Bartholo Newsings

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, P.O. Box 906, High Springs, Fl 32655
www.stbarts-highsprings.org 386-454-9812

December 2017 Vol. VIII, Issue 12

Christ Is Born!

Vicar's Message

Grace, peace, and the love of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ be with you!

Hope, Hope, Hope. Advent and Christmas are all about God's reminder that life is not a hopeless situation for those that see no purpose to their existence or see their existence as nothing more than being in slavery to others or addictions. The dreams that Zechariah and Elizabeth had for a child had faded into the reality of their old age. They were a lovely couple considered blameless among their neighbors. Zechariah had given himself to serving the Lord. He had the great honor of burning incense on the altar. Zechariah and Elizabeth were not sinless, just blameless. They worshiped God continually and in so doing were expressing their hope for the future that a benevolent God would bring to them.

Then comes Gabriel, an Angel that serves God and one trusted to bring the message that begins God's greatest work in earth's history. . . the birth of His Son. The Holy Spirit would enter into the lives of Zechariah and Elizabeth in a son of their own! Zechariah's unbelief is not uncommon to us today. What seems impossible is made possible by the intervention of God when least expected! The Messenger comes to the church to deliver the message. The church is where there is at least some effort being made to love the Lord. How often we forget that God is always present in His worshiping community and that it is in His Church that He is continually seeking to comfort us and, more importantly, to call us to be a hopeful people.

God is continuing in His creative plan for all that is, seen and unseen. His plan is beyond our imagination since we exist in only what is seen and controlled by time. God's hand sets in motion the unseen and the unknown. As Gabriel says in its season it will come to be. This is the message of hope. The congregation family of St. Bartholomew's is one that has been blessed by God continuously. We are a family that trusts in the promises of our Lord and acknowledge that God Son is Jesus Christ our Lord. We don't claim to be better than others and if anything we accept the fact that we are far from being sinless and possibly being blameless. But this we know: Jesus Christ is our Lord and we hope for his mercy on our broken condition. We believe

He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins provided we repent from our heart. We are the hope of the saints of St. Bart's past and our hopes are for those that will follow us.

With John the Baptist let us enter Advent getting ready for the Lord's coming by focusing our thoughts and actions for righteous living. It begins with an honest self-evaluation. This self-evaluation should be the basis of our prayers to God. In prayer we will start the process of a wonderful change and an even greater relationship with our Lord.

Starting Wednesday, December 6th, I will be shifting to a Wednesday program schedule. We will have adult Bible study from 9:30 to 11 am. In the afternoon we will have Evening Prayer at 6 pm followed by an adult book club. We will start with **A Case For A Creator** by Lee Strobel, ISBN 978-0-310-33928-1 (softcover). I will be available during the day for appointments if any should desire it.

Much love to all, fr lance+

Editor's Note We hope you are enjoying the Newsletter and we welcome your comments and suggestions.
Deadline for next issue is December 17, 2017.
Contact: Annette Jones - (386) 454-8585 or **pgrscoot97@aol.com**

From our Senior Warden...

Charles Jones 386-454-8585

Along with Easter, Christmas is one of the most important Feasts in Christianity, but it is actually the more widely celebrated because even in many countries which are nonreligious, Christmas has achieved the status of a national holiday.

A colorfully decorated tree lit with twinkling lights is the most important worldly symbol of Christmas. However, the Christmas tree doesn't appear in the New Testament or in our church songs or prayers.

The first record I could find of a Christmas tree was in Germany in 1419 AD and it was decorated with apples, wafers, gingerbread and tinsel.

Christmas has had a varied history in this country until about 1870. Then Americans eagerly decorated trees, sang carols and shopped for gifts. Since then the Christmas tree has flourished and has gone from being a natural tree to an artificial one. It is an unusual home today that does not decorate a Christmas tree and many homes have several trees decorated for the holiday.

Let us remember that the beautiful lighted tree in our church is to remind us that Christmas is about the birth of our Savior.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." *~John 3:16*

God's Gift Boxes

I have in my hands two boxes
Which God gave me to hold.
He said, "Put all your sorrows in the black box,
And all your joys in the gold.

I heeded His words, and in the two boxes,
Both my joys and sorrows I stored,
But though the gold box became much heavier each day,
The black was as light as before.

With curiosity, I opened the black,
I wanted to find out why,
And I saw, in the base of the box, a hole,
Which my sorrows had fallen out by.

I showed the hole to God, and mused,
I wonder where by sorrows could be!"
He smiled a gentle smile and said,
"My child, they're all here with me."

I asked God why He gave me the boxes,
Why the gold and the black with the hole?
My child, the gold is for you to count your blessings,
The black is for you to let go."

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KUDOS *...to Rosina Dennis and those who helped her with the St. Bart's Thanksgiving "baskets". All 10 were delivered and much appreciated by those who might not have had a special Thanksgiving Dinner otherwise. Thanks for all your efforts.*

…and KUDOS to Joe, Stefanie, Christopher& Samantha & Mason, Rebecca, Richard, Pete & Jane who worked so hard on the church children's' playground. Pete and Jane Woodward took this on as a project and as anything St. Bart's church family undertakes, it turned out spectacularly. If you have not seen the little riding animals with their
new "coats" Take a look:

…and finally, KUDOS to Joe Scianimanico who installed new railroad ties around the gardens in front of the Parish Hall. Great job, Joe.

