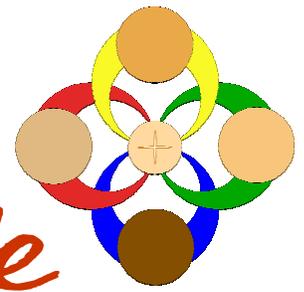


CREATOR



Chronicle



"As a congregation named for our Creator, we are children of the Living God, beloved brothers and sisters of our Lord Jesus Christ, selflessly living out our faith in worship, fellowship, giving, education and outreach."

January 2020

Dear Friends,

As we move from the Advent season and patiently waiting, to the coming of Christ into our world and the yearly memorial of God's incarnation, on to the season of Epiphany when we seek evidence of the presence of the divine DNA. Here are a couple of articles from the Center for Action and Contemplation with insights into our celebrations of Christmas and Epiphany.

From the Bottom Up (Christmas)

Yearning for a new way will not produce it. Only ending the old way can do that. You cannot hold onto the old, all the while declaring that you want something new. The old will defy the new; The old will deny the new; The old will decry the new. There is only one way to bring in the new. You must make room for it.

— Neale Donald Walsch [1]

Father Richard Rohr's spiritual father, **Francis of Assisi** (1181-1226), was a master of making room for the new and letting go of that which was tired or empty. He was ready for absolute newness from God and therefore could also trust fresh and new attitudes in himself. His God was not tired, and so he was never tired. His God was not old, so Francis remained forever young.

Francis was the first to create a living nativity scene, bringing to life the revolutionary new way God revealed God's self in the vulnerability of a baby in a manger. The ***Incarnation of God in Jesus*** was foundational to Francis, and he wanted others to experience its life-changing power.

Francis was at once very traditional and entirely new in the ways of holiness. ***Franciscanism*** is not an iconoclastic dismissal of traditional Christian images, history, or culture, but a *positive choosing of the deep, shining, and enduring divine images that are hidden beneath the too-easy formulas*. It is no fast-food religion, but slow and healthy nutrition.

Continued on next page

Rev. Robert M. Blanton, Priest-In-Charge * office hours: Monday—Thursday, 9:00 a.m. — 12:00 p.m.

Please call the church office, 601-924-2261, to schedule an appointment.

Both *Jesus* and *Francis* did not let the old get in the way of the new, but like all religious geniuses, *revealed what the old was saying all along*. Francis both named and exemplified that “first, *churchless incarnation in the human heart*.” [2] But somehow, he also knew that it was the half-knowing, organized Church that passed this shared mystery on to him and preserved it for future generations. He had the humility and patience to know that *whatever is true is always a shared truth*; and only institutions, for all their weaknesses, make this widely shareable, historical, and communal.

Both *Jesus* and *Francis* were “*conservatives*” in the *true sense* of the term: they conserved what was worth conserving – the core, the transformative life of the Gospel – and did not let accidentals get in the way. They then ended up looking quite “progressive,” radical, and even dangerous to the status quo. This is the biblical pattern, from Abraham to Moses, to Jeremiah, Job, John the Baptist, Mary, and Joseph.

References:

[1] Neale Donald Walsch, Facebook post, July 22, 2014.

[2] Christian Wiman, *My Bright Abyss: Meditation of a Modern Believer* (Farrar, Straus, and Giroux: 2013), 92.

From the Bottom Up

Bias from the Bottom (Epiphany)

Another aspect of the phrase “from the bottom up” has to do with the biblical and Franciscan emphasis on the path of descent. Most of religion is ideological: it defines reality from the top down. It begins with a transcendent God up there in heaven, and then we try to explain everything down here in relationship to that transcendent God. But what *Jesus* actually taught was something much more akin to “*from the bottom up*.”

In other words, *Jesus taught us to find God incarnate in this world, in our neighbor, in the Eucharist* – that is, *in the ordinary elements of this earth*. That’s a very different notion of religion. This perspective is sometimes called the “*bias from the bottom*.” It turns everything on its head. That is why today we celebrate three kings paying homage to a poor baby in a feed trough.

Let’s be honest, our culture places the most value on fame, power, and money. Even people who call themselves Christians are much more fascinated by celebrities and so-called success than they are by the downward path of Jesus. Once you can see that God is in the ordinary and that you don’t have to climb upward or be more pure or perfect to find God, you start honoring God in what Jesus calls “the least of the brothers and sisters” (Mathew 25:40) and in the very common earth beneath our feet. Thus, God said to Moses, “Take off your sandals, for this is holy ground” (Exodus 3:5). Jacob used an ordinary rock to mark the place where he dreamt of a ladder to heaven (Genesis 28:12).

