



Advent: A Knocking Sound

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, then I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with me," says the exalted Christ in the Book of Revelation (3:20).

This Advent, you will hear with unmistakable clarity a knocking at the door. The knock will punctuate the Advent liturgy at climactic moments, signaling to worshipers that something and Someone awaits a response.

Unhook Advent from Christmas. Hard as it is to do where Christmas is the primary cultural celebration, take Advent on its own terms. Advent is fundamentally about preparing for the Coming Reign of Christ. Its heart is the yearning for Christ to come again with power and great glory. This is what the Church prays, proclaims and sings. "A thrilling voice is sounding. Christ is nigh. Cast away the works of darkness. The long expected Jesus, the Lamb of God, is coming with pardon. Every eye shall behold him.. The bridegroom is arriving. Watch in expectation." Phrase piles upon phrase, like these, all taken from some of our best known and best loved Advent hymns.

Next, ponder the real possibility that the "Coming Reign of Christ" is already happening. It is underway as the reach of Justice grows wider. It is happening where the barriers that separate human beings are being dismantled. The reign of Christ is taking root where people are engaged in heal-

ing rather than destroying the natural world. Christ's reign becomes reality when those who work for union and reconciliation become gradually stronger than those who sow discord and enmity.

The logical next step is to ask, "What am I doing to contribute to the reign of Christ? Where is there a place in my life and in my world where I can be working for justice, freedom, and peace?" The Prayer Book and Bible refer to the process of joining forces with Christ's reign in these ways as "casting away the works of darkness" and "putting on the armor of light."

So the knock that comes at the door of our sometimes closed minds and our sometimes hardened hearts is a knock calculated to wake us out of lethargy or hopelessness or unconsciousness (or all of these!). The one knocking might be offering us an opportunity to serve. Or the one pounding on the door might be calling us to proclaim some truth that we have discovered but not fully claimed. Or the knock might be that of the Soul Maker gently rapping, trying to get our attention so that we can pause and look inward, and simply notice the Presence hidden away deep inside us.

As my busy mother used to say to me on occasion, "Frank, somebody is knocking at the door. Would you mind answering it?" Who knocks and for what can only be known when we decide to open up and find out.

-The Rev. Frank Dunn

BREAD

Nov. 26, 2006

The Last Sunday
After Pentecost

Number 1562

BAPTISM

If you or a family member is interested in being baptized on January 7 (the Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord), please contact the church office.

BREAD

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An Evening with Sweet Honey's Dr. Ysaye M. Barnwell

The St. Stephen's Arts Collaborative is very excited to welcome back Dr. Ysaye M. Barnwell, who will lead one of her inspiring Community Sings on Tuesday, December 12 at 7pm. The evening begins at 6:30 with a viewing of "Now Love Incarnate with Us Dwells," an art show and sale benefit-



Dr. Ysaye M. Barnwell

ing the weekend and holiday feeding program, Loaves and Fishes.

If you haven't before experienced Dr. Barnwell's Community Sings, you are in for a treat. She visited St. Stephen's a decade or so ago to lead a vocal workshop and is excited to be returning.

Singers and non-singers alike are welcome to attend and participate as Dr. Barnwell leads the group through song as a means of self-exploration and expression. It's certain to be a special spiritual gathering.

Children are most definitely invited and welcome to attend.

Parishioner Liane Rozzell recalls her experiences with Dr. Barnwell's work: "I remember singing at St. Stephen's many years ago when Ysaye Barnwell led a workshop for us, and again recently at one of her regular Community Sing events. She is a marvelous teacher, who engages and challenges everyone present. Her workshop style builds community, and is full of joy. Time flies, and your heart is filled with wonderful new songs."

A native of New York, Dr. Barnwell

now lives in Washington, D.C. where since 1979, she has performed with the internationally acclaimed a cappella quintet, Sweet Honey in the Rock - including a recent appearance at Carnegie Hall. She is a tremendous vocalist with a range of over three octaves and appears on more than twenty-five recordings. After coming to Washington, D.C., Dr. Barnwell founded and for three years directed the All Souls Jubilee Singers where she began composing and arranging music for vocal ensembles. She currently has an extensive catalogue of compositions in the vocal repertoire. For twenty years now, Barnwell has conducted "The Workshop: Building a Vocal Community - Singing In the African American Tradition" where throughout the United

Would You Harbor Me?

Would you harbor me?
Would I harbor you?
Would you harbor a Christian, a Muslim, a Jew
a heretic, convict or spy?
Would you harbor a run away woman, or child,
a poet, a prophet, a king?
Would you harbor an exile, or a refugee,
a person living with AIDS?
Would you harbor a Tubman, a Garrett, a Truth,
a fugitive or a slave?
Would you harbor a Haitian, Korean or Czech,
a lesbian or a gay?
Would you harbor me?
Would I harbor you?

- words by Dr. Ysaye M. Barnwell

WORSHIP

at St. Stephen's

Sundays

8:00a—

Holy Eucharist,
Rite I

10:30a—

Holy Eucharist,
Rite II with
Children's
Spiritual
Formation

5:00pm—

Misa en Español

Celebrants and
Preachers

11/29: The Rev.

