



The Hillside Messenger

A Message from the Rector: Responding to God's Thrilling Voice

*Hark!
A thrilling voice
is sounding;
"Christ is nigh,"
it seems to say;
"Cast away
the works
of darkness,
O ye children
of the day."*

This opening stanza of Hymn 9 of the **1940 Hymnal** is from Edward Caswall's translation of a Latin hymn of the sixth century. There are many voices in today's Western society which vie for the Christian's attention. There are many calls, many pressures, in the busy life of the average working American. There are so many, in fact, that Christians often find it hard to hear the voice of God calling to them. Even in earlier ages, it would be necessary to say, "Hark!" or "Listen!" It is as if a parent were taking a child for a walk in the countryside and

should hear the call of a particular bird, say a red-tailed hawk, and should exclaim, "Listen! Did you hear that sound? It was a red-tailed hawk!"

But this is no ordinary bird-call, but the call of God to hear and pay attention to the messen-



gers of the Lord Jesus Christ warning us that Christ is near and that we must throw away the works of darkness since we are children of the day. Yet the warning is also a joyful announcement to God's people. It

is a thrilling voice! It pierces the air like a hawk's call, ringing with authority. The message is that Christ will soon come again. He is near. Because of this, Christians, who are "children of the day" because Christ has forgiven their

sins and raised them to new life in Him, must discard all the works of darkness. This reminds me of **Isaiah 2:20-21**, KJV:

In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and the bats; to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of His majesty, when He ariseth to shake terribly the earth.

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Responding to God's Thrilling Voice

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In the presence of the coming King, all these idols and all the works of darkness will be like hateful things, trash to be thrown out and forgotten. Instead, we must be overjoyed at meeting with our King, our Lord and Savior! For the voice that warns is also the voice that thrills our hearts, for we know that what He tells us to do is for our good. In keeping with this, St. Paul, in his *Epistle to the Romans*, urges Christians to “cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armour of light” (*Romans 13:12*, KJV), since the night is almost over and the day is near. If we complain that thousands of years have passed and Christ has not yet come again, we miss the point, which is not the length of time that has passed, but the urgency of using the time that remains to us to live in joyful expectation of Christ's second coming and in doing those deeds of righteousness and acts of mercy and loving-kindness we long to be found doing at the moment of Christ's coming. How will Christ find us when He comes again? It is right that this question should occupy our minds and that we should reflect deeply on it. Some believers think they can stubbornly persist in their sins until Christ comes again, because at His coming they will be transformed instantly to a

state of perfection, or instantaneously sanctified. While we should not doubt the truth of the joyful reality of sanctification, this doctrine is intended to bring joy and peace to all who cooperate with the Holy Spirit in seeking the presence of God in their lives and drawing closer to Him in spirit.

Even now, then, no matter how far off we imagine Christ's second coming to be, we must not be found wanting in the virtues God commands us to practice in our lives. We must embrace them all the more. In fact, we must clothe ourselves with them, just as we have clothed ourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ by having been baptized into union with Him in Holy Baptism and, as we promised at Confirmation, following Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. It is this purpose that St. Paul has in mind in blessing the Thessalonian Christians in this way:

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it.

1 Thessalonians
5:23-24, KJV

Blamelessness in God's sight is the prize that Christians trust and hope in the Lord that He will give them when He comes again, but we must turn our hearts now to hear the voice of God's messengers calling to us in His Word, speaking to us in those around us, and relayed by fellow-Christians. Our ears must be tuned to hear the Lord, to catch the sound of His voice, to understand the meaning of His message, and to obey His call to righteousness in our lives. Thomas à Kempis wrote: “Blessed is the soul which hears the Lord speaking in him and receives from His lips a word of consolation.” (Thomas à Kempis: *The Imitation of Christ*, Book III, Chapter I). The Lord Jesus Christ Himself said, “Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it” (*St. Luke 11:28*), and declared that those who hear and do the word of God are His mother and His brethren (*St. Luke 8:21*). Those that not only hear but also obey the word of God stand close to the Lord Jesus and are walking with Him in their daily lives. It is this intimate relationship and communion with the Lord Jesus Christ that must characterize the Christian life.

It is here that the close connection between

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Responding to God's Thrilling Voice

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Advent and Christmas becomes apparent. Christmas as the celebration of our Lord and Savior's birth is itself a mighty event, but because of the cultural and religious distance of the present world from the reality and saving power of the Lord Jesus Christ's birth and life on this earth, the Second Advent of Christ to harvest the faithful and to judge the world must necessarily receive more urgent attention than the celebration of Christmastide. Jesus is no longer an infant but the King of kings and Lord of lords who will come again to judge the living and the dead. Unlike the commercial world, we do not think of the celebration of Christ's birth as a means of great material profit year by year, for preceding Christmas is Advent, which trumpets the truth that everyone must prepare to meet their God, their coming King. In the face of this great event, material things such as the profits of wealth melt away into meaninglessness.