Brian McLaren offers an honest, prophetic critique of Christianity's misplaced values in domination and artificially contrived success:

Growing numbers of us are acknowledging with grief that many forms of supremacy – Christian, white, male, heterosexual, and human – are deeply embedded not just in Christian history, but also in Christian theology. We are coming to see that in hallowed words like almighty, sovereignty, kingdom, dominion, supreme, elect, chosen, clean, remnant, sacrifice, lord, and even God, dangerous vices often lie hidden. . . . We are coming to see in the life and teaching of Christ, and especially in the cross and resurrection of Christ, a radical rejection of dominating supremacy in all its forms.

The theological term for [this] is *kenosis*, which means self-emptying. ... Rather than seizing, hoarding, and exercising power in the domineering ways of typical kings, conquistadors, and religious leaders, Jesus was consistently empowering others. He descended the ladders and pyramids of influence instead of climbing them upwards, released power instead of grasping at it, and served instead of dominating. He ultimately overturned all conventional understandings of ... power by purging [it] of violence – to the point where he himself chose to be killed rather than kill. [1]

The apostle Paul urges us: “Have among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus, Who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross” (Philippians 2:5-8).

References:

[1] Brian D. McLaren, *The Great Spiritual Migration: How the World's Largest Religion Is Seeking a Better Way to Be Christian* (Convergent: 2016), 90, 91.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Bob





Healing Service and Prime Timers

Wednesday, January 8

12:00 - Healing Service

12:30 - Prime Timers' Pot Luck Lunch

2019 Annual Parish Meeting

January 19 @ 10:30 am

This year we will be electing two new Vestry members, as Deborah Runyan and Doug George have completed their terms. We also need to elect a new Junior Warden. If you have never served as a Vestry member, please considerate running this year. These are very important ministries and our parish cannot function without a dedicated Vestry. If you feel called to serve in either of these positions, please contact Rhea Estes.

At the conclusion of the Parish Meeting we will be having a Pot Luck lunch in the Parish Hall. Please bring your favorite casseroles, salads, deserts and bread.



Come and Join Us!

Monthly Church Work Day

Saturday, January 18 (8-12am)

There is a lot going on and we could really use some extra hands!



FOOD PANTRY SUNDAY

(3rd Sunday each month)

When you are grocery shopping, please remember to pick up some extra, non-perishable food goods and bring them to church the next time you come. We will be continuing this outreach ministry each month on the third Sunday each month, so mark the dates on your calendar.



Pack 345
Winter Outing
This year we visited Ms. Vicky and her horses. The boys learned all about caring for and the handling of horses. After that, they got to ride horses for the first time. Everyone said they had a fantastic day.





WORK DAY • a t t h e • CHURCH

Note: If you notice we are low on Paper towels in the kitchen, please pick some up the next time you shop and place in the kitchen. Thanks.

Inside projects:

1. Clean up pantry, storage closets, and storage rooms in education building and Parrish hall.
2. Cleaning scuff marks from walls in Nave and Education building.
3. Sorting through box of pictures and determine if we wish to display some historical photos.
4. Updating memorial book as needed.
5. Any general sorting or reorganizing in sacristy, narthex, kitchen, Education building foyer, classrooms, attic, etc.

Outside Projects:

1. Check trash cans and place at road if they need to be emptied.
2. Blowing off sidewalks and parking lots.
3. Hedge trimming, trim plants in front of parish hall.
4. Burn leaf pile near education building.
5. Picking up trash and limbs in front of church and near road.
6. Weed beds around church buildings as needed.
7. Clean debris out under foot bridge and culverts.
8. Poison or round-up any weeds or trees in drainage ditches.
9. Clean up playground area.
10. Pick up limbs behind church and place in burn pile.

Contact Rhea 601-813-3863, if you have any questions or additions to list.

Submitted by Rhea Estes, Senior Warden



Pack 345

Cubmaster: Mike Milone
Pack Committee: John Lanford, Chairman, Edie Hill,
 John Fox



Pack 345 Calendar - 2019 - 2020

September

16 Pack Committee Meeting, 11:30 am
 20 New Parent Orientation, 6:30 pm
 27 Pack Meeting, 6:00 pm

October

12-14 Akela Cub Weekend
 19-21 Akela Cub Weekend
 27 Brighton Park, 2:00 pm, Water Rockets

