

2023



THE GOOD SHEPHERD

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

Volume 53, Issue 12

The Lord is Coming!

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.



The above collect for the First Sunday in Advent acknowledges that we are living between the time of Christ's first coming and His final coming. It's a beautiful prayer asking for God to sustain and prepare us for the second coming of Christ. It reminds us that Jesus came in great humility the first time, but when He comes again, we can expect Him to come in His power and glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead. That is great news for all who long for His appearing. There will be justice and judgement, mercy and reconciliation, restoration, and finality.

Our prayer acknowledges that we live in dark times, as we always have, but we are not left defenseless. We have a choice as to how we live. We can choose the light. The darkness has no power over the light. The power of Christ's Holy Spirit is dwelling within each one of us who call Him Lord and Savior. He is with us always, and we can choose to put on His armor of light.

The apostle Paul says in Ephesians 6, "Be strong in the Lord, and His power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can stand against the devil's schemes. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth around your waist, the breastplate of righteousness, with the boots of the gospel of peace, and the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. With all of this in mind, be alert, and continue to pray for one another." Put on the armor of light.

Advent is the season that acknowledges our need for continual preparation for the coming of Christ. It marks our lives as people who actively live in hope. Not a wishful thinking, but an assurance that what God has begun in Christ will be brought to its completion in Him, and in His timing, not ours. We are people of the promise, and we need to live our lives accordingly.

Christ has died, Christ is Risen, Christ will come again!

Come Lord Jesus, Come!

Milton +

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS



ADVENT 2023

Advent 1

Sunday, December 3

Advent Lessons & Carols
10:30 a.m. Service

Advent Chili Supper
6:30 p.m. in Munds Hall Auditorium

Advent 2

Sunday, December 10

Christmas Pageant
10:30 a.m. Service

Advent 3

Sunday, December 17

Canned Food Drive
Bring to Church and place in a box in the Narthex.

Advent 4

Sunday, December 24

Regular Sunday Services:
8:00 a.m & 10:30 a.m. Service



CHRISTMAS

CHRISTMAS EVE

Sunday, December 24

Two Christmas Eve Services:

4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service

7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service

Each service will offer beautiful music, scriptures, and a Eucharist celebration.

***Nursery and Children's Chapel will be available at the 4:00 p.m. service.**



CHRISTMAS DAY

Monday, December 25

10:30 a.m. Christmas Day Service

Join us for this joyful worship on Christmas morning. This is a quiet and reflective service.

Christmas Pageant

Sunday, December 10
10:30 a.m.

We are excited to present our Christmas Pageant to you with a cast of our children and youth! Please join us for the best little pageant in South Texas!

The pageant takes place during our regular 10:30 service as a form of worship. We will not have Holy Eucharist at this service. Please come early to find a good seat!



Cookies for Christmas Pageant Reception

Sunday, December 10 following the Pageant

We will have a cookie reception following the Christmas Pageant in the Courtyard to celebrate the coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Please bring cookies to share. You can take them to the Parlor before church.

A Christmas Eve Tradition

For generations little ones have left their **shoes** around the Courtyard just before the Christmas Eve services only to find them filled with candy as they depart after the service. We will fill shoes with candy at the 4:00 and 7:00 services.



Order Poinsettias to Honor Loved Ones

Christmas is a wonderful time to give flowers in memory of or in thanksgiving for your loved ones. If you wish to help fill the Church with an array of beautiful poinsettias in honor of your loved ones, you can donate to the Christmas Altar Flowers and be listed in the orders of service. Just cut this section out and return it to the church office with a check made payable to COTGS or you can give online at cotgs.org. The amount you donate is discretionary,...any amount is appreciated. Any amount above the cost of the poinsettias, will go to Mission & Outreach and Christian Education programs. Deadline to order is Friday, December 15th.

Given By _____

Phone Number: _____ Donation Amount _____

In Memory of: _____ or In Thanksgiving for: _____

Donation forms can also be filled out on our website.



Important Dates in December

- December 3** - Advent Lessons & Carols at 10:30
- December 3** - Advent Chili Supper at 6:30
- December 10** - Christmas Pageant at 10:30
- December 11** - Deadline to return Angel Tree gifts
- December 15** - Deadline for Poinsettias
- December 22 & 26** - Church Office Closed
- December 24** - Christmas Eve Services at 4:00 & 7:00
- December 25** - Christmas Day Service at 10:30
- December 26** - No 12:15 p.m. Tuesday Service
- December 27** - No 5:30 p.m. Wednesday Service
- December 31** - No 5:30 p.m. Sunday Service



