

CROSSROADS

Fr. Chris writes ...

My dear people,

Christmas is coming! Of all the seasons of the year, this time from Thanksgiving to New Year's Eve is the season most saturated in ritual and tradition. From Thanksgiving meals to Christmas trees and wreaths to carols and crèches and Santa and presents, we wrap this time of year with familiar signs and symbols. Of course, Christmas has become a secular holiday as well as a religious one, but for Christians, the central focus of this season is our preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus.

It is important to Christians to reflect on Jesus' birth. We call it the Incarnation, the part of Christian theology and prayer that pays attention to this surprising truth: that Jesus is both God and human. What does it mean that God became a human being, a human baby? Well, it is a challenge, to be sure. First of all it means you have to believe in God, or in some sort of god-like being. Lots of people don't, of course, but then lots of religions and philosophies do.

But the notion that God could and would become a human being — well, that was scandalous and strange! It is far more common for people to think of God as up there, removed, foreign, different, perfect. It is far more common for people to think of humanity and all of creation as imperfect and flawed, or at any rate certainly not divine! The world's religions and philosophies disagree on many points, but they generally all agree that God and humanity can't be blended or mixed together!

It is only Christianity that has made this bold claim, and we make it of course because Jesus Christ made it, and our Scriptures attest it and the teaching of the church affirms it. God became human. And why? In the words of St. Athanasius, God became human so that humans might become gods. That is our goal, after all: to reach upwards and outwards, breaking free of our chains and trusting the divinity that dwells within us through the Spirit, until eventually we become nothing less than God-like.

And it all started, as do we all, with the birth of a baby. Such a tender and gentle and joyful image, but such a powerful, earth-shattering message is hidden within it!

In the Peace of Christ,

Chris+



December 2014

See how we're doing with our 2015 Stewardship Campaign. [Page 2](#)

Winter has an impact on services. Read about flu and snow on [page 3](#),

Seven ways to keep Christ in Christmas. [page 6](#)

Contribute Christmas flowers in honor of a loved one. [page 7](#).

Stewardship 2015

BY BILL BARNES, TREASURER

This year's stewardship campaign is running behind last year's campaign. We have received 34 pledges totally \$81,915 or \$2,409 per pledging unit. Of the pledges received, four are new, and 13 have increased their pledge over last year. These initial numbers are encouraging. For those members who have not turned in their pledge cards, please complete them and return them to the church office by Christmas. A church, like any family, must know its resources to properly plan for the upcoming year. Our church can grow and thrive when our members provide the appropriate support in terms of time, talent, and treasure. Help make St. Andrew's the church you want it to be.

St. Andrew's congratulates ...

... *John Brownlee*, who is set to graduate from Emporia State University this month. John will receive a bachelor's degree in English.

... *Taylor Schraad*, who is set to graduate from Emporia State University this month. Taylor will receive a degree in Interdisciplinary Studies, with minors in Creative Writing and Philosophy.

... *Nancy Wilhelmson*, who will retire this month from a nursing career in the office of Dr. Thomas Hicks.

Christmas Services

Sunday, Dec. 21

Holy Eucharist at 8:30 and 10:45

Wednesday, Dec. 24 — Christmas Eve

Holy Eucharist with carols at 5 p.m.

Festive Holy Eucharist with carols at 10 p.m.

Incense will be used at the late service

Thursday, Dec. 25 — Christmas Day

Holy Eucharist at 9 a.m.

Sunday, Dec. 28 — 1st Sunday after Christmas

Holy Eucharist at 8:30 and 10:45

Thursday, Jan. 1 — Feast of the Holy Name

Holy Eucharist at noon



Father Chris, Roman Geis, Grant Geis, and Melissa Geis at Roman's baptism on November 28th

St. Andrew's 'adopts' St. Francis

Lending St. Francis a hand to help children

St. Andrew's is helping St. Francis Community Services provide Christmas gifts for children in foster care this Christmas. Our "elves," small and larger, will be collecting cash to help buy gifts for foster children in the Emporia area.

A St. Francis staff member estimates that the agency spends \$50 to \$75 for each child, purchasing gifts the child wants – and the more mundane items the child needs, such as socks, underwear and warm mittens and caps.

In addition to the Christmas elves collecting around the parish, we sold hot apple cider and cookies during the Christmas parade, raising more than \$60 for this effort.

If you don't see an elf to make your donation, you can drop it by the office during regular hours.

Jean Runge, assisted by Sadie Pile and Patrick Kelley, is leading this seasonal outreach project. Learn more about St. Francis Community Services, an Episcopalian non-profit, at <http://www.st-francis.org/>

Flu season and church

Winter means colds and flu. Here are some tips for participating in worship during the season of sniffles:

Don't Dip! Studies have shown that intinction (dipping the host into the wine at communion) is maybe the worst thing for spreading germs.