November

9 Church Campout
 21 Pack Meeting, 6:00 pm, Flag Retirement

December

1 Pack Committee Meeting, 11:30 am
 7 *No Pack Meeting*, Winter Pack Outing

January

30 Pack Meeting, 6:00 pm
 31-Feb 2 Cub Scout Polar Weekend

February

9 Scout Sunday (@ church @ 10:00 am)
 27 Pack Meeting, 6:00 pm (Pinewood Derby)
 Camp Card Sales Begin

March

TBD District Pinewood Derby
 26 Pack Meeting, 6:00 pm

April

17-19 Cuboree Weekend
 23 Pack Meeting, 6:00 pm
 Camp Card Sales End (money due)

May

3 Pack Committee Meeting, 11:30 am
 14 Year-end Parent & Den Leader Meeting,
 6:00 pm
 28 Blue & Gold Banquet, 6:00 pm
 Graduation

June

6-8 Cub / Webelos Summer Camp
 15-19 District Day Camp
 TBD Pack Summer Outing





Vestry Digest

December 16, 2019

Present: Pastor Bob Blanton, Priest-in-Charge, Rhea Estes, Senior Warden, Ross Turner, Doug George, Deborah Runyan, Jennifer Duncan, Tommy Mills, Treasurer, Dianne Martin, Clerk of the Vestry

Absent: John Lanford

Visitor:

Treasurer Report and Budget

- Tommy noted that revenues were way up in November and looked much better than in prior months. His report showed that we now have a little over a half a month's worth of budget reserve.
- The pledges for the choir plus the amount provided in the general fund will be enough to pay for the paid singers next year. Safe Harbor will be increasing their rent money to \$1000 beginning in April. We should be able to have a balanced budget next year although it will be tight. Reasons that we are able to have a balanced budget include the fact that we do not plan to hire a music minister next year, we have cancelled the yard maintenance contract, and cuts to some of the other general fund accounts.
- Tommy will ask Beth to bring the restricted Choir Fund to a zero balance by paying off it's negative balance with money from the Performing Arts fund.

Junior Warden Report

- Next scheduled workday is the third Saturday in December (12/21/2019).
- Lawn care contract is cancelled as of 1/1/2020.
- There is a stain on the ceiling above the freezer in the kitchen which needs to be looked at.

Old Business

- Signs – The signs should be put up this weekend. Ross will bring his post hole digger.
- Plaques for Stations of the Cross walkway – this Friday Deborah will ask Jolyne for the wording to be used on the Stations of the Cross plaque.

Vestry Minutes *continued on next page*

- Rhea has contacted Brian Ponder, Cannon for Administration and Finance regarding parochial funding of diocese, drawdown, and bingo. She left a message with Suzanne Phillips, Assistant, and on Brian Ponder's voicemail.
- Angel tree went very well. Church members were very generous and eager to help. All our angels were given more than they asked for.
- Doug has spoken with members of all the AA groups. He thinks they will all respond favorably to the request for rent money. He suggested a drop box with slot along with envelopes indicating the name of the group and the month for payments.

New Business

Safe Harbor's pastor will move into Ezra's old office.

Ross will get with Beth to better understand the need for a label maker.

Rhea brought up an idea that Wendy Brantley had shared concerning having a Red Beans and Rice fund raiser. Deborah made a motion that we have such a fund raiser. Jennifer seconded the motion and it passed. It will be held on Fat Tuesday, February 25, will be \$10.00 to participate, will include all you want of red beans and rice, coleslaw, and a dessert.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:42.

Minutes of vestry meetings may be found on the bulletin board outside the administrator's office following their approval and correction if needed. If you would like a copy, please call the office and a copy will be provided to you via email.

Thanks so much

to you all for your generosity in giving to our Angel Tree recipients. It is so rewarding to work together with folks who give with such a joyous spirit.

Our angels all got more than they asked for and I'm so happy we had the opportunity to help them have a Merry Christmas.

