
The Shepherd's Staff (amended issue)

1 message

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The Shepherd's Staff



Newsletter of the Anglican Province of Christ the King December, 2022

*The Most Reverend John E. Upham
The Right Reverend D. M. Ashman
The Reverend Gordon Hines, Publisher*

An Advent Pastoral Letter -by Bishop Donald Ashman



My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On November 27th, Advent Sunday, Father Chad Hart III was instituted as Rector of the Parish of Saint Mark in Portland in the presence of a full church. It was a glorious day and a glorious service! But whenever our large parishes experience success (and Saint Mark's truly deserved that day!), I think of our small and struggling parishes. Saint Mark's went through some terrible

times and we rejoice for their parish family. The parish persevered; the Fire Brigade supplied clergy; we all worked to save a parish. *Laus Domini!* Their success is our success and I want us to use this Advent 2022 to call to remembrance who we are and what our calling is.

We must understand that we are doing God's work. Ours is not to collect the most dollars or build the most spectacular edifices or draw the largest congregations, unless we work in the vineyard together to build Christ's Kingdom. We are not independent contractors! Large and small parishes; rich and poor parishes all work for a common cause (as Bishop Morse said): to bring souls to Christ. To paraphrase Henri Nouwen, we must struggle to avoid the temptation to be relevant or to be spectacular or to be powerful. We will be judged by every life we touch; every soul we save. Our calling is to spread the Kingdom. Building new churches, attracting new parishioners, and giving for the physical welfare of others are all good, but to show our neighbors the love of God by what they see in us, to teach them what the Incarnation truly means, and to illuminate the darkness with the Light of Christ, these are our first priorities.

And our priorities are no better illustrated than in the Advent Wreath and its candles. Each candle represents one week leading up to Christmas and there are many interpretations. The one I like best is that the first candle represents the Patriarchs (the Fathers of the Hebrews – and us), the second represents the Prophets (those inspired men who spoke to us by the Holy Ghost), the third John the Baptist (the forerunner who paved the way for the Messiah), the fourth Mary (the great Mother of God, the greatest of the Saints and our example of obedience); and a center candle for the Baby Lord Jesus (Who came to save us from ourselves). I like this symbolism not only because it emphasizes God touching the human experience down through time but also because it explains our reason for being in this darkened world that so desperately needs the Light of Christ.

Every Advent in my preparation for Christmas, I reread Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol. We know the plot, how a miser and unloving man is shown present, past and future; and how he mends his ways by learning to love his neighbor as himself. How appropriate during Advent that this novel teaches us that true relevance in this life has nothing to do with material success or the gospel of Mammon. Every one of our parishes is important – even the smallest – because we prepare our folks to meet our Infant Saviour. Tiny Tim shows the way, when he tells his father that he hoped that when people saw him, a cripple in church on Christmas Day, it would be pleasant for them to remember just Who made lame beggars walk and blind people see. Advent and Christmas; you can't have one without the other! So God bless us, God bless us every one!

+DMA

The Institution of Fr. Chad Hart, III
St. Mark's, Portland, Oregon
1st Sunday in Advent, Nov. 27th

Fr. Chad Hart III grew up in the parish of St. Mark's and once expressed that being its rector was the ideal job for him.









Sacrament of Holy Confirmation
administered by Bishop Peter Hansen
Christ Anglican Church, Carefree, Arizona



Congratulations to the
Confirmands pictured with
Bishop Peter Hansen, from
left to right:

Ava York, Keira Kolander,
Keikilani Johnson, and
Matthew Pastian.

Bishop Hansen confirmed
them at Christ Anglican
Church on the parish Feast
Day of Christ the King on
an episcopal visit before
Thanksgiving.

Canon Steven Dart is the
Rector of Christ's Church;
Darius Gasatura is Deacon

Left-center photo: Ava
York with Bishop Hansen



administering Holy Confirmation. Canon Dart and Deacon Gasatura assisting.

Left-bottom photo: Keikilani Johnson with Bishop Hansen administering Holy Confirmation. Canon Dart assisting.