Ronald Conner

(8:00); The

Rev. Joe Clark

(10:30)

12/3: The Rev.

Linda Kaufman

States, Canada, Great Britain and Australia she has utilized African and African American history, values, cultural and vocal traditions, working with singers and non-singers alike.

The December 12th event at St. Stephen's will also feature a Barnwell composition, "Would You Harbor Me?," performed by the St. Stephen's Choir (lyrics on previous page). We selected this piece because it so eloquently reflects the parish's Advent

theme this year of "welcoming the stranger." Written in 1994, "Would You Harbor Me?" is part of a song suite entitled "Safe House: Still Looking," and her lyrics ask us to examine how accepting we are of those who may differ from us. We are so fortunate to have Dr. Barnwell visit us for this special event. Please join us for a meaningful evening of spiritual examination and expression.

-Mark Vogel

An Update on Loaves and Fishes

You hear about the meals that take place every Saturday, every Sunday, and on federal Monday holidays. You can often smell the delicious food cooking as you walk toward the altar to receive communion on Sundays. The meals have been around, in one form or another, for so long—since 1968—that most parishioners can't remember or weren't born when there weren't meals for the needy at St. Stephen and the Incarnation. We are especially reminded, this time of year, to donate our time, energy, goods, and money. With Thanksgiving and Christmas, it is one of the busiest times for Loaves and Fishes.

It turns out that, in addition to cooking and preparing meals, we on the management team need to get busy with other, equally important tasks, mainly, raising enough money to sustain the program at its current level. For a variety of reasons, we have not raised the funds this year that we had hoped to raise. While the program is in no immediate danger of closing, this obviously needs to change.

On behalf of the management committee, I commit us to doing a better job of publicizing the great works of the

program. I am starting with this article. Thanks to our meals, 150-200 people get fed each Saturday and each Sunday of the year. The energy of the volunteers, the efficiency of the teams, and high quality of the meals are all things to bring to your attention. We will do a better job of keeping you informed.

What I ask you to consider, in addition to your current generosity, is to dig a little more deeply into your pockets. The program relies on your support. It is crucial that we raise at least \$10,000 by December 31. This amount, unfortunately, will not entirely close our deficit for the year, but it will go a long way toward balancing our budget. Just as importantly, it will demonstrate solid support among parishioners for the principal outreach program of a parish that considers outreach so important. If you need any more information, feel free to contact me or others on the management committee—and feel free to attend our monthly meetings (the next one will be on December 16). Meanwhile, please give prayerful consideration to adding an extra donation to this valuable program.

Many thanks.

-Earl H. Foote

Use of Inclusive-Language Psalms Resumes

After many, many years, St. Stephen's is again using an inclusive-language version of the psalms. Starting on All Saints Day, we began using the St. Helena Psalter.

The Order of St. Helena is a religious community for lay and ordained women in the Anglican Communion. In the late 1980s, the sisters of St. Helena were becoming increasingly uncomfortable with sexist language and began to make inclusive the language used in their daily worship in their three convents in Georgia and New York. Two

St. Helena Psalter

Unless God builds the house,
 their labor is in vain who build it.
 Unless God watches over the city,
 in vain the sentries keep their vigil.
 It is in vain that you rise up so early and
 go to bed so late;
 vain, too, to eat the bread of toil, for
 God gives to the beloved sleep.
 Children are a heritage from God,
 and the fruit of the womb is a gift.
 Like arrows in the hand of a warrior
 are the children of one's youth.
 Happy are they who have their quivers
 full of them;
 they shall not be put to shame when
 they contend with their enemies
 in the gate.

decades later, what started as an informal process resulted in the formal completion and publication of an inclusive-language Psalter. The sisters based their version on the texts found in the Book of Common Prayer and kept in mind the importance of being able to sing the psalms.

Below, compare Psalm 127, which we said (at 8:00) and sang (at 10:30) on November 12.

See Frank Dunn if you have comments or questions.

Book of Common Prayer

Unless the LORD builds the house,
 their labor is in vain who build it.
 Unless the LORD watches over the city,
 in vain the watchman keeps his vigil.
 It is in vain that you rise so early and go
 to bed so late;
 vain, too, to eat the bread of toil,
 for he gives to his beloved sleep.
 Children are a heritage from the LORD,
 and the fruit of the womb is a gift.
 Like arrows in the hand of a warrior
 are the children of one's youth.
 Happy is the man who has his quiver
 full of them!
 he shall not be put to shame when he
 contends with his enemies in the
 gate.

Hymnal Donations

We're growing! The new edition of SALT has 26 more listings than the last. On Nov. 12, 132 people attended our 10:30 service — the most for a regular Sunday service in years. And we're again starting to run

short on hymnals. A donation of \$16.15 buys a hymnal. Our goal: 40 new hymnals by January.

Feel free to contribute! Mark your contribution "hymnals" and put it in the offering plate or mail it to the church.