Do Sip! Taking a small sip from the chalice is typically ok. The edge of the chalice is wiped clean after each person drinks. The metal of the chalice and the alcohol in the wine discourage germs (they don't kill them, though). Father Chris drinks last at every Eucharist, and he doesn't get sick more often than anybody else!

If you personally have a runny nose or are sneezing, please consider not receiving the wine at all. Communion in one kind, receiving only the bread, still offers the full grace of the sacrament.

Communion is far less likely to spread germs than shaking hands or hugging. Try bowing at the Peace.

Wash your hands. Before and after church, stop by the restrooms to wash up with warm water and soap.

If you're really sick, stay home. The Christian obligation to attend Sunday worship is suspended if you're ill.

Snow season and church

Snow and ice can make the roads dangerous or even impassable. We will nearly always have church, but you must use your own judgment about coming out. Note that even if the doors of the church are open, we might not have the walkways and parking lot cleared out.

Updates on church closures will be posted on the church website at <http://www.standrewsemporia.org>, to our twitter feed @standrewsemporia, or to our Facebook pages. You can also call Father Chris or Senior Warden David Mai.

December Milestones

In our daily prayers we celebrate and remember

Births

Dec. 1	Marged Amend	Dec. 10	Harry Frick
Dec. 2	Millard Harrell	Dec. 12	Rebecca Reynolds
Dec. 5	Ron Roerig	Dec. 13	G race Chance
Dec. 9	Patrick Kelley	Dec. 15	Forrest Kessler
Dec. 10	Ranney Vogt	Dec. 17	Carol Jones
Dec. 11	Jason Brinkman		Daniel Koger
Dec. 20	Deborah Cotterman		Sally Torrey
Dec. 29	Nancy Romine	Dec. 18	Eve Faulkenbury

Baptisms

Dec. 12	Abigail Jacob	Dec. 20	John Payne Sr.
Dec. 23	Alice Mae Smith		Ruth Payne
Dec. 24	Florence Colaw	Dec. 23	Mary Price
	Carolyn Murphy		Shelly Prost
		Dec. 24	Jane Austin
			Judith Kimbell
			Floyd Metzger
		Dec. 25	Winston Cram
			Girdner Crofoot
			Richard Douthit
		Dec. 28	D.D. Dehler
		Dec. 30	Christi McCollough

Confirmations

Dec. 6	Leigh Ann Crofoot
Dec. 7	Deborah Cotterman
Dec. 11	Karen Henderson
Dec. 22	Trish Weidert

Anniversaries

Dec. 26	John and Anna Brownlee
Dec. 27	Douglas and Marged Amend
	Mike and Trish Weidert
Dec. 28	Chris Arnold and Celeste Williams
Dec. 30	John Dougherty and Deborah Cotterman

The faithful departed

Dec. 6	George Herbert
Dec. 9	Robert MacDonald

January Milestones

In our daily prayers we celebrate and remember

Births

Jan. 9	Will Dyer	Jan. 6	Mrs. A.H. Christie
	Donna Storm	Jan. 7	Bernie Olin
Jan. 12	Jordan Crofoot		Rose Samuels
Jan. 13	Bob Henderson	Jan. 9	Nancy Spencer
Jan. 14	Nancy Gilpin		Richard Hubert
	Onnalee Harrell	Jan. 10	Martha J. Christie
Jan. 15	Karen Henderson	Jan. 11	Robert Perry Warren
Jan. 16	Lynn Bonney		Blanche Baysinger

Baptisms

Jan. 9	Ian Lackey	Jan. 12	Forbes Christie
		Jan. 13	Mabel Tyson
		Jan. 14	Elizabeth Alford
		Jan. 17	Helen Clark Hagan
		Jan. 18	Walter Stowe
		Jan. 20	Bradford Grimes
		Jan. 22	Kenneth Welch
		Jan. 26	Virginia Biggs
			Dorothy Dotson
		Jan. 27	James Pagedas
		Jan. 30	Bernard A. Smith
		Jan. 31	Mary Steele Maher
			Lloyd E. Judd

Confirmations

Jan. 8	Kelley Lackey
Jan. 13	Patrick Davis
	Anna Brownlee
	Michael Mallek
Jan. 14	Carolyn Lackey (rec'd)
Jan. 23	Lee Fowler
	DeLores Johnson

Anniversaries

Jan. 22	Dennis and Carolyn Murphy
Jan. 26	Mel and Donna Storm

The faithful departed

Jan. 1	Harvey Myers Cary
	David Hilton
	Michael Price
Jan. 2	Doug Allan
Jan. 3	Marian Baysinger Carpenter
	Pearl Buckley Kraum
Jan. 4	Byron Strawn Chance
Jan. 5	Edna Pauline Robison

If a date that's important to you hasn't been included in this calendar, please notify the church office at 342-1537 or office@standrewsemporia.org.