St. Joseph of Arimathea Seminary Announces Winter/Spring Session Classes

The Fall Semester is winding down and ending in mid-December. The classes have been fantastic with enthusiastic participation. The only disappointment has been that there were not more registrants. Well then again, fifty students and auditors isn't bad at all! And we can boast over ten postulants testing their vocations! Not bad at all!



In January Saint Joseph's will offer five classes (starting dates to be announced).

1. Bishop Hansen's Dogmatic Theology class will continue;
2. Bishop Ashman's World History, Latin and Greek classes will also continue;
3. Bishop Ashman's Historical Homiletics class will continue but with some changes,
 - a) the class will focus on the Anglican Breviary Readings, especially the Saints' Days

b) each class will be shorter in length and probably offered twice, once in the morning and once in the evening; and will have a meditation theme woven into each class around the Collect.

4. Younger clergy (by date of ordination) and seminarians are strongly encouraged to sign up for our classes – and that goes for Bishop Hansen's class as well!

Is anybody interested in a class on teaching confirmands, or a class on Latin One?

It is important to understand that the offering of Greek and Latin dates to the earliest days of Saint Joseph's Seminary. We lost it when we lost the fall and spring in-person instruction, but Zoom has given us another chance to recapture these disciplines.

******* The laity especially are encouraged to join our classes.**

Lastly, the provost, Bishop Ashman, can be contacted for scholarship funds which are available at bishopashman@gmail.com

2023 Ordo Kalendars

As 2022 draws to a close don't forget to order your 2023 Ordo Kalendars which have been edited, prepared and are still available for ordering. The Ordo Kalendar conforms to the 1928 Prayer Book and the American and Anglican Missals and is in full color and edited for Church use by Father Matthew Weber of Saint Ann's Chapel in Palo Alto. This useful guide to the church year displays detailed information about feasts and penitential seasons, saints' days and colors used during the church year and no Altar Guild or Parish Sacristy should be without one. There is space on the front of the Kalendar where a parish may, if desired, insert a picture, its name and other information after receiving the Kalendars. Nona has mailed out order forms but if lost or you didn't get an order form, you may direct inquiries to Mrs. Nona Gourley (209) 862-2582 or email our Ordo Kalendar website: order1928bcpcalendar@gmail.com.



ACW-DWS Notes - December, 2022



Carol Karcher has completed her fabulous, embroidered picture, and here it is framed.

Tickets will be available soon, and Carol hopes to take the picture to show to some churches in the diocese before 2023 Synod. Tickets will be \$5.00 each and will

benefit St. Joseph of Arimathea Student Support. The final drawing for a winner will be made at the joint DWS/DWSW

Synod at Embassy Suites in Walnut Creek, CA on Friday, April 28, 2023 at the Synod banquet. We congratulate Carol and are extremely grateful for her very generous contribution.

Please let me know what fund-raisers your ACW branch is planning, and we can all share. Do not forget to tithe to your church when you are counting your profits! My email is gillian.golden@yahoo.com . Send photos of your activities as well. We are all interested, and your ideas may spark ideas for other parishes!

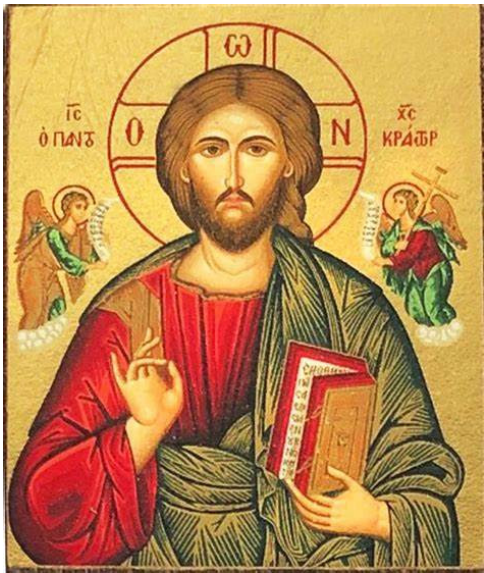
Happy New Year to you all! As we enter our new church year, and await the birth of Our Saviour, we are thankful for our many blessings and approach our new year with hope. The new year also brings the annual reminders for ACW Dues. Each church, whether or not they have an active ACW group, needs to send a check for \$50.00 to the Diocesan ACW Treasurer. \$15 goes to the Provincial ACW, and the remaining \$35 to the Diocesan ACW. Please complete the form accompanying the dues request with details of ACW officers, or simply give the name and email of a contact person.

