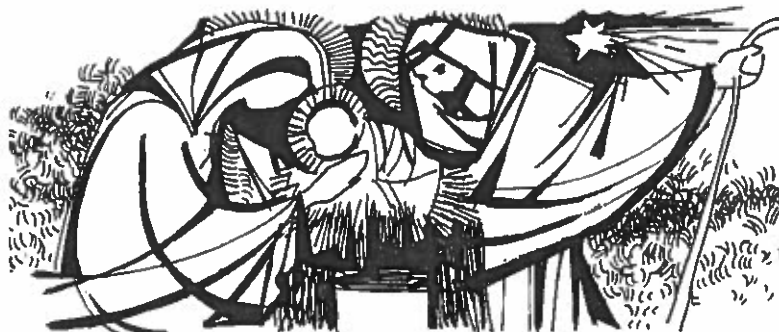
that way in Christmas pageants. Herod ordered the death of all the baby boys in Bethlehem under 2 years of age (Matthew 2:16), so a fair amount of time may have elapsed since Jesus' birth. Plus the Magi visited Jesus in a house (Matthew 2:11).

9. *The Wisemen were Kings from the East.*

They were astrologers. The same word for Magi is translated as "magician" or "sorcerer" in Acts 13:6 & 8 (if you like them, they're "Wisemen"—if you don't, they're "sorcerers").

10. *There were three Wisemen who brought gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.*

There were three kinds of gifts brought by an indeterminate number of "Magi from the East" (Matthew 2:1).



DECEMBER 24—SERVICES FOR 4 ADVENT & CHRISTMAS EVE

This year, 12.24 falls on a Sunday. The morning will be the 4th Sunday of Advent—the evening will be Christmas Eve.

So we will have ONE Sunday morning service observing the 4th Sunday of Advent:

10:30 a.m.—4th Sunday of Advent. This will be a said service with Advent hymns (and the focus will still be Advent, not Christmas).

And then we will have our regular Christmas Eve services:

4:30 p.m.—Children's Service. This is a noisy and kid-friendly service, with a VERY simplified liturgy (similar to a Children's Chapel service), including a simplified Eucharistic prayer.

6:30 p.m.—Early Christmas Eve "Vigil" Service. This will be a "real" Christmas Eve service, though just a bit "plainer" than the "Midnight" service (it will NOT have incense). This service will begin with 15 minutes of Christmas music at 6:30, with the processional hymn and service proper beginning at 6:45. It will be a full Eucharist with a sermon and traditional carols.

10:30 p.m.—Late Christmas Eve "Midnight" Service. This is the service with "all the trimmings". It begins with 15 minutes of Christmas music at 10:30, with the service proper beginning at 10:45. INCENSE WILL BE USED at this service, only.

Nursery

Nursery will be available for the 6:30 p.m. Christmas Eve "Vigil" Service

Sunday School

We will not have Sunday School classes on Sunday, December 24th or Sunday, December 31st.

*You are cordially invited to attend the annual
St. Paul's on-the-Plains Episcopal Church Women's*

CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

Wednesday, December 13, 2017

11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

at the home of

Caroline Kopp

10804 Norwood Avenue

RSVP to

Caroline.kopp@att.net or call 806-729-6027

Please bring an article of winter clothing for the Thrift House.



**THE CHURCH OFFICE
WILL BE CLOSED**
Thursday Dec 21
Tuesday Dec 26
Wednesday Dec 27

The office will be open for
normal hours, 9-3, on
Thursday, Dec 28

WHERE IS BETHLEHEM? By C W Harriger

The house was purchased for \$45, torn down board by board and hauled by wagon to a new location. This was done around 1915. The cut stone basement was in place and the house erected as it had been. In 1919 my father was born into what would become a family of thirteen children. Dad was somewhere in the middle as was the house. Located in a remote and lush green valley with forest and stream on a dirt road removed from neighbors by a mile one direction, three miles the other. When the sun went down it was dark and quiet. Water came from a spring, the bathroom was out past the apple tree and the bath tub came out once a week.

So, how is there a Christmas story in this setting? You need to know two more details. There were several barns with one always referred to as the "lower barn" and going in a different direction was "mailman hill" that ended in a ridge running across the back of the farm. The ruler of this little kingdom was a woman whose heart was stolen by my grandfather. She was known to me as Grandma Kate. A German girl from a few valleys over. She would gather her children together, my dad being one, and tell Bible stories. In one season it might be Philistines who were always assembled on the ridge above mailman hill from where they would come charging down with spears and swords. Exciting times for little children. However, the best story was in winter when two feet of snow covered the fields creating an even deeper silence on the farm. As Christmas approached, Kate would begin telling of the

birth of the Christ Child. She would point towards the lower barn sitting a hundred yards away with snow drifted against the sides and covering the roof. In that barn she created the vision of a manger amongst the animals sheltered against the winter weather. My father imagined wise men, Mary and Joseph, and the small Christ Child resting in the hay. It was a good story for stealing the imagination of a young boy who lived by lamp and candle with forest and field and if his luck held, a star filled night sky. I never heard Kate tell her stories. She died shortly after was born in 42. It was many years later before the subject of early farm life came up. I was a grown man with children of my own sitting out one night on that very farm with my dad when he said, "I have never been able to listen to Bible stories without them taking place on this farm". He pointed toward the ridge and said, "The Philistines are still there and Jesus will always be born in the lower barn each Christmas". What a legacy that German girl from a few valleys over left behind. The question remains: Where is Bethlehem?



