



Holy Comforter Episcopal Church

December, 2018

Good News from Holy Comforter Comfortable Words

The Reverend Suzanne Smith

The Lord's grace and favor has prevailed upon deacon Smith to be ordained by the Right Reverend Hector Monterroso on January 12th at Grace Episcopal Church in Alvin, Texas. No time has been set at this writing. The Smith family would be most honored with your presence witnessing this sacred service; you have been integral in her encouragement and love these last four years. We thank you for being you.



Sunday Luncheons:

Since August we have begun hosting lunches after each 10:30 service in an attempt to provide a healthy and filling meal for all those who wish to stay and enjoy more time with church-family and friends.

The luncheons have been a lovely success. Mrs. LaFaye Grimes, our cook, has done a remarkable job feeding us! It is great food and an easy atmosphere; giving us time to sit and reconnect after Eucharist together.

Beyond us not having to leave the church campus in order to pay for an expensive meal around town and battling for another parking space (these alone are great reasons to stay) the meals LaFaye treats us with are only \$7 per adult and \$2 per child!

And visitors and guests don't pay! We ask that you let us treat you. Of course, we do not want anyone to leave or pass up a lunch because they forgot money or do not have the money. *If you're hungry please stay and dine with us! All monies go back into the luncheon ministry.*

Children's Pageant practice...for all the Holy Comforter kiddos excited for Christmas and the Christmas Pageant we are practicing for it each Sunday in December (all four Sundays leading up to the 24th). Mr. Rodney Mason is holding choir practice for the children's choir (the kiddos will be singing during the pageant this year).

Parents, please make it a point to have your kids at practice each Sunday by 9:45 am. The songs are the same songs we normally sing in the pageant but things will be different enough for the children to need practice. The various parts for the pageant will also be chosen during these practices in the next couple of weeks.



Christmas service dates and times:

Sunday, December 23rd - the fourth week of Advent

8:30 am – Rite I

10:30 am – Lessons & Carols with Eucharist

Monday, December 24th - Christmas Eve services

5:00 pm Children's Pageant & Eucharist (Rite II)

8:00 pm Candlelight Eucharist (Rite II)

11:00 pm Contemplative Eucharist (Rite III)



Tuesday, December 25th - **10:30 am** - Christmas Day – Rite I – Sermon and Holy Communion – The Christ Mass

After Christmas Day Events and Services

Wednesday, December 26th - Boxing Day- office closed –

No Wednesday Bible Study and Dinner

Friday, December 28th - Feast of the Holy Innocents (Contemplative Eucharist) at 6 pm

Sunday, December 30th - Christmas 1 (First Sunday after Christmas regular Sunday services)



John Lothrop:



Many of you met John first Sunday and many have noticed him helping at the altar. John Lothrop is our Seminarian! Having John with us is a very good thing, indeed. As you will read John's biography below, he has lived an abundant life and now finds himself called to serve God in His Church. (exactly how he will serve is the reason John began attending seminary at the Iona School for Ministry and why he has come to be with us).

For those who believe themselves called (and affirmed by our Bishops) yet not called to be rectors in parishes there is a school designed to help determine how to serve in such ways as deacons and lay ministries, etc. Part of the discernment process at Iona (seminary) is to do field work. Field work is essentially an internship; receiving the practical training for John to take his classroom studies into the parish setting.

By the grace of God and the wisdom of John's supervisors he has been assigned to Holy Comforter until next June. This means (much like Suzanne did) that he will assist Preston and myself on Sundays at the altar (doing what we call Lay Eucharistic Ministry). As well, part of John's discernment work is to figure out his ministerial passions in ministry and build a program borne out of his passions in his time with us.

Below is a little bit about the Lothrop's, in John's own words:

John and Lisa Lothrop are Texas Gulf Coast flatlanders, Lisa having been born in Freeport and John in Brownsville. Most of Lisa's pre-marriage years were spent in Lake Jackson, having graduated from Brazoswood HS in a year that shall remain untold. John grew up in League City and graduated from Clear Creek HS in 1970.

Lisa's "church upbringing", baptism, and confirmation into the Body of Christ was at St. Timothy, Lake Jackson and John's was at St. Christopher, League City. Lisa and John both pursued their college degrees later in life (while in their 40s), and are graduates of the University of Houston, Clear Lake. Post-graduation, Lisa shifted from her early work career as a medical arts technician to that of an elementary school teacher, from which she retired two years ago after over twenty years of service (the last four as a special education teacher) at League City Elementary School.

John retired earlier this year after over thirty years of service with the City of League City Engineering Department. Prior to joining the City, John was a self-employed land surveyor. Lisa loves to garden and create and fix stuff. Adept at using a vacuum cleaner, she prefers the circular saw or drill. John enjoys noodling around on the guitar, golf (a confirmed duffer), and looks forward in the hopefully near future to foul-hooking some specks, red-fish, and flounder. Both love to read, travel, and spend time with family and friends. After forty-three years of marriage, John and Lisa are proud parents of adult children, Russell and Lydia, and one high school sophomore grandchild, Arysa.