Reminders about Lenten Mite Boxes will also be going out shortly. Ash Wednesday is February 22, and Easter is April 9, so requests for Mite boxes need to be received by early February. Thank you to all churches participating in this program, which raises money for student support at St Joseph of Arimathea Seminary.

Wishing you all a very blessed Christmas season!
Gillian Golden, President ACW-DWS

*The Stage is Set:
O Come, O Come, Emmanuel!
-by David St. John*

"And it came to pass in those days . . ." These are the words of Luke at the beginning of the second chapter of his gospel, as he relates the account of Christ's birth. But prior to this, there is a great and lengthy prelude to the story of Christmas.



As we know, Christ is present in every single book of the Old Testament. He appears in many forms, some of which, from our vantage point, are pretty obvious. In other ways, He may be there in a symbolic fashion. And He is very much there in the form of prophecies.

Messianic prophecies are contained in the writings of Old Testament prophets Jeremiah, Micah, Hosea, Zechariah, Ezekiel, Daniel and Malachi among others.

King David even wrote about the crucifixion 1,000 years before Jesus was born: “Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me; they pierce my hands and my feet. All my bones are on display; people stare and gloat over me. They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment” (Psalm 22:16-18).

The Old Testament described the awaited Messiah’s birth in detail. In particular, the prophets foretold that the Savior would be born of a woman and would defeat Satan to redeem humanity for Satan’s deception of our First Parents (Genesis 3:15).

Further, the Savior would come from the line of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Genesis 12:3; 17:19; Numbers 24:17), and the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:10). Scripture also revealed that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2) to a virgin who would call Him Emmanuel (Isaiah 7:14). The Messiah would be an heir to King David’s throne and would reign for eternity (2 Samuel 7:12-13).

Another example: There is the prophecy from Jeremiah: God will raise up an heir of David, and he will be the savior of Israel (Jeremiah 23:5). This was written about 600 years before Christ!

And later, there is another prophecy from Malachi: God will send His messenger to prepare the way, and He Himself will come into the Temple (Read Malachi, Chapter 3). This was written about 400 years before Christ!

It was not only the words of the prophets that prepared the way. There were also the deeds of God; a consistent pattern of action that set the stage for Jesus' birth.

Go to the book of Judges, Chapter 13, and read about the birth of Samson and you will see that it follows a particular pattern. Manoah's wife was barren. An angel of the Lord appeared to tell her that she would conceive and bear a son. The son was to be consecrated to God from the womb. The Spirit of the Lord would move him, and he would begin the deliverance of Israel from its enemies. This pattern was established more than a thousand years before Christ!

There are also the births of Samuel (Read 1st Samuel, Chapter 1) and John the Baptist (Read Luke 1:5-25). These events happened more than a thousand years apart, but followed the same pattern.

By the time we get to the birth of Jesus, God has repeatedly said what He's going to do through the prophets and has established His characteristic way of acting. This time, though, there's an extra twist. In the Old Testament, we didn't expect women such as Sarah or Manoah's wife to give birth because they were barren. And now, we wouldn't expect Mary to give birth because she's a virgin. This too, however, was foretold. Isaiah 7 states, in a prophecy given more than 700 years before Christ: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name Him Emmanuel." This prophecy is even quoted in the Gospel of Matthew.

So, the stage is set. God is about to reveal His Messiah, and institute a New Covenant with His people.

May this season of Advent and Christmas be meaningful and a blessing to us all.

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel!

Who is the Virgin Mary, Mother of Jesus?

-by Aurore Leigh Barrett & David St. John

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to Mary, a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The angel



went to Mary and said, "Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women." Mary was greatly troubled so the angel said to her, "Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

Later, after having been greeted by her cousin Elizabeth, Mary spoke her song of praise, in which she recounts God's of intervention in her own life as well as the fulfillment of God's promises made to Abraham:

My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me

great things; and holy [is] his name. And his mercy [is] on them that fear him from generation to generation. He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from [their] seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of [his] mercy; As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.