[From Father Chris' blog, www.fatherchristopher.org](http://www.fatherchristopher.org)

Seven Ways to Keep Christ in Christmas

1. **Don't worry so much about your decorations and your parties.** December is a frantic time of the year, and we get worn out with all the planning. *But Jesus was born to draw humanity closer to our God-given calling: to love God and to love our neighbors as we love ourselves.* Remove your crazy expectations for how December is supposed to be, and just be with God, be with your family, and be with your friends. Just connect.
2. **Consider not buying so many things for people.** Instead donate money in their name to charitable organizations. *Most of us don't need so much stuff, but those who need stuff really need stuff.* Episcopalians might send funds to [American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem](#), which will aid children of all religions in the Holy Land.
3. **Don't get all bent out of shape when the person in the store doesn't say "Merry Christmas".** The point of stores is to sell you stuff and make money, not to represent your religion. *Representing your religion is chiefly your job.* If you are a Christian, then you represent our shared Christian faith to everyone you meet. Don't make the task of evangelism harder by being a bully or a jerk. If someone greets you in any sort of nice and kind way, respond to them nicely and with kindness.
4. **Don't confuse commercial/secular Christmas with the Nativity of our Lord.** Christmas is a religious holiday, centered on the birth of Jesus Christ in Bethlehem, and the mystery of what Christians call the Incarnation. Christmas is also a secular holiday centered around Santa Claus, egg nog, buying stuff, and "It's a Wonderful Life". There are some overlaps, sure, and Christians can and should rejoice in both versions of Christmas. *But if you're a Christian, check to see if the music you're listening to mentions Jesus at all, or only Jingle Bells.* Check to see if the decorations point you towards the miracle in Bethlehem, or only towards Santa and the elves. Keep the Christ in Christmas, so remember that not everything "Christmassy" is actually helping with that.
5. **Keep Christ in Christmas, so wait until actual Christmas.** Christmas is a holiday of the Church that begins on December 24th (in the Evening) and ends with January 6th. These are the famous 12 Days of Christmas. That's right, the 12 Days aren't a countdown to Christmas, they are the 12 days *of* Christmas. *It's a 12 day long celebration, and it only begins on Christmas Eve.* Before that is the season of Advent, which is a season of waiting and expectation, not only for the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, but also for the second coming of Christ to rule as Lord and Ruler over all. If you're making a big deal about the "War on Christmas", but you're already celebrating in November and you take down the tree on the 26th, then you are actually part of the problem, historically.
6. **Keep "Mass" in Christmas, too.** The name of the holiday means "The mass of Christ". So get thee to church and celebrate with the Holy Eucharist, the mass, the Lord's Supper, the Holy Communion. Whatever you call it in your tradition. *Check out a local Episcopal Church in your neighborhood.* We tend to do spectacular and holy and wonderful and tender services on Christmas Eve.
7. **If you really want to keep Christ in Christmas, keep Christ in you.** The point is that God became human in order to make humans like God. *If you want to honor the birth of Jesus, let him live in you.* Recognize him in the lives of those around you. This season, do what he says in Matthew 25, and feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick and the imprisoned. When you do these things, you care for Christ, and you will be blessed.

Emporians will join force to help end hunger

When you get your 2015 calendar, draw a big circle around February 11! That's the day that St. Andrew's will join other churches in the Lyon County Ministerial Alliance and Emporia State University students to help feed the world.

We're calling this event **Sting Out Hunger**.

From 4 to 8 p.m., volunteers will gather in the Memorial Union to package food staples to be sent to western Africa – and to stay in Lyon County. Rice, dried beans and spices that families can prepare themselves will be shipped under the auspices of Numana Inc., which has been helping feed hungry people since 2009.

This year, the food will be designated to the countries in west Africa which have been devastated by Ebola.

There'll be tasks for volunteers of almost any age and ability, working in two- to four-hour shifts to measure and pack the food items.

We're looking for more than 200 volunteers for each 2 hour shift, and we're looking to raise a grand total of \$39,000. How much can we contribute from St. Andrew's?

Pick up a plastic fork from the table by the office to find out more, and circle February 11 on your calendars!

Sponsor flowers for Christmas

Please complete the form if you would like to contribute toward flowers for our Christmas worship. You may drop it in the collection plate. The form should be in the office by December 21 to assure inclusion in the Christmas bulletins. There are also forms on the table in the hall. You may also call in your contribution (342-1537) and drop a check by the office at your convenience before Christmas.

Thank you.

Name _____ Phone _____

Please print clearly.

In memory of _____

In thanksgiving for _____

In honor of _____

Amount enclosed _____

The Rt. Rev. Dean E. Wolfe
Bishop of Kansas

The Rev. Chris Arnold
Priest in charge

David Mai - Sr. Warden
Rick Mitchell - Jr. Warden

**ST. ANDREW'S
EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

828 Commercial St.

Emporia, Kansas 66801

office@standrewsemporia.org

www.standrewsemporia.org

620.342.1537

WORSHIP TIMES

Sundays 8:30 (spoken) and

10:45 a.m. (sung)

Wednesdays 6:00 p.m.



**St. Andrew's
Episcopal Church
828 Commercial
Emporia, Kansas 66801**