



The Shepherd's Voice

December 11, 2012

By Fr. Joe Rees

“Baptized with Fire”

John the Baptist said, “I baptized you with water, but He who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.” (John 1:26)

The voice of one crying in the wilderness is calling for repentance but John also says that we are to be baptized with the Holy Spirit and with fire. Amazing things happen when we are baptized! As a baby the Holy Spirit knows the offering we make to bring this child into the Presence of the Lord in His Church and deposits a spark of divine purpose and recognition within the spirit of the child. I believe that the child is given divine means to come into the fullness of the baptism as they grow and understand more deeply the recognition of God's blessing within them. This is like an imbedded program that speaks a new language of the heart into the life of that child. It continues to work its purposes throughout the course of our lives. The spark of divinity finds suitable kindling in the work of the parents to bring the child to church and yes even Christmas pageants. The kindling is then caught up in flame and a new fire is set that needs the fuel of the Word of God and the Sacraments to feed the flames and bring the brightness of His Light into the yet to be explored rooms of their souls. That fire will comfort them in challenges of life and it will burn up the dross of poor decisions and regrettable consequences. The fire is mighty to bring new strength to the steel of determination to remain within Christ!

Fire has many purposes. But it has to be fed. It has to have seasoned, dried logs, branches, or other fuel to keep it burning. What's keeping your fire burning these days? Is it fed by other things, like that which we eat, or drink, or buy with money? After all isn't this the season to 'eat, drink, and be

merry!' Do so now before the taxes go up in the New Year, they say. Spend it on the credit card now so you can have the 'joy' of the new toy or tablet or i-phone etc. for Christmas. All those voices competing for your attention and wanting you to fuel the fire of this world and its goodies that consume us are rubbish on the fire that flares up fast but quickly dies away. But, the fire of God in His Spirit calls us to pay attention to our Lord Jesus and His call to share our tunics and food with someone else (vs. 11). (BTW, we are having a Christmas Food Drive to help folks this season, see Rob Ackerman). The fire has a purpose and we need to feed it fuel that will make it burn brightly from our lives for the glory of the Lord. Long lasting 'Yule' logs of love and faith and hope.

So, before you overdo it with 'merry', let's think about ways we can bless someone in true need this year. We have a family we know who does not have a dad and are in need for so much. The Lazarus Fund can help them. Maybe an extra donation over the next week or two will bring them a bit of the warmth of the fires of our love in the Holy Spirit. Perhaps they will get to know Jesus and want to be baptized to follow Him and have His fire within. Let the Lord lead you but perhaps just make those decisions of how much material fuel you need to get as excess presents and make a commitment to present yourself to Jesus as His fuel to be used for the glory of His Kingdom. The best fuel is the faith that trusts in Him.

Just some thoughts to warm you in this still getting colder December, when it's always so good to stoke the fires of our faith. Let's give the right fuel to the fire and keep it always burning to do the work of the Kingdom.

Praying that indeed we burn brightly for the Lord Jesus and allow His Spirit to guide us to the good fuel to put into the fire. May the Lord bless you in

this season of great Light from the Fire of His Spirit. Let the Spirit rule for this Yule and put a log on the fire!

Love in Christ,
Fr. Joe

Sunday Servers this week...

December 16, 2012	3rd Advent	8:00 a.m. Service	10:15 a.m. Service
First Reader	Zephaniah 3:14-20	Robbin Gates	Frances Slaughter
Psalm Reader	Psalm 85	to be sung	to be sung
Second Reader	Philippians 4:4-9	Jani Dubski	Cline Handy
Intercessor		Mitch Dubski	Rob Ackerman
Lay Euch. Ministers		Jane Rost, Dick Phelps	Petey Seibold, Joy Rosendale
Acolytes		Mitch Dubski	Rob A (C); Kalani C (T1); Zachary J (T2)
Welcomers		Myrna Lipnicke, Paula Sholly	Margaret Olson, Jeanne Shannon
Ushers		Doug Hall, Jackie Lansing	Dink Nash, Ted Vallas, Ray Seibold, April Knowles
Vestry Person of Day			
Healing Ministers		Rudy Theobald, Jan Simon	JR & Ann Fox
Announcer		Jani Dubski	Petey Seibold

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Shakey's Pizza fund raiser. We received a check for \$124.16 which will go to the children's ministries.