(See Luke 1:46-56)

We admire and love Mary for her bravery and for her devotion to God. In her obedience, she walked a difficult path, knowing how costly it would be.

How much do we know about the details of her life? Not much.

We do know that Mary was the only person to be present with Jesus at his birth and his earthly death. Mary comforted Jesus as He entered this world, and also as He left it to return to the Father.

We also know that Mary was familiar with Old Testament prophecy about the coming Messiah. In her song of praise, we find evidence that Mary knew the Old Testament teachings. As a Jew, she had been learning about biblical prophecy her entire life. Her song also bears a striking resemblance to Hannah's famous prayer found in 1st Samuel 2:1-10.

There are only four occasions when Mary's words are recorded in the Bible. They are found in the Gospels of Luke and John. Luke gives an account of her dialogue with the angel at the Annunciation (Luke 1:26-38), her encounter with Elizabeth and her Magnificat (Luke 1:46-56), and the finding of the twelve-year-old Jesus in the temple (Luke 2:41-52). John describes Mary's intervention at the wedding at Cana (John 2:1-11).

In her dialogue with the angel, Mary spoke twice. In reply to the angel's message she asked, "How shall this be, seeing I

know not a man?" (Luke 1:34). Having received insight into God's plan, Mary gave her consent: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word" (Luke 1:38).

Then, during that visit with her cousin, Elizabeth, Mary intones her beautiful Magnificat, as shown above.

The next time Mary's words are recorded in the Bible was when the boy Jesus, at the age of twelve, remained behind and was found in the Temple. His mother's words expressed distress and grief: "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing" (Luke 2:48).

The final time we hear Mary's words in the Bible is in the fourth Gospel. John narrates Mary's involvement in Jesus' first miracle at a wedding in Cana of Galilee. Here Mary spoke twice. Turning to her Son she said, "They have no wine" (John 2:3). She then told the servants, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do [it]" (John 2:5).

(We like to think of those last five simple words of Mary to be "the gospel in miniature".)

There is no account in the Bible of Mary's death. Everything we think we know about her death comes from apocryphal narratives.

There are many of these stories. In almost all of them, Mary has been resurrected by Jesus and welcomed into heaven. One of the most popular versions describing Mary's death is an early story by Bishop John of Thessalonica. In the story, an angel tells Mary that she will die in three days. She then summons relatives and friends to stay with her for two nights, and they sing rather than mourn. Three days after the funeral, same as with Jesus, the apostles opened her sarcophagus, only to find that she had been taken away by Christ.

Mary shines as a symbol of God's desire to use the obscure and the ordinary. What encouragement from this simple peasant girl who now stands as one of the most loved women of all

time! Let's learn from Mary's example today. Let's remember to live humbly and step out with boldness. Like Mary, we can all be part of God's remarkable story.

The Advent Wreath Its Tradition & Symbolism



Note: Even though the Advent Season has begun, it is not too late to participate in the daily Advent Wreath devotions offered in this article.

The origins of the Advent wreath are obscure. Historians agree that it originated in other contexts in Europe and probably pre-dates the birth of the baby Jesus. Pagans brought the tradition with them when they were baptized. The word “advent” itself derives from the Latin *adventus*, which means “coming.” In our Christian context, of course, it refers to our penitent yet joyous preparation for the coming of our Blessed Lord, for the season of Christmas.

The wreath celebrates the beginning of the liturgical year. It also overflows with Christian symbols. For example, the circle represents the eternal nature of God and of His love; the evergreens symbolize eternal life; the laurel, victory over suffering and death; the yew and pine, immortality. Holly has special significance: the prickly leaves signify the crown of thorns that awaits the Blessed Baby. It is also said that the Cross on which Christ would hang was made of holly. Pine cones and seed pods hold the promise of our new life in Christ.