Though the beautiful nativity narratives of *St. Matthew* and *St. Luke* feature prominently in Christmas services, pageants, and plays, the prologue of the *Gospel according to St. John* describes the enormous significance of Christ's birth: The eternal Word of God became flesh in

this world in order to bring into the world the true light of life. It escapes our comprehension that God loved the world so much that He gave His only-begotten Son so that everyone who believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life (*St. John 3:16*). We cannot comprehend even how God became man except from what Holy Scripture tells us, that the Blessed Virgin Mary conceived Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit (*St. Matthew 1:20; St. Luke 1:35*). The birth of Jesus has transformed the lives of many. It still does, and will continue to do so in the future, since He has brought to mankind the means of salvation in Himself. By turning away from sin and believing in the Lord Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins, **anyone** can be born again and receive forgiveness from God and the gift of the Holy Spirit (*St. John 3:3-8; Acts 2:38*). It does not depend on whether we can pay a high rent, or whether we have a nice car, or whether we are young or old, or on any possible condition for success in this material life on earth. It depends on the grace of God from the beginning and the obedience of our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Having progressed from hearing the word of God to obeying it more and more in the hope that, by "daily increasing in the Holy Spirit more and

more," we may "come unto God's everlasting kingdom" (*Bishop's Prayer for a Candidate at Confirmation*, page 297, *Book of Common Prayer*, 1928), we must share the Gospel as effectively

***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.***

as we can this Christmas and always since many might not hear such a Gospel except this Christmas.

– *The Reverend
Christopher Parrish*

Our Chapel Family Prayer List

O God, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, we humbly beseech Thee for all sorts and conditions of men; that Thou wouldest be pleased to make Thy ways known unto them, Thy saving health unto all nations. More especially we pray for Thy holy Church universal; that it may be so guided and governed by Thy good Spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life. Finally, we commend to Thy fatherly goodness:

Archbishop
Foley Beach;

Bishop
Bill Ilgenfritz;

Bishop
Richard Lipka;

Canon
Michael Penfield;
Father Chris Parrish;
Deacon Peter Vogel; and
Deacon Linda Bracken;

also all those who serve as Thy ministers in governing our nation and state, particularly:

President
Donald Trump;

President-elect
Joseph Biden; and

Governor
Gavin Newsom;

as well as all those who are any ways afflicted, or distressed, in mind, body,

or estate; especially those for whom our prayers are desired:

the soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen, coasties, police officers, firefighters, and pilots who protect us every day;

our persecuted Christian brothers and sisters throughout the world;

all refugees;

all who have suffered loss from wildfires and those who provide disaster relief to them;

all who are suffering from the coronavirus, all medical personnel treating them, and all those who work with the public;

Jim and Edna Davis;

Estelle Wilson;

Joya de Rossett;

Debbie;

Scott;

Brittany;

James and Tanya Theiler;

Dale Quinn;

Brian Quinn;

Mark Quinn;

Lisa;

Ben;

Marion;

Flo;

Max;

Dan and Kendra Pack;

Ernst Hernandez;

the Stanko family;

Yoshihiko and Hideko

Ikegami;

Ali Hemphill;

Lori Hemphill;

Pennel Magaw;

Tracy Magaw;

Mary Frances Reeves;

Maryanne Sanchez;

Kaitlyn Lindstedt;

Brenda Terry;

Mrs. Kitt;

Jon Carter;

Marilyn;

Frank Capone;

Rose Handwerker;

Ann and Frank MacVoy;

Gary Winiger;

Bishop Ilgenfritz;

Dave Shuman;

Barbara Busch;

Libby Codd;

Maria Fernandez;

Patricia Bowers;

Deacon Linda Bracken;

