



The Franciscans

December 2021

A newsletter for friends and members of St. Francis Episcopal Church
Goldsboro, NC 27534

SERMON PREACHED NOVEMBER 14, 2021 by The Reverend Margaret Pollock (supply Priest)
ST . FRANCIS EPISCOPAL CHURCH, GOLDSBORO
PROPER 28, YEAR B HEBREWS 10:11-14(15-18)19-25 AND MARK 13:1-8

Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful.

In today's gospel reading from Mark, Jesus and his followers have just left the temple, and are standing on the temple mount, high above the lower city. They marvel at the massive stonework, which forms the temple and the government buildings nearby. Herod's palace and fortress, several towers and a theater all share the precinct adjacent to the temple. To counter their admiration, Jesus asks them, "Do you see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down." Such a cataclysm is almost unimaginable, and the upheaval would represent something like an end to their world.

So, later, when he is sitting on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew ask Jesus privately, "Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?" Then Jesus began to say to them, "Beware that no one leads you astray. Many will come in my name and say, 'I am he!' and they will lead many astray. When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed; this must take place, but the end is still to come. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birth pangs."

All will be thrown down.

A few weeks ago I returned from the Canadian Arctic, where I stayed in the frontier town of Churchill on the shores of Hudson Bay. I was with a nature tour that searched out and photographed polar bears. The town has a population of only 900, and there is no road connecting it with points south: a train comes from Winnipeg twice a week, and otherwise one travels to and from Churchill by plane.

Small as it is, though, Churchill is known as the Polar Bear Capitol of the World, for the hundreds of bears that gather there in the autumn, waiting for sea ice to form on Hudson Bay. Polar bears are precisely adapted to their Arctic setting, in that they fast during the spring and summer, and hunt seals on the sea ice during the fall and winter. Tourism – for polar bears, Northern lights, and beluga whales – brings thousands of visitors and sustains the town.

Yet for the tiny town of Churchill, all is being thrown down as the result of climate change. The Arctic is warming faster than any other place on earth. Yes, temperatures can plunge to 40 below, yet a couple of years ago Churchill was the hottest place in Canada, at 90 degrees Fahrenheit. For Churchill, this brings calamities. The polar bear population is diminishing as the sea ice forms later and farther from shore. There are those who believe that in 80 years polar bears will be extinct. With this as the foundation of Churchill livelihoods, the prospect of absent polar bears is daunting.

Then there is the literal undermining of the town's foundations. Churchill is built on the tundra, a thin layer of soil overlying permafrost – soil yards deep that is permanently frozen. Now the solid permafrost is thawing. The foundations of buildings are shifting and sinking, the railroad tracks are twisting, and water pipes are breaking. Not one stone is left upon another; all is being thrown down.

This is when a people needs to call on hope. While I have been sketching the impending calamities bearing down on Churchill, arising from climate change, many other people in this world, and we in our own nation, are worried by what feels like calamity from several sources.

Climate change is the immediate cause of weather extremes – forest fires, floods, drought, tornados, and storms. A new affliction, environmental anxiety, especially affects young people, many of whom say they do not want to bring a next generation of children into this world. In addition we have a refugee emergency on our southern border. We are dying of the COVID-19 pandemic, and nurses are leaving hospitals in droves. One child in every seven in the United States is born into poverty. 40 million Americans struggle with hunger. [children.org] Black and brown people in America suffer economically, educationally, and emotionally from personal and institutional racism. I'll stop there, but you may have your own most present worry – possibly a personal one -- that I've not touched on.

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What we need is good, solid hope, not a sentimental, lace paper doily sort of hope. For the Christian – as our catechism, in the Book of Common Prayer teaches – “hope is to live with confidence in newness and fullness of life, and to await the coming of Christ in glory, and the completion of God’s purpose for the world.” (BCP p 861)

This is where our reading from the Letter to the Hebrews is so encouraging, so uplifting. Hebrews is the longest sustained theological argument in the Bible. It was written to persuade a congregation not to forsake Christianity and revert to Judaism – but instead to understand the preeminence of Jesus Christ compared to the prophets, compared to the angels and even to Moses, and compared to the Levitical priesthood. It is this last point that we consider this morning .

The great hope we have in Jesus Christ is that by his unique and complete sacrifice of himself for the sins of the whole world, we have gained entry into heaven. There we shall be welcomed into the nearer presence of God and all the company of heaven in God’s supreme glory. As Hebrews says, “by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified.” Therefore:

Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful.

It is our Christian duty to stand fast before naysayers and fear-mongers, and to beat down our own hesitations and anxieties – whether they stem from general problems, or from deeply personal ones. We can do this because Jesus is faithful. And he is the source of our hope. Because of him, we hope without wavering.