FROM THE VESTRY ABOUT SECURITY

The Vestry and Rector are mindful of the concerns we all feel as the result of the recent atrocity in Sutherland Springs. While there are no measures that can be taken which guarantee everyone's safety from an attack, there are steps that can be taken to heighten security. Some have been implemented for quite a while, and others are in the rapid planning stage. If you have concerns, if you wish to participate in our safety, or if you simply wish to voice an opinion, you are urged to contact any of your Vestry members. In case you do not know, they are:

Bob Nebb, Mike Quartaro, William Asquith, Sally Brown, Sheila Gray, Lane Thomas, Sonya Nash, David Bennett, Bart Howard, Richard Morgan and Abby Quinn



Episcopal Relief & Development

Healing a hurting world

ERD LAUNCHES \$760,000 HOLIDAY MATCHING GIFT CHALLENGE

Episcopal Relief & Development is launching its annual Holiday Matching Gift Challenge. Starting now through the end of December, Episcopalians, friends and other supporters have the opportunity to double their donations by participating in this special fundraising opportunity. A group of extremely generous donors will match all donations dollar-for-dollar up to \$760,000 until December 31. The Matching Gift Challenge will benefit the Global Needs Fund, enabling Episcopal Relief & Development to work around the world with its local partners in overcoming poverty, hunger, disease and rebuilding after disasters. Donations made to any Episcopal Relief & Development fund before year-end are eligible for matching. For new and existing monthly donors, any scheduled contributions will also be matched.



\$760K M TCH

Let's work Hand in Hand this Christmas

Between now and December 31, all contributions up to \$760,000 will be matched. Go to support.episcopalrelief.org to donate online, or call 1.855.312.HEAL (4325).

Gifts can also be mailed to Episcopal Relief & Development, PO Box 7058, Merrifield, VA 22116-7058.

For over 75 years, Episcopal Relief & Development has served as a compassionate response to human suffering in the world. The agency works with more than 3 million people in nearly 40 countries worldwide to overcome poverty, hunger and disease through multi-sector programs, using the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a framework. An independent 501(c)(3) organization, it works closely with Anglican Communion and ecumenical partners to help communities create long-term development strategies and rebuild after disasters.



THERE WILL NOT BE LADIES NIGHT OUT OR LADIES LUNCH BUNCH IN DECEMBER

BUT Please mark your calendar for these January dates—

Ladies Lunch Bunch
Thursday, January 18th at 11:30 a.m.
La Madeline
19th and Quaker

Ladies Night Out
Tuesday, January 30th at 6:00 p.m.
BJ's Restaurant & Brewhouse
4805 S. Loop 289

THANK YOU NOTES TO CONGREGATION

We would like to thank everyone for joining us in our sacramental celebration of our marriage. It means a lot to us, and it would not have been the same without our family and friends there! We are so blessed to know every one of you and it means a lot that you have supported us as we take this new step in our lives!

With gratitude,
Jimmy and Allie Haney

Dear Father Jim, Renee, Deacon Becky and church family—
We want to thank you all for your prayers, visitation, cards and many other kindnesses during these last few difficult months.

We were sustained and lifted up by the hands of our loving God and his people. We are so grateful.
Shannon and Cary Harriger

FOOD BASKET FOR THE NEEDY

Please remember that we are collecting food items each week for the less fortunate (small toiletry items too!). Items may be placed in the basket in the narthex each Sunday. They will be brought forward at the offertory at the 10:30 service each week. Thank you.

