



Hickory Neck Nuggets

December 2014

Living in Hope

By The Rev. Earnest Graham

We live in a world of instant gratification. Today, if we need information, there is an app for that. If we want something, no matter how rare and hard to find, we can find it online, and have it express-shipped to our homes in 2-3 business days from anywhere in the world. If we are forced to stand in a line for 30 minutes (or even worse, an hour!) it feels like an eternity. The world conditions us, even trains us to expect immediate action. As normal as this feels now, we do not have to reach very far into the past to remember that it wasn't always like this. Waiting was a natural part of life. Even when it is inconvenient or outright frustrating, waiting slows us down to appreciate the value of something, and opens us up to that moment of anticipation and rejoicing. In this way, waiting is a spiritual practice.

In the season of Advent, we are reminded that God does not work on our timeline. We hear the words of the prophets, who looked to God for their salvation, which they believed would come with the messiah. The people of Israel waited not years, but

centuries, for the fulfillment of that hope and expectation. They endured hardships from generation to generation. By the world's standard, one could ask how or why they would remain faithful in this hope. And yet, they did. When we hear the stories of Mary and Joseph, Zechariah and Elizabeth, we witness that the people were still holding on to that hope. And in the birth of Jesus, the Messiah, we see God's response to that hope and faithfulness. God's timing may not be our timing, but God chooses the right time to act.



For all of the instant gratification offered by the world, we are faced with the reality that there are problems in our world that are not easily solved: poverty,

famine, disease, prejudice, hatred, violence, war, corruption. We cannot wish them away, nor hide from them. Here, we find that the world's solution offers little hope, but God's way does. The qualities of patience, faithfulness, and hopefulness that we practice in Advent give us the capacity to face the world's problems and to persevere, knowing that God is at work, even now. ❄️

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Advent & Christmas WORSHIP

Centering Prayer—Monday mornings at 7:30 a.m. in the Historic Chapel

Morning Prayer offered weekdays at 8:15 a.m. in the Historic Chapel

Sunday, Nov. 30—The First Sunday of Advent

Sunday, Dec. 7—The Second Sunday of Advent

Sunday, Dec. 14—The Third Sunday of Advent (Christmas Pageant at the 9 a.m. service)

Saturday, Dec. 20—Concert of Christmas Carols for Organ and Flute, 3:30 p.m. in the New Chapel

Sunday, Dec. 21—The Fourth Sunday of Advent (Greening of the church after the 11:15 a.m. service)

Wednesday, Dec. 24—Christmas Eve

- 5 p.m.—The Feast of the Nativity—Family Service with Holy Communion and Choir in the New Chapel
- 9 p.m.—The Feast of the Nativity—Holy Communion with music by the Praise Band in the New Chapel
- 11 p.m.—Candlelight Christmas Eve Service in the Historic Chapel

Thursday, Dec. 25—Christmas Day, 10 a.m. in the Historic Chapel

Sunday, Dec. 28—2 Services: 8 a.m. Holy Communion Rite II, 10 a.m. Festival of Lessons and Carols.

Nuggets Staff

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Deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month. Items received after this date will be considered for publication in a future issue.

Please send submissions to nuggets@hickoryneck.org

Sarabande



“Here We Come A-Caroling. . . ”

By Sarah Ford Bland

Carols date from the late Middle Ages when folksongs, religious songs in the vernacular and dance tunes began to replace liturgical music. Originally meaning “to dance in a ring”, the carol is a simple, popular religious song composed for outdoor or informal singing. This contrasts with hymns, written by educated churchmen and musicians for formal use in worship. Carols were actually banned from the church for many decades because of the strict, Puritan views Christians in Britain held about their religion. Any activity or form of expression associated with secular living was considered evil.

Carol texts often come from folk poetry, giving them a fresh, down-to-earth quality. They generally deal with serious aspects of life but almost always treat them with optimism. They tell stories, often rambling on like a ballad, in the form of stanzas with a refrain. With their simple, appealing melodies, they express a more joyful mood about religion. Today carols are usually sung just during the seasons of Advent and Christmas, but in past centuries people sang carols all year long.

In the 19th century British researchers traveled around

those parts of England least affected by Puritan restrictions and they collected by oral tradition many of the carols we know today. Large song sheets with carol texts (broadsheets) were published in London in the 1830s followed by the first large collection of Christmas carols in 1871. The first service of Lessons and Carols was devised by Archbishop Benson of Truro Cathedral, Cornwall in 1877. King’s College, Cambridge, began its now famous annual Christmas Eve Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols in 1918. First broadcast in 1928, we on the East Coast can hear the live broadcast that day at 10:00 a.m. on public radio.