Our nation – and the world – needs to see and hear of hope. And if not from our churches, then from where will it come? Saint Francis is a small congregation, born of a mission church in the 1960s. That is my own formative church experience. I grew up in a mission church in upstate New York. We first met in a fire house. My mother tended nursery in the coat closet. I had Sunday school in the fire chief’s office. Every Sunday, to prepare for worship folks set up chairs, and threw a drape over the pool table.

In due course, the diocese of Albany bought land and built a church of our own, for Saint Boniface parish. We were a small church, which meant that everyone knew everyone else, and if something needed to be done everyone set to. I suspect it is that way here at St. Francis.

A mission church, a small church, lives on hope. No doubt the greatest flame of hope is the one you share with each other. In the name of Jesus Christ, you comfort and celebrate, envision and work for the onward life of the parish. I know that St. Francis participates in the fundamentally hopeful ministry of the neighborhood soup kitchen, providing for those in need – not only good food, but also hope in the form of a welcoming smile and listening ear.

Probably the greatest act of hope St. Francis does within and for the community is to tend your garden. You share your own hopeful spirit when you work the soil and care for the flowers and other plants -- always in tune with God’s beauty and freshness, and with the onward flow of the seasons. Your garden offers a place of quiet hope and refuge for any who come, in the name of St. Francis and of Jesus Christ.

In Mark’s gospel, Jesus warns of calamities, of wars and rumors of wars, of kingdom rising up against kingdom, of earthquakes and famines. But listen closely: he doesn’t end there. Jesus guides our attention past the calamities to the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God. These troubles, he says, are but birth pangs. We are not to cripple our spirits by fixating on the present and the rubble that is stone crashing against stone, foundations collapsing. Rather, we are to understand these as trials that bring new life. Trials that in God’s good time will lead to the return of Jesus Christ, to establish fully the blessed Kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven.

I am reminded of the hymn:

All my hope on God is founded;
He doth still my trust renew,
Me through change and chance he guideth,
Only good and only true.
God unknown, he alone calls my heart to be his own.


Mortal pride and earthly glory,
Sword and crown betray our trust;
Though with care and toil we guild them,
Tower and temple fall to dust.
But God’s power, hour by hour, is my temple and my tower.



FOR THE HOPE OF CHRIST, THANKS BE TO GOD.



December 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
 <p>Second Sunday of ADVENT</p>			<p>1 10-11am</p> 	<p>2 4:30pm</p> <p>Choir Rehearsal 6-7pm</p> 	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>5 2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT 10:00am</p> <p>Rev. Gene Carpenter Holy Eucharist Annual Parish Meeting Social Hour</p> <p>Third Sunday of ADVENT</p>	<p>6 Office Open 9am-3pm</p>	<p>7 Office Open 9am-3pm</p>	<p>8 10-11am</p> 	<p>9 4:30pm</p> <p>Choir Rehearsal 6-7pm</p> 	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p>
<p>12 3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT 10:00am</p> <p>Rev. Dr. Bill Thomas Holy Eucharist Social Hour ECW</p> <p>Fourth Sunday of ADVENT</p>	<p>13 Office Open 9am-3pm</p>	<p>14 Office Open 9am-3pm</p>	<p>15 10-11am</p>  <p>Newsletter DEADLINE</p>  <p>6pm ADVENT EVENT Covered Dish Crafts/Meditations</p>	<p>16 4:30pm</p> <p>Choir Rehearsal 6-7pm</p> 	<p>17</p>	<p>18 9am-12noon St. Francis Clean-Up with Lunch provided</p> 
<p>19 4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT 10:00am</p> <p>Morning Prayer Social Hour</p> <p>6:00pm LESSONS and Carols @ St. Andrew's</p>	<p>20 Office Open 9am-3pm</p>	<p>21 OFFICE CLOSED</p>	<p>22 10-11AM</p> 	<p>23 4:30pm</p> <p>Choir Rehearsal 6-7pm</p> 	<p>24 Christmas Eve Holy Eucharist at St. Andrew's (time-TBD) & St. Stephen's (5:30&11pm)</p>	<p>25 Christmas Day Holy Eucharist (10am) at St. Stephen's</p> 
<p>26 FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY 10:00am</p> <p>Rev. Dave Davis Holy Eucharist Social Hour Vestry meeting</p> 	<p>27 Office Open 9am-3pm</p>	<p>28 Office Open 9am-3pm</p>	<p>29 10-11AM</p> 	<p>30 4:30pm</p> <p>Choir Rehearsal 6-7pm</p> 	<p>31</p> 	