December Birthdays

Anna Marie Wanasek (1)
Andrea Mahan (5)
David Kinnison (9)
Lee Rivenbark (13)
Madalynn Keen (15)
John Cassel (19)
Evan Duval (20)
James McNabb (20)
Patrick Pritchett (21)
Laura Lowe (23)
Eric Blackwell (27)
Mike Quartaro (30)
Bo Brown (30)
Dorothy Kay (31)

December Anniversaries

David & Mona Freriks (5)
Rob & Suzie King (23)
Jim & Sally Brown (26)
James & Jo McNabb (27)
Michael & Debra Quartaro (29)

DECEMBER EVENTS

- | Sunday, Dec 3—2:30 pm—Carillon Eucharist
- | Monday, Dec 11—1:30 pm—St Hilda's Guild (study of John—at Carillon, Cimarron Rm)
- | Tuesday, Dec 12—6:30 pm—Vestry
- | Wednesday, Dec 13—11:30 am—ECW Christmas Luncheon
- | Sunday, Dec 19—2:30 pm—Carillon Eucharist
- | Thursday, Dec 21—Office closed
- | Sunday, Dec 24—4th Sunday of Advent—10:30 am Service only (no 8:00 am, no Sunday School)
- | Sunday, Dec 24—Christmas Eve—4:30 pm children's service, 6:30 & 10:30 pm full services
- | Tue & Wed, Dec 26 & 27—Office closed
- | Thursday, Dec 28—Office open 9:00 to 3:00
- | Sunday, Dec 31—regular 8:00 and 10:30 services, but no Sunday School

AND IN JANUARY...

- | Sunday, Jan 7—2:30 pm—Carillon Eucharist
- | Tuesday, Jan 16—6:30 pm—Vestry
- | Sunday, Jan 21—Bishop's Annual Visitation
- | Sunday, Jan 21—2:30 pm—Carillon Eucharist
- | Monday, Jan 22—1:30 pm—St Hilda's Guild (study of John—at Carillon, Cimarron Rm)
- | Sunday, Jan 28—St. Paul's Annual Meeting

Christmas Flowers—Memorials/Thanksgivings

Amount Given: _____

Given By: _____

In Memory of: _____

In Thanksgiving for: _____



Poinsettias are \$18 each. Please turn in your order by Thursday, December 14th

ST. PAUL'S MEMBER WRITES AND DIRECTS NEW PLAY



One of our members, Adam Howard, who is an assistant professor of musical theatre at TTU has written and is directing a new play: *Cinderella -or- Prince Charming Gets the Boot: A West Texas Panto*. It will be staged at the Lubbock Community Theatre Nov 30-Dec 3, & Dec 7-10, 2017. His wife (and St. Paul's member) Lisa, who is a doctoral student at TTU, is the choreographer.

For more info, go to lubbockcommunitytheatre.org

And if you're curious what a "Panto" is, check out Adam's article, "PANTO: Could Britain's Hottest Holiday Show Draw New Audiences to Your Theatre?" which graced the cover of Southern Theatre Magazine's fall edition at issuu.com/setc.org/docs/southern-theatre-2017-fall "Break a leg" to Adam & Lisa.

FR. JIM'S VIDEO BLOG

Fr. Jim posts short video reflections on Tuesday mornings, along with additional postings from time to time. You can find our YouTube channel by searching in YouTube for "St Paul's on the Plains Episcopal Church". Links to new videos are posted weekly on the St. Paul's Twitter and Facebook pages. You can also hit subscribe on the YouTube page if you'd like (it's a red box), and you can manage your subscription settings to email you notifications when a new video is uploaded.



**St. Paul's-on-the-Plains
Episcopal Church**
www.stpaulslubbock.org

*St. Paul's is a part of the
Diocese of
Northwest Texas*

VISION STATEMENT

+ *Worshipping God in the
Beauty of Holiness* +
+ *Welcoming and Growing in
Faith and Fellowship* +
+ *Serving our Neighbors in
Jesus' Name* +

VESTRY

Bob Nebb, Sr. Warden;
Mike Quartaro, Jr. Warden;
William Asquith, Clerk;
Patrick Pritchett, Treasurer;
Abby Quinn, George Sanford,
Sally Brown, Sheila Gray,
Lane Thomas, David Bennett,
Bart Howard, Richard Morgan,
Sonja Nash

PARISH STAFF

The Rev. James P. Haney V,
Rector
The Rev. Becky Tilton-Orem,
Deacon
Dr. John Hollins,
Minister of Music
Kathi Harris,
Parish Administrator
Cary Harriger,
Sexton

The Epistle

Epistle Deadline
Monday, December 11
Epistle Workday
Wednesday, December 20
at 10:00 am

St. Paul's-on-the-Plains Episcopal Church
1510 Ave. X • Lubbock, Texas 79401

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DECEMBER 24—SERVICE SCHEDULE

This year, Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday. This is the "worst case scenario" for services, since Sunday morning is the 4th Sunday of Advent, and Sunday evening is Christmas Eve. (We've been lucky—because of leap years it hasn't fallen this way since 2006, though it will happen again in 2023).

So we will have ONE Sunday morning service observing the 4th Sunday of Advent:

10:30 a.m.—4th Sunday of Advent—said service with Advent hymns

And then we will have our regular Christmas Eve services:

4:30 p.m.—Children's Service

6:30 p.m.—Early Christmas Eve "Vigil" Service

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