There is one candle for each of the four weeks of Advent. The three purple candles (and the purple ribbon) are for penance while one rose candle is for Rose Sunday. It reminds us that we are halfway through this somber season of expectancy. It also tells us to rejoice because the Lord is at hand.

Lighting the Candles

Arrangements for who lights the candles will vary according to the family make-up and number of children. Most common is for the father to light the first candle on the first Sunday. On the second Sunday the mother lights the first and second candles; on the third Sunday the oldest child lights the first, second, and third candles; and on the fourth Sunday the youngest child lights all four candles. Now all the candles shed their brilliance to announce the approaching nativity of our Lord.

A very practical custom is to make the evening meal each day the time for the candle lighting ceremony, allowing the candles to burn until after the meal. Or the prayers at the wreath may be used as family prayers at bedtime each evening. During the twelve days of Christmas (December 25 – January 6) the purple candles and ribbon may be replaced with white ones, and all four candles may be lit at mealtime or during family prayers. Bright Christmas balls may also be added to the wreath during the Christmas season.

Note: You can purchase a wreath and candles through online stores such as Amazon.

Liturgy for Lighting the Candles

A member of the family lights one or more candles of the Advent wreath, depending on the Sunday in Advent.

Leader: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

All: Come, Lord Jesus!

Leader: Reads Scripture passage for the day (see list below) and concludes with “Here endeth the lesson.”

All: Thanks be to God.

Blessing of the Advent Wreath

On the first Sunday in Advent the leader asks God's blessing on the wreath with the following words:

O Lord, by Whose Word all things are sanctified; pour forth Thy blessings upon this wreath of green, and grant that we who use it may prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ, and may receive Thy abundant grace, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Leader: Let us pray. (Use the collect for the week. See following page.)

All: Visit, O Lord, this habitation and this family; drive far from it all snares of the enemy, let Thy holy angels dwell herein to preserve us in peace, and let Thy blessing be ever upon us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Leader: The almighty and merciful Lord, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, bless us and keep us. Amen

At the end of the meal all of the candles are extinguished.

Suggested Scripture Readings

Day	Week One	Week Two	Week Three	Week Four
Sun	Jn 1:9-14	Isa 40:1-12	Isa 9:6-7	Lk 1:5-25
Mon	Jn 3:16-21	Gen 3:1-21	Isa 7:10-16	Lk 1:26-36
Tue	Isa 60:1-3	Mic 5:1-3	Isa 11:1-6	Lk 1:39-56
Wed	Psa 43:3-5	Hos 11:3-4	Isa 40:9-11	Lk 1:57-66
Thur	Isa 58:69	Psa 130	Isa 52:7-12	Lk 1:67-end
Fri	1Jn 2:8-11	Mic 6:6-8	Jer 33:14-16	Jer. 23:5-8
Sat	1Jn 3:1-2,7-10	Jer 14:7-9	Mat 3:1-6	Matt. 1:18-end

Advent...is a Penitential Season, like Lent; therefore, altar flowers are not used during the Advent season except on the third (Rose) Sunday.

The Collects of Advent

First Sunday in Advent

Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy 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 quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal, through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. Amen

This Collect is to be repeated every day, after the other Collects in Advent, until Christmas Day.

Second Sunday in Advent

Blessed Lord, who has caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of thy Holy Word, we may embrace, and never hold fast, the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Third Sunday in Advent

O Lord Jesus Christ, who at thy first coming didst send thy messenger to prepare thy way before thee; grant that the ministers and stewards of thy mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready thy way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at thy second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in thy sight, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit ever, one God, world without end. Amen

Fourth Sunday in Advent

O Lord, raise up, we pray thee, thy power, and come among us, and with great might succor us; that whereas, through our sins and wickedness, we are sore let and hindered in running the race that is set before us, thy bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be honour and glory, world without end. Amen

Some Reflections on Advent



-by Christine Sunderland



We have entered the Church's New Year, and as in January's New Year, we begin December's Advent with penitential prescriptions. Instead of making resolutions (usually fitness), we clean out our hearts. Both beginnings call us to change for the better, to repent and resolve. In so doing in this season of Advent, we prepare ourselves

for the greatest of all festivals, the Nativity of Jesus Christ, **Christ-Mass.**

Advent is called "Little Lent" for this reason. We scour our souls with the Word of God, with His Word of Creation, with Christ Himself in the Eucharist. We look for our failings, our sins, our unlove. For our Creator will re-create us in His image as we were meant to be. As we submit to our Father's will for us, we discover our true selves. It is in this prayer, "Thy will be done," that we find joy, a mysterious and miraculous, and even surprising, joy.