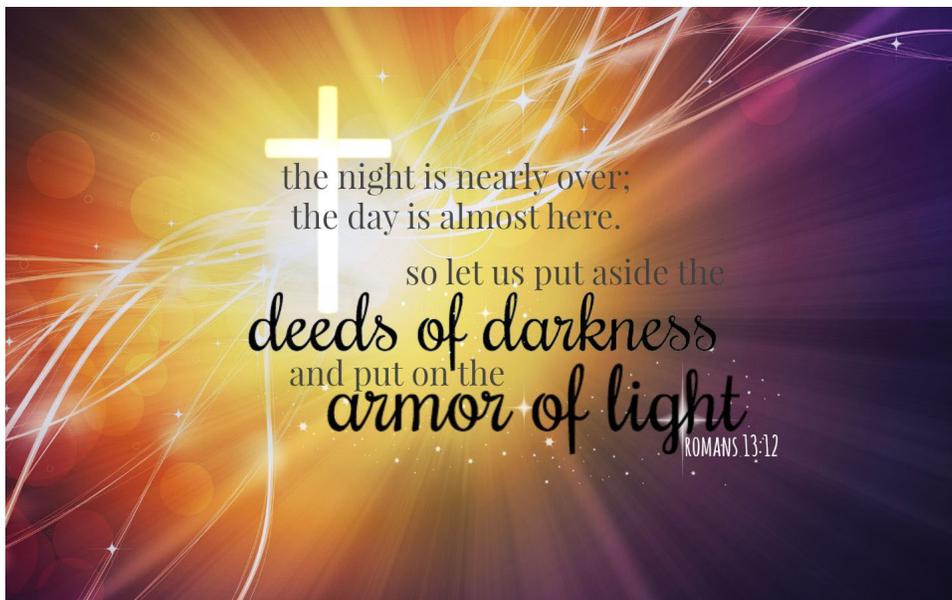
John Waldern;

and for all those who are in our hearts, that it may please Thee to comfort and relieve them, according to their several necessities; giving them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions. And this we beg for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Please note: This prayer list was current as of November 20th, and our congregation will pray for each need until we are notified that it has been met. Please contact Father Parrish to add or remove names. Thank you!

A Prayer for Our Congregation

O GOD, Holy Ghost, Sanctifier of the faithful,
visit, we pray Thee,
the Congregation of St. Luke's Chapel in the Hills
with Thy love and favour;
enlighten our minds more and more with the light of the everlasting Gospel;
graft in our hearts a love of the truth;
increase in us true religion;
nourish us with all goodness;
and of Thy great mercy keep us in the same, O blessed Spirit,
whom, with the Father and the Son together,
we worship and glorify as one God, world without end.
Amen.



In Times of Great Sickness and Mortality

O MOST mighty and merciful God,
in this time of grievous sickness,
we flee unto Thee for succour.
Deliver us, we beseech Thee, from our peril;
give strength and skill to all those who minister to the sick;
prosper the means made use of for their cure;
and grant that, perceiving how frail and uncertain our life is,
we may apply our hearts unto that heavenly wisdom which leadeth to eternal life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Festival of Lessons and Carols ~ 2020 Style

One of the hardest parts of the holidays for me this year (and I suspect for many) is the necessity of forgoing many traditions we've enjoyed most of our lives. In order to keep county ICU capacity from being overwhelmed by the latest surge in Covid-19 cases, we are urged to keep religious services outdoors and without singing. For St. Luke's, this means none of our traditional Christmas Eve services! For me, this means giving up my personal favorite: our annual celebration of the *Festival of Lessons & Carols*. Or does it? Read on!

Originally celebrated in 1918 at King's College Chapel in Cambridge, England, the *Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols* (as it is officially known) has been the annual Christmas Eve service of that Chapel ever since. The service was first broadcast by the BBC in 1928. This year, alas, the realities of Covid considerations have come to roost even at King's. As Stephen Cherry, the Dean of that Chapel, writes:

One feature of the Festival of Nine Lessons and

Carols that is especially important to the College has always been the participation of the congregation of College members and members of the public. We regret to say that this year we are not able to have a congregation in the Chapel.

In a normal year, the choir would also lead the congregation in traditional Christmas hymns, but this



Christmas Eve there will be no congregation present. With Covid restrictions and the need for social distancing within the choir, a number of new arrangements have been made which capitalise on the rare opportunity to hear these ever-popular hymns in versions for choir only.

So here's my answer to maintaining some semblance of the tradition, inspired by the weekly film review meeting we

run at Hydrow (where all 100+ employees come together for an update on the company and a chance to view a highlight reel of the on-the-water workout filming of the week). The program will be broadcast live at 3:00 PM GMT on Christmas Eve, 7:00 AM PST, and it *appears* that the recording of the program will be available for me to download in high definition by noon our time, (I'll also endeavor to record the live production just in case.) I suggest that we get together via a

Zoom meeting which I shall host at **8:00 PM Christmas Eve**. I'll play the video directly into the Zoom video feed (not via screen share, which would lag terribly), and we can enjoy the maj-

esty of the service together, chatting via the Zoom text chat feature.

Make your plans now to put together a tasty batch of Glühwein, egg-nog, hot chocolate, or the beverage of your choice, and let's begin celebrating Christmas together as a parish family as best as is possible this year!