ADVENT CHILI SUPPER

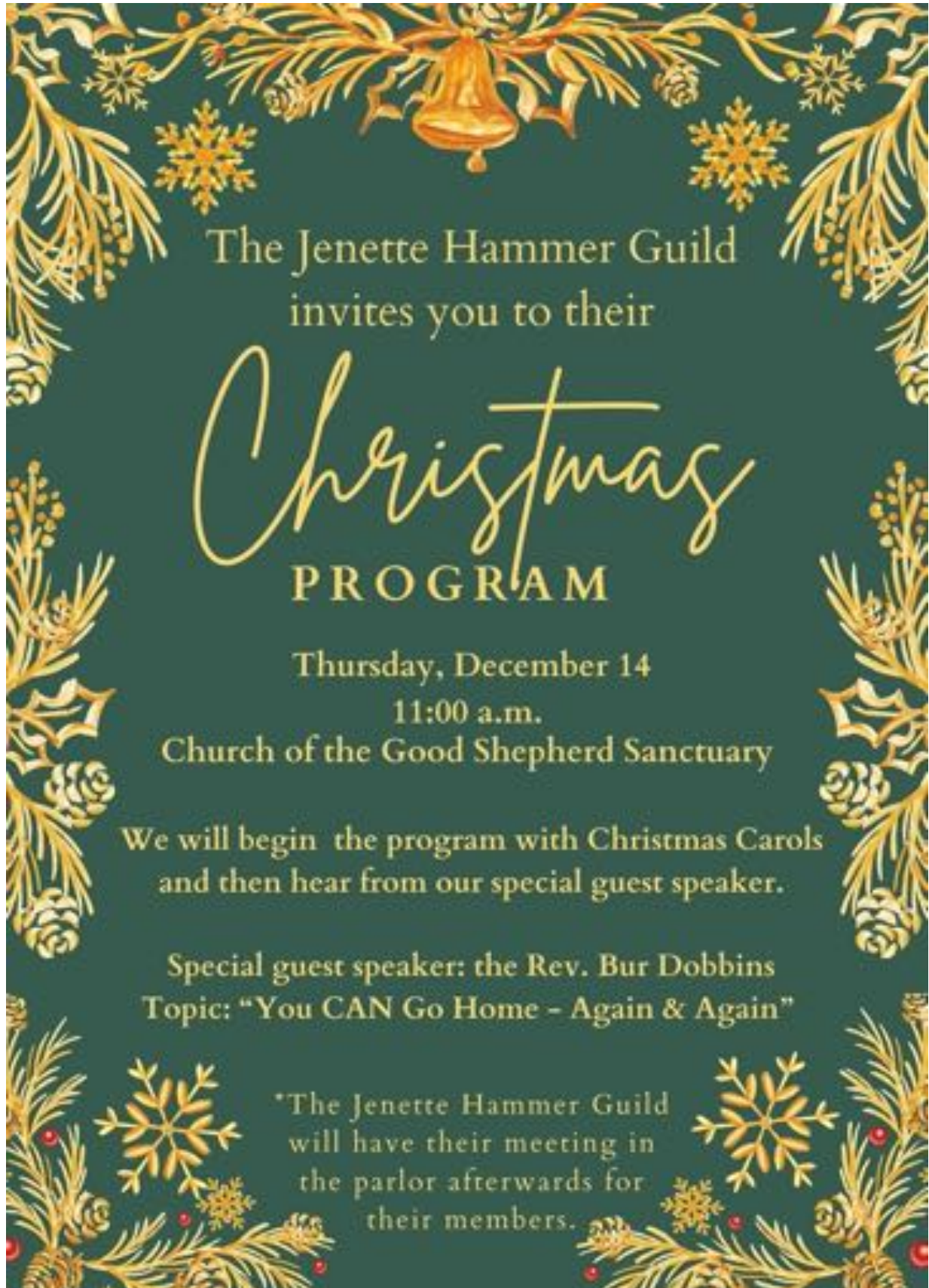


Sunday, December 3
6:30 p.m.
Munds Hall Auditorium



**JOIN WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY AS WE
KICK OFF THE SEASON OF ADVENT**

**Bring a Pot of Chili or Cornbread to share!
You can enter our Chili Cook-Off!
Crafts and Desserts!**



CHILDREN'S & YOUTH MINISTRIES

Children & Youth are Invited to be in the Christmas Pageant!

Rehearsal for Children Pre-School - 5th Grade

Sunday, December 3
9:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary

Rehearsal for Youth 6th - 12th Grade

Saturday, December 9
3:00 - 5:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary



The Pageant will be on Sunday, December 10 at 10:30 p.m.

All participants must arrive at 9:30 a.m.
Children go to Foster Hall. Youth go to the Youth House.

December Youth Group

Sunday, December 3

Advent Chili Supper

6:30 p.m.

We will have a special table for our youth!



Sunday, December 10

Christmas Pageant

Meet at the Youth House at 9:30 a.m. to dress in costumes.

Pageant begins at 10:30 a.m.