Advent calls us to pay attention to these joyful moments. We watch for Christ's second coming, the advent of the New Jerusalem, and the advent of Judgment. For Advent means "coming," and we are reminded of the three advents of Christ - the coming to mankind as a baby in Bethlehem, the coming to mankind in judgment in the New Jerusalem, the coming of Christ in the Eucharist today, filling our hearts. And so in Advent we prepare for His coming to us at Christmas, for this coming will change mankind forever. We clean out our hearts to make room for the Savior of the World. We pay attention. We re-mind one another through ritual and song.

The Church Year cycle invites us to dance through Time to prepare for Eternity. The nine seasons tell the greatest story of all, that of God's immense love for mankind and his desire to share Eternity with us. We tell the story of redemption (crucifixion and resurrection) and salvation (our saying yes to God); we sing the story in hymns and in liturgies and in



pageants and in processions. We dance this dance of life, and in the dance we learn to love one another. We learn to share. We learn to give. We learn to step outside our prison of self and, slowly, miraculously, we learn to see one another more clearly. We learn to listen, to hear the music of the spheres, the perfect harmonies of the universe.

And so in this season of Advent, when daylight is shortened and darkness lengthens, this season of cold and silence, when natural world shrinks and hibernates, sleeping and waiting for spring - in this season of Advent, we look to the bright lights of Christmas. We cast our eyes upon Mary, our Mother, and her story of obedience. We watch her say yes to God, and in this "fiat" we learn obedience too. We watch her journey to Bethlehem with her faithful Joseph, and we learn patience and fortitude and trust. We watch her seek a safe place to bear her child, the Son of God, which she finds in a dark cavern. We journey with her.



As we journey we sing carols that tell of these magnificent acts of God. The poetry and the rhyme, the melody and the meanings, invite us to journey with Mary and Joseph. With the bright stars and the glorious angels we too pay homage to the King of Kings born in a manger on Christmas Day. With these hymn-stories we become part of the re-creation of the world. We live inside these love-songs. We dwell there, in the Bethlehem manger, where the shepherds bow to the newborn King, where the magi from afar bring gifts to honor His priesthood, His kingship, and lastly, His death that will redeem the world with resurrection.

And as we journey through the year, we hold the hands of our children, to show them what God has revealed to us. We teach them to clean out their hearts to make room for Him, so that they too can glimpse glory, the glory of the only Begotten:

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only Begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." (John 1:14, KJV)



We dance the dance of life through the year, so that we may vanquish the dirge of death. We journey with Mary who carries the Christ Child in her womb, and as we celebrate the Holy Child within her, we celebrate all children, born and unborn. We celebrate all mothers and fathers who trust in their Creator to bring them through the rough times, so that they can fully enjoy the good times, the truly God-times.

We journey in the dark of night to emerge into the light of day. We see our way with the our flaming candles, three purple and one pink, lighting our way through Advent, bringing us to the glory of Christmas morning.

The Final Word...



***Heaven and earth shall pass away:
but my words shall not pass away.***

What do these words mean? Here are three suggestions by three Church Fathers. (1) St. Theophylactus suggests that Heaven might mean Faith and Christ's Church. Then the passage might mean the Faith, the Church shall not pass away. Therefore Jesus is saying that the Church is above all other institutions. (2) St. Gregory the Great says that these words mean that everything that seems to us enduring, will not endure – except the words of Jesus; and (3) St. Bede says that maybe heaven means NOT the heaven of God but the heavens in which the birds fly, that is to say the skies, so the passage could be rendered, *Heaven that is all things in nature and this world shall pass away but my words shall not pass away.*



Anglican Province of Christ the King

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