Thank you very much. -- Dianne





Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 EPIPHANY			1 6:00 pm: Cub Scouts 7:00 pm: Men's AA Group New Year's Day Office Closed	2 12:00 pm: AA Meeting 6:00 pm: Cub Scouts	3	4 5 pm: AA / Al-Anon Meeting
5 8:00 am: Mass 10:30 am: Mass 6:00 pm: Safe Harbor Epiphany	6 7:30 pm: DOA—Big Book Group	7 12:00 pm: AA Meeting	8 12:00 am: Healing Service 12:30 pm: Prime Timers 6:00 pm: Cub Scouts 7:00 pm: Adult Choir 7:00 pm: Men's AA Group	9 12:00 pm: AA Meeting 6:00 pm: Cub Scouts	10	11 5 pm: AA / Al-Anon Meeting
12 8:00 am: Mass 10:30 am: Mass 6:00 pm: Safe Harbor FOOD PANTRY for the 4 C's Baptism of our	13 6:30 pm: Vestry 7:30 pm: DOA—Big Book Group	14 12:00 pm: AA Meeting	15 7:00 pm: Adult Choir 7:00 pm: Men's AA Group	16 12:00 pm: AA Meeting	17	18 5 pm: AA / Al-Anon Meeting Church Work Day 8am-12pm
19 Annual Parish Meeting & Luncheon 8:00 am: No Service 10:30 am: Mass 6:00 pm: Safe Harbor	20 7:30 pm: DOA—Big Book Group MLK Day Office Closed	21 12:00 pm: AA Meeting	22 7:00 pm: Adult Choir 7:00 pm: Men's AA Group	23 12:00 pm: AA Meeting	24	25 5 pm: AA / Al-Anon Meeting
26 8:00 am: Mass 10:30 am: Mass 6:00 pm: Safe Harbor	27 7:30 pm: DOA—Big Book Group	28 12:00 pm: AA Meeting	29 7:00 pm: Adult Choir 7:00 pm: Men's AA Group	30 12:00 pm: AA Meeting	31	

	5	12	19	26	
	Epiphany	Baptism of our Lord	Annual Parish Meeting		
Chalice	Mike Milone Ruby Lanford	Mike Milone Wendy Brantley	Bob White Tori Meyers	Bob White Maddie Gray Braley	
Lectors	Joan Blanton Ruby Lanford	John Lanford Pennie Van Brocklin	Wendy Brantley Maddie Gray Braley	Deborah Runyan Landon Daniel	
Prayers	Deborah Runyan	Ross Turner	Pennie Van Brocklin	Wendy Brantley	
Acolytes	Max Lanford Rowan Braley	Ruby Lanford Manny Diaz-Olarra	Maddie Gray Braley Kate Onyia	Landon Daniel Max Lanford	
Ushers	Austine Onyia	Vicky Donaho Doug George	Beth Braley Stone Braley	Austine Onyia Emmanuela Onyia	
Altar	Katie Lanford	Ross Turner	Rhea Estes	Tommie Kirksey Sandra Randall	
Home Communion			Edie Hill		
Vestry Person of the Day	Deborah Runyan	Doug George	Rhea Estes	John Lanford	



Birthdays & Anniversaries



Birthdays

- 2 Jeremy Randall
- 13 Bill Singletary
- 17 Doug George
- 21 Ross Turner
- 22 Elisabet McGahey
- 24 Edie Hill
- 27 Alexx Shirley

Anniversaries

- 1 Will & Jennifer Duncan
- 11 Jim & Wendy Brantley

Episcopal Church of the Creator

Church Office Hours:

9:00 am—2 pm, Monday—Thursday

Presiding Bishop

The Most Reverend Michael Curry

Bishop

The Very Reverend Brian Seage

Priest-In-Charge

The Reverend Robert M. Blanton

Administrator

Beth Braley

theepiscopalchurchofthecreator@gmail.com

Choir Director

Vacant

Senior Warden

Rhea Estes, 601-813-3863

Junior Warden

Vacant

Treasurer

Tommy Mills, 601-259-5333

Vestry

Ross Turner, 601-214-2484

John Lanford, 601-708-4374

Doug George, 601-502-5063

Deborah Runyan, 601-497-7947

Jennifer Duncan, 601-850-6353

Contacts

Church Office

Administrator—Beth Braley, 601-924-2261

Email: theepiscopalchurchofthecreator@gmail.com

Pastoral Emergencies

Rev. Robert M. Blanton, Cell: 601-291-0652

Polly Marshall, Cell: 601-953-2980

Acolytes

Mike Milone, Cell: 601-473-6305

Adult Christian Education

Rev. Robert M. Blanton, Cell: 601-291-0652

Altar Guild

Larry & Rhea Estes, Cell: 601-813-3859

Choir

Vacant

Children's Christian Education

John Lanford, Cell: 601-966-3441

Columbarium

Wendy Brantley, Cell: 601-954-3946

Flower Guild

Becky Wright, Cell: 601-940-4861

Funeral Guild

Vacant

Parish Lunches & Special Events

Andrew Wilder, 601-842-0058

Doug George, 601-502-5063

Cubmaster

Mike Milone, Cell: 601-473-6305

Wedding Coordinator

Vacant



Episcopal Church of the Creator
1445 Clinton-Raymond Rd.
Clinton, MS 39056

*We are part of the Worldwide Anglican Communion and in communion with the
Archbishop of Canterbury.*

“We are a congregation of the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi: One church in mission, inviting, transforming, and reconciling. We seek to serve Christ in all persons and to respect the dignity of every human being.”