Sunday, December 17

Youth Group Christmas Parties

Locations and times to be determined.

Sunday, December 24 & 31

No Youth Group

Children's Choir Sings

December 3 during Advent Lessons & Carols

Our Children's Choir, under the direction of Dr. Mi Ou Lee, will sing for us at the 10:30 a.m. service on December 3rd.

Come enjoy their beautiful voices!

SUNDAYS FOR YOUTH & CHILDREN

Sunday School

The last day of children's Sunday school for 2023 is on December 3rd. Please come to the Sanctuary for Pageant Rehearsal.

Children's Chapel will meet in the chapel on December 3rd as usual, but for the remainder of December will meet in the Kid's Zone next to the Nursery.

Celebration Chapel will meet in Munds Hall Auditorium on December 3rd as usual, but for the remainder of December they are invited to join us in church.

NURSERY

Ages 6 months - 2 years

Sundays from 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon

We offer nursery in Dobbins Hall during Sunday School hour and the 10:30 a.m. service.

Stewardship for the Closing of 2023

Please help us close out the 2023 year by Giving to the Church.

- Mail to Church of the Good Shepherd
- Give Online at cotgs.org under the Giving tab
- Give on our Ministry One app

New Faces on our Good Shepherd Staff



Julia Prickett
Children's Ministries Assistant



Devin Batey
Youth Ministries Assistant



Eric De Los Santos
Sexton



Peter Perales
Sexton

SCHEDULE CHANGES

No mid-week services on the following dates:

12:15 p.m. Service
Tuesday, December 26

5:30 p.m. Service
Wednesday, December 27

No Sunday service on the following date:

5:30 p.m. Service
Sunday, December 31

No Breakfast Fellowship on December 10, 24, and 31

MORNING PRAYER

**Monday - Thursday
8:00 a.m. on Zoom
w/Rev. Philip May**

Start your day out right!
Join Fr. Philip for a *Morning Prayer by Zoom*, Mondays through Thursdays. The link is on the Church web page, and on our Ministry One app.

This is a very simple service of scripture and prayer, and we'll be finished and ready to face the day in 15 - 20 minutes.

Find the Zoom link at
cotgs.org/worship/morning-prayer/

MISSION & OUTREACH

ANGEL TREE GIFTS FOR KOSTORYZ ELEMENTARY

We are continuing to make this Christmas a special one for students in need at Kostoryz Elementary.

What to do: buy gifts for that child, place it in the provided gift bag, and bring it to the Church Office with the angel tag attached to bag.

There will be a sign-up sheet with the angel trees in the Church Office and in the Narthex.

Each gift bag should include:

- one jacket
- one pair of shoes
- a couple of toys
- favorite candy



Please return your gift-filled bag with the angel tag attached by December 11th.

FOOD DRIVE for the COASTAL BEND FOOD BANK

The Coastal Bend Food Bank needs our help! They are in very short supply of non-perishable items such as beans, rice, sugar, canned goods, etc. We have bins to drop off items in the Narthex and in the Church Office. Monetary donations are also welcome. Make out your check to the church and indicate Food Bank on the memo line. Or you can donate online at cotgs.org.



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who participated in donating a gift-filled shoebox to children in need around the world. Your gift and prayers will show the child that receives it the Love of Christ. You are a blessing!

WHEELCHAIR RAMP MINISTRY

Next Build is Saturday, December 16

8:00 a.m.

Location to be announced soon.

The Episcopal Ministries of Corpus Christi join together once a month to build wheelchair ramps for families in need in our community. This is a wonderful way to not only build something that will make life better for someone, but also to make connections in our community. The builds typically take place the third Saturday of the month and begin at 8:00 a.m.

Be on the lookout in our Sunday Announcements and our Thursday emails for the exact location of this build.

Defining Your Relationship through Membership

One of the trickier things to nail down in *any* church is the concept of “membership.” For some people the term is nearly meaningless, but it can also be a loaded and intensely sensitive subject. Anyone can come for Sunday worship and everyone is allowed to visit, attend classes, give, and come to special events. This begs the question: why be a “member” at all?

The short answer is that membership has adequate Scriptural, historical, and theological warrant. As for the long answer—well, let’s dive in. In the Old Testament, membership in Judaism was defined by the race, nationality, culture, and language of the Jewish people. In the New Testament, Jesus speaks to and about Jews, but also—radically at that time—to and about people gathered in his name who existed outside of Judaism. Throughout the Gospels, Jesus teaches people who choose to follow him how they should treat each other. We have come to call these people the Body of Christ. As membership in Christ—defined solely by Baptism and *not* race, ethnicity, language, or anything “worldly”—grew, we see the disciples pray for leaders to be raised up (in Acts 1 and 6). These leaders serve the membership of Christ, take God to where people need Him, and make sure that the growing community is well stewarded and efficiently governed. Paul speaks directly to individual churches in Corinth and Ephesus (among others) in his letters. He encourages them in their local calling to be Christ’s hands and feet in the world and reminds them of their greater belonging (their membership) in Christ. Through time, we’ve seen Christ’s community continue to act and grow—to Baptize, make disciples, and raise up new leaders to serve in churches all over the world. We see how important it is to seek to know God as He is revealed in Scripture, in Jesus, and in each other in community because community means belonging—belonging to each other, to Jesus, and to God. Membership—belonging—moves past individual interests to something other and bigger than self. And with many members, a need for common rules and understanding exists.