Both Lisa and John have been active through the years at St. Christopher, where Lisa is still a member, from puppet ministries to vestry service, and all points in between. John is in his third year of spiritual formation and discernment at the Iona School of Ministry, where his focus has shifted from the clerical ordination track to lay licensing track.

Bishop's Visit has been cancelled...

Though we were looking forward to Bishop Duncan's visit on December 30th he is unable to make it. Yet we are pleased to announce that bishop Jeff Fisher will make his return to Holy Comforter October 6th, 2019! For those who were hoping to be confirmed in December, fear not (and my apologies) you will simply have more time to be immersed in the Episcopal way!

Pledge Cards...



Having finished the fiscal year at Holy Comforter balanced (our second year in a row!) we are on pace to enjoying our third. Already so many of you have turned in a pledge card and increased your pledge. For this you have my profound gratitude. There is a tremendous spirit about this lovely Family and campus. And it's plain for so many to see.

And should we have each family pledge we would be very near our projected budgetary goals and would have reached our grant match (we have been gifted with yet another year for a \$30K matching grant for all new pledges and increased pledges). With this amazing blessing it would be tremendously disappointing not to reach our full potential. And yet we are so close and are on track to having our best year yet.

If you have not turned in your pledge I ask you to do so as soon as you can so that we might better plan for next year's growth. Giving is our way of living into the Eucharistic life and the parish's means of growing into its ecclesiological responsibilities and goals.

Finally, as December draws to a close please make every effort to fulfill your financial commitment this year. As always, it matters more than you might realize.

...and Chart sign up



We have enjoyed record sign up for the Chart. Lest one think the Chart does not work I would humbly (and strongly) disagree. No longer do we have just a few people doing most of the parish's work; the vast majority of the good folks of Holy Comforter have some hand in the parish's workings.

We pledge and we Chart because as a means of growing into our Christian discipline; Episcopalians do not sit in the pews and receive communion without preparing first. We prepare through sacrifice and offering our time in the Church's mission and ministries (what is more commonly called through our time, talents and treasure). We give and we volunteer as a natural expression of our communion; and without sacrificial giving worship is incomplete. In other words, we live out Christ's sacrifice in our own sacrifices.

The Chart will remain hanging in the Parish Hall throughout December and January until the All Parish Meeting. If you have signed up for something new a Vestry member will be contacting you soon to discuss your new role. For those who have signed up I thank you.

Pictorial Directory – picture day...Sunday, December 9th

Mike Hattaway was kind enough to take family pictures in November and has agreed to do so again (if you missed it the first time). These pictures Mike is taking are for Holy Comforter use only. There will be no "selling" anyone on buying the pictures, I assure you. Of course, should you wish to have family pictures I am certain Mike would be happy discuss it further with you.

When all the pictures have been taken we will compile a directory for all of us to enjoy; we have been blessed with so many new families. I am so very grateful to Mike and Sciobhan for all the hard work they are putting into this project.

Advent devotionals...

As the rest of the world is already geared for Christmas we humbly wait and hold the tension as Christians have done for thousands of years throughout Advent. We humbly wait in order to prepare ourselves seeking to image (as best we can) Christ's humility as He took the form of a child to be our Messiah. We wait as a devotion to Him. To help get (and keep us) in a proper frame of mind please feel free to pick up one or both of the Advent devotional booklets waiting for you in the Narthex. As well, for families with younger children you will notice Advent calendars for you to enjoy. I wish you a sacred preparation as our Messiah will soon arrive!

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Return Service Requested

<u>January, 2019</u>	
Tuesday the 1 st ...	Feast of the Holy Name (Contemplative Service)...at 6 pm
Wednesday the 2 nd ...	No Wednesday Bible Study and Dinner
Sunday the 6 th	(Epiphany Sunday)- regular Sunday services
	5 pm Burning of the Greens at nightfall
Wednesday the 9 th	6 pm Peach Street Film Society
Saturday the 12 th	The Reverend Suzanne Smith's Presbyteral Ordination (priest ordination) at Grace Episcopal Church in Alvin, Texas (time TBD)
Sunday the 13 th	(Baptism of our Lord)
Wednesday the 16 th	6 pm Peach Street Film Society
Thursday the 17 th	6 pm TME
Saturday the 19 th	Schuett wedding (more details to follow)
Wed. the 22 nd	6 pm Game Night
Friday the 25 th	5 pm Appreciation Dinner
Sunday the 27 th	All Parish Meeting (combined 9:30 service with our parish meeting immediately following)
Wed. the 30 th	6 pm Game Night