Lay Server Schedule December 2021	December 5 <i>SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT</i> Rev. Gene Carpenter Holy Eucharist	December 12 <i>THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT</i> Rev. Dr. Bill Thomas Holy Eucharist	December 19 <i>FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT</i> Morning Prayer	December 26 <i>FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY</i> Rev. Dave Davis Holy Eucharist
	10:00 am	10:00 am	10:00 am	10:00 am
WORSHIP LEADER	TBD	TBD	Barrett Rae	TBD
SERMON READER	N/A	N/A	Liz Meador	N/A
LECTORS	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
USHER	John Koegel Dave Meador	John Koegel Dave Meador	John Koegel Dave Meador	John Koegel Dave Meador
ALTAR GUILD	Jill Brogneaux Norma Powell	Jill Brogneaux Norma Powell	Jill Brogneaux Norma Powell	Jill Brogneaux Norma Powell
FLOWER GUILD	David Powell	David Powell	David Powell	David Powell
TELLERS	Liz Meador TBD	Liz Meador TBD	Liz Meador TBD	Liz Meador TBD
SOCIAL HOUR	Debbie and Stan Stedner	Debbie and Stan Stedner	Debbie and Stan Stedner	Elaine and Al Elmore

December



5 Tony Baker
7 Zeb Jones
31 Al Elmore



If your birthday has been omitted, please notify the church office so that the birthday lists are up-to-date.

Vestry

2021
Barbara Pedersen
(Bookkeeper)
2022
Liz Meador
(Junior Warden)
George Moye
(Senior Warden)
2023
Debbie Stedner
Dave Meador
Brandon Robbins
Al Elmore, Treasurer
Shelley Mills, Clerk

As we end 2021 and prepare for 2022 it is a great time to review what St Francis means to you. We are asking you one simple question. Is it the right time for me to make a commitment to the St Francis LEGACY FUND? We have an information flyer in the church office or feel free to contact any member of the Legacy Fund to get your questions answered. Thank You and Merry Christmas.



Roger Brogneaux, Al Elmore, Stan Stedner, George Moye (Senior Warden)

Please remember to turn off all lights and lock all doors when departing the church. We are so grateful for volunteers who come and get things ready for Sunday and sometimes we might forget.



St. Francis Episcopal Church
503 Forest Hill Drive
P. O. Box 11406, Goldsboro, NC 27532
Tel: 919-735-9845, Fax: 919-735-9893
E-mail: parish@stfranciscgoldsboro.org
Web Page: www.stfranciscgoldsboro.org

The Franciscans is published 11 times a year. The deadline for items to be considered for inclusion is the **15th of each month.**





Now that more of us are singing in the choir, we call upon Cecilia, patron saint of singers, musicians, and lute makers, to guide us to our best efforts (aided, of course, by Bill Hayes, our choirmaster). Cecilia, whose feast day is November 22, was born in Rome in the third century to an aristocratic family. As a teenager, she converted to Christianity, believing an angel was guarding her virginity. She married

Valerian, who was baptized along with Cecilia's brother Tiburtius. Valerian died a martyr when he broke the law by performing the Christian burial rite.

Cecilia, too, underwent torture for her part in Christian activities, first being condemned to die in boiling water. Surviving this ordeal unscathed, she was then sentenced to beheading by an executioner who tried three times to decapitate her but failed. She did die three days after her torture, singing the praises of God throughout. She bequeathed the house where her torture occurred to Pope Urban I, who converted it to a church in Trastevere, the present-day basilica that bears her name.

By the 14th century illustrations depict her with a portable organ, perhaps one which accompanied her wedding or was played at the Roman games. Her feast day inspired poems from John Dryden and Alexander Pope and music from Henry Purcell (*Ode to St. Cecilia*), George Frederic Handel, Charles, Gounod, Benjamin Britten (who was born on her feast day), and from many others.

FOCUS ON A SAINT

A community gift to the glory of God

Child of the Promise

A Musical Story Celebrating the Birth of Christ

Libretto and Lyrics by STORMIE OMARTIAN
Music by MICHAEL OMARTIAN

Adapted for the stage and stage orchestras by IAN GARLAND
The production adapted and directed by PHILIPPE PERROTTES, LTD. on behalf of the authors

DEC 17	DEC 18	DEC 18	DEC 19
7:30PM	2:00PM	7:30PM	3:00PM

General Admission: \$18 Child/Military/Senior: \$13
(Saturday matinee half price)

PARAMOUNT Theatre

For ticket information Call (919) 553-8432 or go to www.goldsboroparamount.com

Winter Clean-Up Day at St. Francis, Saturday, Dec. 18, 9am-12noon Lunch provided.