Local Life for Global Good: Reflections from the Presiding Bishop

In order to achieve effectively the Episcopal Church's priorities for peace and justice work framed by the Millennium Development Goals, our congregations — together with the individual spiritual life of each of us — must be rooted in places of health and strength.

For our congregations, this means practicing a stance of welcome and hospitality, reaching out to invite seekers and neighbors into widened expressions of community. It also means assuring the highest quality possible in public worship, education and outreach programs.

As individuals, this grounding comes in the form of a regular and disciplined prayer life, study of the scriptures, the commitment to participation in a local community of faith, and an attitude of generosity that limits personal excess in order to provide necessities for those in need.

In short, this practice is a matter of living a local life for global good.

For our congregations, I call each local community of faith to a season of careful assessment of your ministries of hospitality, evangelism and service. The 2007 "Groundwork" Lenten-study resources provided by the Mission Office at the Episcopal Church Center can help.

I would also recommend a re-engagement of the 2020 energy that called our Church, through the General Convention in 2000, to work to double its membership within two decades' time. This is doable, even with the challenge of declining birthrates that have an impact upon all mainline denominations at present.

For each of us individually, I recommend a discipline of personal examination of life, focused attention to the needs of others, and a generosity of spirit that seeks to love our neighbors equally as we love ourselves. That is the sort of holy living to which Jesus calls us all. When we meet and love our neighbor, we are meeting and loving God himself in our midst.

The Most Reverend Katharine
Jefferts Schori
Presiding Bishop and Primate
The Episcopal Church
November 10, 2006

Do You Work in a DC Office Building?

Interfaith Worker Justice, a ministry supported by the diocesan Commission on Urban Ministry, is working with DC Jobs for Justice to bring together the tenants of downtown office buildings to support service workers in their buildings.

In these multi-million dollar buildings janitors get only three sick days a year, parking workers earn as little as \$7 an hour, and security guards are denied affordable healthcare. Anyone who works in a downtown office building and is willing to help raise standards for downtown service workers, please contact mbaris@solidaritycenter.org or kjohnson@stthomasdc.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sundays,
9:15am,

Adult Forum:

•Nov. 26:

"Wreath Making
for Advent"

•Dec. 3: "Mary,
Mary, Quite
Contrary ...To

the Media Hype:
A Feminist View
of Jesus'
mother"

•Dec. 10 &
17:

"Om for the
Holidays:

Finding Peace in
a Busy Season"

Sunday,

Dec. 3:

**"Now Love In-
carnate with
Us Dwells" Art
Show Begins**

Tuesday,
Dec. 12,
6:30pm:

**Art Show
Opening
Reception
and
Community
Sing
with**

**Dr. Ysaye M.
Barnwell**

LECTIONS

Last Sunday after Pentecost (November 26)

2 Samuel 23: 1-7

Psalms 132:1-12

Revelation 1: 4b-8

John 18:33-37

1st Sunday In Advent (December 3)

Jeremiah 33: 14-16

Psalms 25:1-10

I Thessalonians 3:9-13

Luke 21:25-36

THE SAINTS

Tuesday, November 28
KAMEHAMEHA AND EMMA, KING AND QUEEN OF HAWAII, 1864, 1885

Wednesday, November 29
Birthday: Louise Dyer, Gay Gellhorn

Heavenly Birthday: Fred Lewis, 2003

Thursday, November 30
SAINT ANDREW THE APOSTLE

Friday, December 1
NICHOLAS FERRAR, DEACON, 1637
Birthday: Clara Lincoln

Saturday, December 2
CHANNING MOORE WILLIAMS, MISSIONARY BISHOP IN CHINA AND JAPAN, 1910
Heavenly Birthday: Amy Crippen, 1976

Monday, December 4
JOHN OF DAMASCUS, PRIEST, c.760
Heavenly Birthday: Nehemiah Allen, 1998

Tuesday, December 5
CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, PRIEST, c.210

Wednesday, December 6
NICHOLAS, BISHOP OF MYRA, c.342

Thursday, December 7
AMBROSE, BISHOP OF MILAN, 397
Birthday: Beatrice Drumwright

THE PRAYERS

Here's who we've been praying for recently:

- Michelle Dyro, and her baby-in-the-making;
- Jennifer Blackman, Martha Carty, Terrey Danley, Leota Lawrence, Elizabeth Palmberg, and all who desire to be restored to health; those who are home-bound; and all who care for aging relatives, the sick and the homebound;
- The Best & Lincoln Family, Duane Bonds, Helen Bonds (mother of Duane), Louisa Brown, Lisa Buonarosa & Marcus Spiegelman (Michele Lewis's sister and brother-in-law, adopting a baby from Guatemala), Elio Dal Molin (Luciano Muzzatti's uncle, recently diagnosed with prostate cancer), Shirley Drake (mother of Ken Drake), Jamal Duncan and Ryan Kaufman (sons of Linda Kaufman and Liane Rozzell), Stephanie Holodnak (daughter of Martin Padarathsingh), Wilda & Charles Lincoln (Jane's father and his wife), Mary Lynn Mefford (Michele Lewis's sister), and all those who have been commended to our prayers.

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BREAD

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