For something so large as the worldwide Anglican Communion (with around 110 million members worldwide), the bureaucracy that grows out of a need to organize and steward membership can be astounding. On the business end of things, the term “membership” has bearing in almost everything we do: from how we count and record numbers of people in attendance on a given Sunday, to the way we manage our everyday ministry into the world, to how we are represented with votes and delegates in larger meetings of the Church. In other words, membership is too important to ignore. So how do we define it?

Currently, The Episcopal Church defines lay membership in three ways:

- (1) Baptized Members—All persons who have received the Sacrament of Baptism in a given Church. Baptism is full initiation and inclusion into the Body of Christ.
- (2) Adult Members—Baptized Members 16 years of age and over.
- (3) Members Confirmed or Received—Baptized/Adult Members confirmed or received by a Bishop. Confirmation may be looked at as initiation into the ministry of the Church.

CHURCH MINISTRIES

Further, The Episcopal Church lists three ways of defining its lay members' involvement:

- (1) Communicants—Members having received Holy Communion 3 times in the previous calendar year.
- (2) Adult Communicants—Members aged 16 and over who have received Holy Communion 3 times in the previous calendar year.
- (3) Communicants in Good Standing—Members who for the previous year have been faithful in worship and to the work, prayer, and giving for the spread of God's Kingdom.

What's important to note is how these definitions strengthen community. Healthy community has a habit of doing that—building us into more than we are alone by shaping us, guiding us, and even humbling us. In membership, Baptism is but a beginning. Beyond Baptism, we are challenged to continue and grow into ministry and relationship with God and each other, to proclaim our faith and connect it to the wider world, and to continue to worship, pray, and give for the spread of God's Kingdom.

This is one of the reasons why only "Adult Members Confirmed or Received being a Communicant in Good Standing" are considered for leadership positions within Good Shepherd and the larger Church. We want leaders here to set a faithful example, and we are continually aiming to raise up members to lead in prayer, in worship, in welcoming, in governance, and in so many other ways in the life of our parish.

As Clergy—yet another distinct layer of church membership and leadership—Fathers Milton, Philip, Frank, and I seek to support you in your ministry of representing Christ and his Church, as you bear witness to him where he is, as you carry on Christ's work of reconciliation in the world, and as you take your place in the life, worship, and governance of the Church.

So how do you fit in here? That is—where do you fall in the literal terms of membership? Are you fulfilled there? What is your growing edge? What do you feel driven to in your own heart? And how can we support you as you become—by expanding your participation and membership—in Christ and at Church of the Good Shepherd?

If you are interested in knowing more about the various layers of church membership, all your clergy welcome your questions, and we invite you to attend the Adult Inquirer's Class on Sunday mornings in the new year.

His Peace,



The Rev. William Campbell

WORSHIP SERVICES & HOURS

Sunday Schedule

8:00 a.m.	Traditional Eucharist
8:45 a.m.	Breakfast Fellowship
9:30 a.m.	Sunday School
10:30 a.m.	Family Eucharist
5:30 p.m.	Come As You Are Service

Nursery For the Little Ones

6 months - 2 Years in the Nursery 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon
Located in Dobbins Hall (next to Munds Hall).

Sunday School Classes

Sundays 9:30-10:15 a.m.

Living Word w/Rev. Black & Rev. May in the Parlor for Adults
Are My Kids on Track? w/Rev. Campbell in Dobbins Hall Class
The Psalms w/Rev. Fuller in Munds Hall Library
Children meet in Water Street Class 107

Good Shepherd Office Hours

Monday - Friday from 8:00 - 5:00

Weekday Services

Tuesdays at 12:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist Service
Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m. Healing Service with
Holy Eucharist (Rite II)

Monthly Services

We offer a service of Holy Communion at the Trinity
Towers/Brookdale retirement community at 3:30 p.m. on
the first Sunday of every month.

St. James Chapel Services

Tuesdays at 8:05 a.m. Middle School Chapel
Tuesdays at 8:45 a.m. K- 4th Grade Chapel
Wednesdays at 9:00 a.m. Preschool Chapels (4 services)
Thursdays at 8:05 a.m. All School Chapel

Parents are welcome at All School Chapel on Thursdays.