Christmas Poinsettias

Deadline to Order is Sunday, December 19th.

If you would like to purchase a poinsettia for the church adornment, please complete this form and turn it in with payment to the church office.

The cost of each poinsettia is \$14.00; please make checks payable to St. Francis marked Poinsettia!

Your Name: _____

In Memory of: _____
and / or

In Thanksgiving for: _____

Total # ordered: _____ Total Cost: _____ Cash: _____ Check: _____





Saying goodbye is never easy. We celebrated Rev. Kate and her ministry among us for the past two years on October 31, 2021.



First Presbyterian Church
presents
The Chancel Choir, Guest Soloists
and Symphony Orchestra
in
The Music of Christmas



Sunday, December 12, 2021 • 7:00 pm
(Doors to the Sanctuary open at 6:30 pm)

First Presbyterian Church
1101 East Ash Street • Goldsboro, North Carolina 27530
919-734-5392

This concert is free and open to the entire community as a gift to Goldsboro and the surrounding communities.

Still time
to get
your
pledge
in!



Search your hearts and wallets to see what you can add to the budget for next year. Don't forget we need your talents as well – make coffee, sweep the walkway, help with the Altar, and the many other tasks that promote the warm welcome that St. Francis provides. Jill (Altar Guild) and Roger (Stewardship)

Thank you for the reception celebrating my twenty-five years of service as organist/choirmaster. The special prayers, the floral arrangements, and flowering plants, and the festive and creative decorations in the parish hall, I will long remember. I sincerely appreciate the exceedingly generous cash gift, and it will be put to good use. I am indeed fortunate to have such a caring parish family. I am grateful and I heartily thank you.

Bill



Thanks to Judy and Leonard Hoke and the ECW! We have pretty cabinets once again!



At its November 21 meeting, the ECW voted to send funds to four community organizations and three Diocesan entities: DSS/GAL program, Cry Freedom, the Community Soup Kitchen, the Four-Day Movement, Diocesan ECW, Book of Remembrance, and Dominican Republic scholarship. The group also approved support of staff gifts as part of its outreach and inreach efforts.

The membership voted to sponsor an Advent Event for **Wednesday, December 15, 6:00 p.m.**, that includes a covered dish dinner, Advent meditations, and crafts!

Other business included approval of a fundraiser with Pampered Chef, a suggestion from Elaine Elmore. Other fundraisers were discussed as possibilities later in the year.

Thirteen women attended and had lunch: chicken tortilla casserole, corn salad, applesauce, and magic cookie bars. Thanks to the clean-up crew!
Liz Meador, President

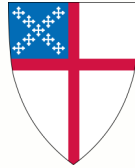


We are invited to join St. Andrew's, Sunday, December 19, 6pm for a Service of Lessons and Carols.



The Franciscans

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503 Forest Hill Drive
P. O. Box 11406
Goldsboro, NC 27532



Wednesday, December 15, 6pm
The ECW will sponsor
AN ADVENT EVENT.
Bring a covered dish!
Advent crafts
and meditations.

*PROMISE
REJOICE
PREPARE
WAITING*

~ The Franciscans — December 2021 ~

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 The Rt. Rev. Rob Skirving,
 Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of East Carolina
 William Hayes,
 Organist/Choirmaster
 Beverly Anderson,
 Parish Administrator
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Christmas Eve Holy Eucharist
5:30 and 11:00 p.m.

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
200 N James St.
Goldsboro

Christmas Day Holy Eucharist Rite 2
10:00 a.m.

Watch your weekly emails for info on Christmas Services to be held at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church located at 901 Harris St. Goldsboro.



NOTES ON THE REV. MARGARET POLLOCK



The Reverend Margaret Pollock is a graduate of Virginia Theological Seminary, and has a BA in economics, and an MBA in finance and investment, both from the George Washington University. Now retired, she was a dual-career priest, working full time as an international development economist while also serving as a parish priest. For most of this time, she assisted her husband, The Rev. Dr. David

Pollock, a full-time parish priest. During the course of her career, international work took Margaret to thirty countries; she and David lived for a time in Almaty, Kazakhstan and Abuja, Nigeria. She enjoys doing supply work for parishes whose priest is out of town. Just now, she is publishing a book, "Polar Peril," a contemporary fantasy adventure, in which two Mohawk kids go to the Arctic to save the polar bears, in the face of global warming. Margaret is blessed with six grown daughters and wonderful sons-in-law, and eleven grandchildren. She lives in New Bern.