– Deacon Peter Vogel

Parish Postings

Due to the resurgence of Covid-19 cases in our area, Governor Newsom has ordered that houses of worship not meet indoors until at least December 21st. Thanks be to God that we are able to meet for worship via Zoom! To join us:

1. If you have not already done so, download the **free Zoom app** onto your computer, tablet, or phone by visiting <https://Zoom.us/download> to get the app.
2. Father Parrish will e-mail a reminder with the meeting link and password a few days before we meet for Morning Prayer. He will also e-mail the worship bulletin. If you have not received an invitation to a Zoom Morning Prayer service, please ask Father Parrish to add you to the list.
3. When it's time to begin Morning Prayer, click on the meeting link in the invitation message.



The Catechism Class will break from its weekly Zoom meetings beginning Friday, December 18th, and resuming on Friday, January 8th, at 2:00 PM. Father Parrish is offering this class as part of the Chapel's renewed focus on evangelism and discipleship. Participants will delve into what it means to be a Christian and learn how to share the Gospel. The class is open to all who are interested, whether already confirmed or preparing for Confirmation at the next visit of the Bishop. Please let Father Parrish know if you would like to join this class.



Look up! An article in the November 2020 issue of *Forbes* notes that there will be a special event in the sky approximately 45 minutes after sunset on Monday, December 21st. Jupiter and Saturn will be in close conjunction that evening, creating an effect like a Christmas star low on the horizon to the southwest. More information is available at:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/jamiecartereurope/2020/11/20/a-spectacularly-rare-christmas-star-is-coming-in-december-as-two-worlds-align-after-sunset/>



Weather permitting, our Chapel Family will honor the birth of our Lord and Savior by celebrating Holy Communion on the Chapel lawn Christmas Day at 10:00 AM. All worshippers must wear face masks and maintain social distances of at least six feet. Please notify Father Parrish if you plan to attend this service so that enough chairs may be set up and spaced appropriately.



The Vestry will meet on Sunday, January 17th, at a time yet to be determined.



Our Annual Parish Meeting has been set for Sunday, February 7th, immediately following the worship service.

Upcoming Events

St. *Matthew 16:18* records our Lord's assurance that not even the gates of hell shall prevail against His Church, so she can easily withstand a novel coronavirus pandemic. We may have to worship mostly by teleconference, but we can still worship together. Please join us!

Friday, December 4th

Confirmation Class via Zoom
2:00 PM

Sunday, December 6th

The Second Sunday in Advent

Office of Morning Prayer via Zoom
10:00 AM

Wednesday, December 9th

Finance Committee Meeting via Zoom
6:00 PM

Friday, December 11th

Confirmation Class via Zoom
2:00 PM

Sunday, December 13th

The Third Sunday in Advent

Office of Morning Prayer via Zoom
10:00 AM

Wednesday, December 16th

Ember Day

Friday, December 18th

Ember Day

Saturday, December 19th

Ember Day

Sunday, December 20th

The Fourth Sunday in Advent

Office of Morning Prayer via Zoom
10:00 AM

Monday, December 21st

"Christmas Star" Planetary Conjunction
~5:15 PM

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Upcoming Events

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Thursday, December 24th
Christmas Eve

Lessons and Carols Watch Party via Zoom
8:00 PM

Friday, December 25th
The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ,
commonly called Christmas Day

Holy Communion on the Chapel lawn
(weather permitting)
10:00 AM

Sunday, December 27th
The First Sunday after Christmas Day

Office of Morning Prayer via Zoom
10:00 AM

Friday, January 1st
New Year's Day

Sunday, January 3rd
The Second Sunday after Christmas Day

Office of Morning Prayer via Zoom
10:00 AM

Tuesday, January 6th
Epiphany,
or the Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles

Friday, January 8th
Confirmation Class via Zoom
2:00 PM





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A PUBLICATION OF
ST. LUKE'S CHAPEL IN THE HILLS
ANGLICAN CHURCH

A PARISH OF
THE CONVOCATION OF THE WEST,
PART OF THE
MISSIONARY DIOCESE OF
ALL SAINTS IN
THE ANGLICAN CHURCH
IN NORTH AMERICA

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Non-Pandemic Worship Schedule (We live in hope!)

St.

Luke's Chapel in the Hills is a traditional Anglican parish which uses the 1928 edition *Book of Common Prayer*. We invite you to join us for worship soon!

***"A place
where the Bible is taught."***

##_

*Biblical in teaching.
Liturgical in worship.
Loving in practice.*

First, third, and fifth Sundays of each month

Holy Communion
(with Healing Service on First Sunday)
10:00 AM

Second and fourth Sundays each month

Office of Daily Morning Prayer
10:00 AM

Said Holy Communion
noon

Please note that both services on Feast Days occurring on these Sundays will be Holy Communion.