Chalice Bearers/Acolytes -December

Lay Readers -December

12/3 --TBA	12/3 – Margaret Palmer Stephanie Sauble
12/10 -TBA	12/10 – Samantha Shiver Debra Wright
12/17 -TBA	12/17 – Gabby Harris Gregg Pelfrey
12/24 -TBA	12/24 – Charles Jones Annette Jones
12/31 - TBA	12/31 – Gabby Harris Annette Jones

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December Birthdays

Dec 2 -- Michelle Shiver
4 – Ed Lundy
10 – Zamira Young
12 – Anne Lundy
22 – Danielle Marston
25 – Jesus
26 – Chris Hansen
30 – Shirley Mogensen
30 – Tracie Munn

Anniversaries in December

20 – Susan & David Hansen
24 – Alma & Art Moegenberg

Congratulations to Each of YOU! If your name does not appear here, please contact your Editor to have it added for next time.

Hostess List for December

Dec 3 – Potluck
Dec 10 – Cornelia
Dec 17 – Marge D/ Stephanie S
Dec 24 – Ruthann S
Dec 31 – Tracie M/ Ben H

Note: If you would like to volunteer to bring a light snack and drink for after one 10 AM Church Service, please contact Cornelia Swann at 386-454-3505.

Advent Wreath

What the Advent Candles Symbolize

The Candles symbolize that Jesus is the Light of the World.

There are four candles, one for each Sunday leading to Christmas and a fifth candle for Christmas day. The four Sunday candles are usually tapers. There are variations in the coloring of the candles, often there are three purple and one pink candle. Occasionally, all of the candles are purple. The central candle is usually a large white pillar candle.

The purple represents repentance. The pink symbolizes joy. The central candle is called the Christ candle and is not lit until Christmas day. When you light the candle it is customary to read a few verses of scripture that relate to meaning of the candle.

The First Candle (The Candle of Prophecy/Hope)

The first candle is sometimes called the candle of prophecy because it symbolizes the promises the prophets delivered as messages from God; promises that foretold Christ's birth. Others consider the candle to be a symbol of the hope we have in Christ and so it is called the Hope candle.

The Second Candle (The Candle of the Way)

The second candle shows that Christ is the Way. Christians are lost in sin and Christ is the Light sent into the world to show them the way out of darkness.

The Third Candle (The Candle of Joy)

The third candle indicates that the only lasting Joy to be found in life on earth is through Christ. All other joy is fleeting and does not last.

The Fourth Candle (The Candle of Peace)

The fourth candle reminds that Jesus comes to bring Peace to both the world and to people's hearts. Without Christ there is no peace in this world.

The Fifth Candle (The Christ Candle or Christmas Candle)

The fifth candle represents Christ himself who is born to save people from their sins. It is a celebration of the fulfillment of prophecy as represented in Christ's birth and hope in the final fulfillment when Christ comes again and Christians join him.

Childrens Activities and Family Fellowship

Sunday School Teaching Schedule for 10am Services

Dec. 3rd:	Samantha Cherie	Dec. 10th:	Sheryl Betty
Dec. 17th:	Samantha Ben	Dec 24th:	Cherie Cornelia

Upcoming Children & Youth Events

~ Wed. Dec. 6th: Fellowship 7pm

~ Sat. Dec. 9th: High Springs Parade Line-Up 4:30pm

~ Wed. Dec. 13th: Rehearsal for the Pageant 7pm

~ Sun. Dec. 17th: Pageant during 10am service

~ Wed. Dec. 20th: Cookies & Carols 7pm

~ Wed. Dec. 27th & Jan. 3rd No Meeting – Christmas Break

Christmas Flowers for the Altar

Wouldn't you like to see our church decorated with beautiful poinsettias during Christmas? If you would like to provide one or more plants to be used in this way, please fill out one of the Poinsettia Order Forms available in this newsletter and also in the Parish Hall, and turn it in or mail it , along with your check or cash. Your poinsettias will be ordered as soon after the first of December as they become available. (Your plants can be taken home after Christmas.)

Lessons for December

December 3rd: Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7,16-18; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37

10th: Isaiah 340:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2,8-13; 2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8

17th: Isaiah 61:1-4,8-11; Psalm 126; I Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8,19-28

24th: 2 Samuel 7:1-11,16; Canticle 3; Romans 16:25-27; John 1:6-8,19-28

31st: Isaiah 61:10—62:3; Psalm 147; Galatians 3:23-25; John 1:1-18

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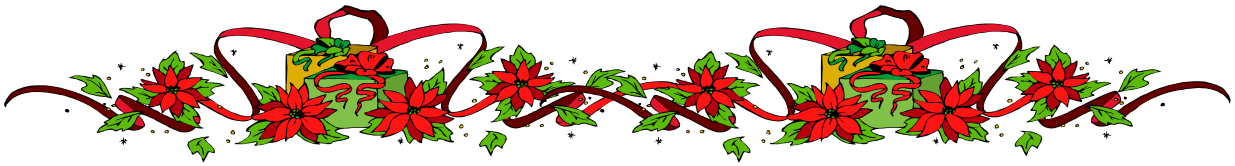

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church
Poinsettia Order Form

Name_____

Telephone number_____

Number of **poinsettia plants** ordered at a cost of **$10.00**

each_____. **Check or cash must accompany order.** Make checks payable to "St. Bartholomew's and put "poinsettia" in memo line.

Turn completed form in to church office or mail to:
PO Box 906
High Springs, FL 32655

Is your plant in honor ?_____ or in memory ?_____

Name of loved one_____

Thank you for your order. These poinsettia plants will be used to beautify our sanctuary during the Christmas Holiday. You may take them home after Christmas.