**All Parish Prayer Meeting
Sunday, Dec. 16th at 4:00 p.m.
Take a break from the Christmas Craziess.**

**Christmas Services
Christmas Eve – 5:00 p.m. – Family Service
10:00 p.m. – Traditional Service
Christmas Day – 10:00 a.m.**

Soaking Prayer - Wednesday, December 12 - 6:30 p.m.



Join us for
The King's Birthday
A Christmas Pageant
for all ages.
Sunday, December 16th at 10:15 a.m.
Potluck and cookie Swap follow.

Sunday at Grace

8:00 a.m. – Traditional service
with Choir
9:30 a.m. – Coffee & Adult Forum
10:00 a.m. – Nursery opens
10:15 a.m. – Family Service
With Worship Team
10:15 a.m. – Children's Church

Christmas Pageant

presented by
the Children of Grace at
the 10:15 a.m. service on
Sunday, Dec. 16th.

Readings for Sunday

Zephaniah 3:14-20
Canticle 9
Philippians 4:4-9
Luke 3:7-18

We are using the English Standard
Version of the Bible and the Lectionary
from the Book of Common Prayer
(Year C)

This Week at Grace –Dec. 11, -Dec. 18, 2012

Tues. December 11

11:30 a.m. Rector's Bible Study – Isaiah
4:30 p.m. Healing Eucharist at the Oasis
6:30 p.m. Potluck Fellowship Dinner
7:15 p.m. "Christianity Explored"

Wed December 12

8:30 a.m. Morning Prayer & Eucharist
9:30 a.m. Staff Meeting
No Wed. evening Healing Prayer until further notice.
6:30 p.m. Youth Group

Thurs. December 13

7:00 a.m. Bible Study
11:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist at the Oasis
3:30 p.m. Alpha Club
7:00 p.m. Choir

Fri. December 14

6:30 p.m. Evening Prayer & Eucharist at Grace

Sat. December 15

8:00 a.m. Men's Bible Study
3:00 p.m. Snider/Stewart Wedding

Sun. December 16

Third Sunday of Advent

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist with Choir
9:30 a.m. Coffee & Adult Forum – Fellowship room
The Great Divorce by C.S. Lewis
10:00 a.m. Nursery opens
10:15 a.m. Family Service with Worship Team
10:15 a.m. **Christmas Pageant**
12:00 p.m. Short Vestry Meeting
12:00 p.m. Potluck Lunch and Cookie Swap
4:00 p.m. Parish Prayer Meeting

Mon. December 17

6:30 a.m. Men's Prayer

Tues. December 18

11:30 a.m. Rector's Bible Study at Grace
4:30 p.m. Healing Service at CHC
6:30 p.m. Potluck Fellowship Dinner at Grace
7:15 p.m. Teaching – "Christianity Explored"

Rector's Bible Study

Tuesdays
11:30 a.m.

Fr. Joe is leading the group through a study of
the Book of Isaiah. Everyone is welcome.
B.Y.O.L. (Bring your own lunch)

Wednesdays at 8:30 a.m.
Morning Prayer At Grace Anglican
All are welcome to attend.

Weekly – There are over 25 small groups meeting
during the week. Check our newsletter for a list of
all the groups or you can find the list on our website:
www.graceanglicanchurch.com.

Save the date!

Dec. 12 Soaking Prayer
Dec. 16 Special Family Christmas Play – 10:15 a.m.
Dec. 16 Potluck Lunch and Cookie Swap
Dec. 23 One Service at 9:00 a.m.
Dec. 24 Services at 5 and 10 p.m.
Dec. 25 Service at 10:00 a.m.
Dec. 30 One Service at 9:00 a.m.
Dec. 31 New Year's Eve Service at 7:00 p.m.
Jan. 27 All Parish Annual Meeting
Feb. 16&17 Bishop Bill at Grace
May 3 Anglican Men's Retreat at Forest Home