Christmas Carols will be central to our Advent and Christmas celebrations this season. On Saturday, December 20, at 3:30 p.m. my flutist friend, Margaret Carlson, and I will present a concert of Christmas carols for flute, organ and keyboard in the New Chapel. A light reception will follow. The Sunday after Christmas, December 28, the Parish Choir will lead the congregation in our own Service of Lessons and Carols. This will be at 10:00 a.m., combining our 9:00 and 11:15 services. ❄️



Transition Update

By Juliana Morris

The Search Committee is happy to announce that we have officially met and begun the process of finding HNC a wonderful rector. We wrote the prayer for the congregation's rector search and appointed several positions within the committee.

These positions are:

- Co-Chairs: Dave Hartsough and Rebecca Zoellner
- Chaplain: Betty Somloi
- Recorder: Karen Small
- PR: Juliana Morris

The Search Committee is excited that the process has begun and we are all happy to serve the congregation with this important endeavor.

Small Group Leader Training

Jan. 12th, 6–8:30 p.m.

This class, led by Fr. Earnest Graham, offers training for people to lead or facilitate small group meetings, bible studies, classes or committee meetings. We will work on basic skills for organization, communication, personal relations in the group, and healthy group dynamics. It is open to people who have experience in group leadership as well as those who have not. Note: these skills are also useful in other areas of life. Contact Fr. Earnest if you would like to participate in the class.
egramam@hickoryneck.org

Angel Tree

By Nancy Snyder

The Angel Tree is in the New Chapel Narthex, with tags describing what each child wishes. Please make sure that the tag is attached to the package when returned. The last date for return of the Angel Tree items is **December 10th**. The Salvation Army asks that the gifts be unwrapped because of safety issues, but you may include paper with your gifts.

Please remember that these gifts will probably be the only gifts this child receives for Christmas, so you will want to provide that child with an outfit or two and some toys. Perhaps several people, or two or more families may wish to join together to provide for one Angel.

It is very important that each person record his or her name beside the name of the “adopted” Angel on the note pad which will be at the base of the Angel Tree. This will be the only record anyone will have to show who has “adopted” which child. If you have any questions – either call (804)557-3175 or e-mail me at nansteve13@cox.net



Chaplain's Corner

By Chaplain Don Seeterlin

A Prayer-Filled “Aha!” Moment

“Any one of you should pray...and pray for one another to be cured”. James 5:13-16 NJB

Robin, my wife, recently received some significant injuries from a fall off of a fast galloping horse. She was taken to a trauma hospital, and wound up in a Neuro-intensive Care Unit. We were very concerned for her and were asking everyone to please pray for her recovery and a lessening to her immediate pain. This time of waiting and watching caused me to think back on the innumerable times others have asked me to pray for their loved ones, and I readily agreed, only to find that after the initial thought, the time of continued praying would slip out of the forefront of my mind. I am a man of prayer, and I have seen too many answers to prayers to think that prayer doesn't work. Admittedly sometimes the answers may be long in coming, and sometimes the answer does not resemble the answer I had in mind. Still, I knew, and felt in my heart that what Robin needed most at that time was prayer.

As I was leaving the coffee shop in the hospital, I chanced to meet some friends from our small town who were in the hospital on a follow up appointment from a cancer scare. We exchanged cordialities, and shared why we were each in this place away from home. During the visit, we prayed together for each other, and promised to keep the other in

prayer. As I walked away, I reflected on the promise to keep praying, and wondered how many people actually do follow through, and how many people say they will pray, meaning it with all their heart in the moment, but the activities of everyday living distract them and change their focus.



As I pondered on this, I had an “Aha!” moment. I thought about how good intentions about praying, mine and others, may sometimes only have a shelf-life of a moment, and I knew at that moment that that was all that was necessary. The God we worship and adore is a God without the bonds of time and space as we know it. Everything is in the present moment with God. When we pray, we strive to quiet ourselves so as to be in the moment with Him. Our prayers, whether they are long conversations, or short momentary thoughts with earnest intentions, may all serve the same purpose as long as they are humble and reverently offered to God. He can do more with one moment than all mankind can do with all of the moments of time past, present and to come. So offering to pray for someone, and really meaning it, whether once or continuous is still a prayer of unequalled worth.

I walked back towards the elevators that would take me back to Robin with an increased lightness in my step, and a renewed sense of hope and gratitude for the opportunity to pray and to be prayed for.



DECEMBER



Birthdays

4 John Dutro	20 Shannon Houser
5 Nancy Snyder	22 Angela Casanave
6 Bryce Corlett	22 Joseph Pruitt
7 Karen Small	24 Michael Wilson
10 Doug Smith	26 David Forrest
11 Don Seeterlin	26 Tori Otstot
14 Eve Beisch	28 Debby Corlett
15 Joseph Banks	30 George Bridewell
18 Sue Edwards	30 P. J. Casanave
18 Noel Sinclair	31 Joy Tanner
20 Bill Harrison	

Anniversaries

1 Alita & Bill Small
12 Kay & Norm Cooper
19 Diane & Henry McQueen
21 Sue & Chuck Edwards
22 Bonnie & Ben Manning
26 Melissa & Chris Casheros
28 Charlotte & Chris Ellmers
28 Toni & Aaron Small
31 Esther & Bob Gay

Did we miss your big day? If your birthday or anniversary is this month and you are not listed above, please send the information to Nuggets@hickoryneck.org



(10/31/14)

Budget Income	\$368,657.40
YTD Actual Income	\$354,184.88
Budget Expense	\$352,186.31
YTD Actual Expense	\$337,137.31

Once again, the October income was disappointing in all three categories. The aggregate was under budget by \$4,019 for the month, and by \$14,473 year-to-date. Even with expenses slightly under budget (\$624), October was in the red by \$2,212. As explained in the October Nuggets, our cash flow problem continues.

We give thanks for those of you who have returned your pledge cards, expressing your gratitude for God's abundant gifts. And for those of you who are still praying about what you can do, please let us hear from you. Even though the annual meeting will be held on January 18th, it still takes time and effort to prepare the budget for 2015. A budget fully subscribed to by all of our members would be an awesome thing!

We now enter the Advent season, a time of anticipation of the birth of Christ. It is a time of rebirth and renewal, a rekindling of our devotion to the Christ Child. It is also a time to ensure that the Light on our Holy Hill emanates the Love of Christ within our community and around the world.

Fred Boelt



Burial: Mary Elizabeth Pilley Eybers
(+21 October) Requiem 8
November

Vestry Highlights

The monthly Vestry meeting took place November 11th in the Wilkinson Center. Father Earnest led the group in prayer and a reflection on aspects of spiritual leadership. Fred Boelt, Treasurer, discussed the financial standing of the parish (see separate Nuggets article). The Second Sunday offering for November raised \$338.71 for Hospice House. The church received an additional \$1,000.00 grant from Dupont for the Fall Festival; which increases the total net raised from the Fall Festival to \$11,509.56.

Brian Manning reported on the Worship Committee's activities in the past months. Training has been completed for acolytes. Plans are underway for HNC holiday services, along with the Children's Pageant on 12/14. More help is needed in the flower arranging ministry.

Gay Forloine reported on the Newcomers Committee activities for 2014, indicating that HNC has welcomed 25 first-time guests/families since January. Any newcomer who fills out information cards receives a doorstep welcome gift which includes homemade dessert bread, information about the parish, and a welcome card. Both Gay and Ann King are working to create new name badges for returning guests and any parish member who needs a replacement.

Bob Zoglman reported on the Building and Grounds Committee since he has taken it over in August. Ongoing pest control continues to deter ground hogs, snakes and other pests. New doors and windows have been installed in Wilkinson Center, along with new Episcopal Church signage at campus entrance. A successful fall work day with over 20 participants spruced up the grounds prior to Fall Festival, and fall maintenance continues with the spreading of river pebbles in areas around HC and WC, and winterizing of flower beds. Additional flower bed maintenance will be completed in the spring with planting of native and dwarf azaleas. With more volunteers, an additional

work day in 2015 could concentrate on larger projects, such as power washing, shed cleanout, etc.

John Rothnie reported on the numerous activities undertaken by the Outreach Ministry in 2014. The Fall Festival raised over \$10,000 and the golf tournament raised \$320, all proceeds to benefit outreach projects. The Financial Grant Team will be making a presentation to the Vestry at the December meeting concerning their charity grant recommendations. Signups are now underway to assist in Partnering in Parents Program at Toano Middle School on Nov. 20th, and the Emergency Homeless Shelter ministry in December. The Second Sunday offering has donated \$2,321 year-to-date to charities. December's offering will benefit Good News Jail & Prison Ministry.

New committees formed by motions at the Vestry meeting include a FUNraising committee, led by Alita Small, to review and undertake new parish social gatherings and other creative fundraising activities identified by the Adult Formation brainstorming session earlier in the summer. A Safety Committee will be established to review concerns raised by parishioners about various lighting, accessibility, and security issues. A Gift Committee will be reactivated to look at ways individual contributions can be earmarked for various parish needs at times.

Other topics discussed included increasing the number of elected Vestry members. A vote will be placed before the Parish at the Annual Meeting, along with exploring the possibility of an alternate weekly worship service. Fr. Earnest will also be leading a small group leadership training session on January 12th for ministry leaders. Vestry members were given printouts of the church directory with a section of names to maintain contact with each quarter, as a way to make connections with all parish members in the life of the church.

The next meeting of the Vestry will be December 9th at 7:00 p.m. in the Wilkinson Center.

Jill Ramsaur, Register



HNC

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Noel!

Carols for flute, organ, & keyboard

Margaret Carlson, flute

*Sarah Ford Bland,
organ & keyboard*

**Saturday, December 20, 2014
3:30 p.m.**

**Hickory Neck Episcopal Church
New Chapel
8300 Richmond Road
Toano, VA
(757) 566-0276**

Reception Following

