

Saint Bartholomew's News

2015 October

Words from Reverend Wendy

Dear Ones:

Hope you are enjoying your Fall so far. We are well into the county fair season, with some having already turned to memories. But, we have both the Waller County Fair



and the Austin County Fair to look forward to during October. When we first made the full time shift to country living over a decade ago, we were so amused to have school holidays for the days of the county fair. This tradition is one we only get to enjoy in rural Texas, as those big urban school districts would never dream of letting all those kids miss school when so few of them have ever stepped foot into a barn, let alone a county fair.

This year I have already attended the Fayette County Fair in LaGrange to see the ZZ Top concert. It was fun to load up in a big yellow school bus in the corn field where we parked, and to ride in those timeless, familiar seats up to the fairgrounds. The midway was just lighting up as the sun went down, and the distinctive odor of livestock was in the air. All the city folks were holding their noses, standing in contrast compared to the kids scrubbing their fair animals. As an old 4-H Horse Project kid and then leader, it made me smile to remember all those scrubbing moments, especially since my paint pony was a mad expert in rolling in horse manure EVERY evening before we were to show the next morning—never on a brown spot but smack dab in the middle of the beautiful white clean coat I had so carefully washed the day before.

Living in the country is such a blessing. We get to smell all those barnyard animals and step in that mystery poop once in a while, and if it came from a grass eater, it's not too bad!! We have open fields and full forests and burn piles and donkeys who bray a

greeting when we return home. WE even have a scarred up barn cat who shows up once every few weeks to remind us to fill the cat food bowl.

We also have pretty strong faith communities in the country. Most people have a church family. On Sunday we gather together to urge one another forward for another week, and to share the week behind us. It is nice to have that extended family to look forward to seeing each week. That connection is part of the human condition and it is healthy and important to our wellbeing.

Imagine though that someone in your community does not have a faith home. Often it is just because they were never asked, or were never invited, or never knew when or how to join the community. We need to do a better job of asking others if they have a faith community, and if not, go ahead and invite them to join us. Think about all the places you see people. Every single interaction is an opportunity to invite people to your faith community.

And while we are thinking about our faith community, consider our building and how we might use it every day of the week. We need to use this beautiful building of ours. Doing so builds our community. We have some ideas in the works from Mandala Monday (for those who like to color); Crafts Tuesday (for our hand craft people); Yoga Eucharist Tuesday early evening (for a gentle stretch and body prayer ending in Eucharist); Meals on Wheels (meets here every week a couple of days); ECW Bible & Brene' Monday evenings; Blessing of the Pets with 4 Paws Farm; Pardoning of the Turkey; and more. What do think would be fun, or even educational?

I love living in the country in small town Texas, and I love sharing my faith life with each of you. Make sure your friends feel welcome at our faith community by inviting them this month to join us.

With Christ's Blessings,

Rev'd Wendy

Barks from Brother Brownie

Hey all you PET PEOPLE:

I got a phone call the other day—the man from 4 Paws Farm rescue called the church because he heard there was a priest who had a dog for an assistant—then I heard the Rev tell the guy he had it wrong as it was a dog who had a priest for an assistant. Well, he was calling to invite all of us to participate in a community-wide Blessing of the pets, and he wanted the Rev to come, and even wanted me to go, too. Now I guess I need to be clear, I am not a party dog. I may or may not attend this event.

I do not like big gatherings of dogs or even people. I like this church because I feel I get to see everyone on Sundays after church. I also get to greet a few who get there before I am “locked up.” I have been to lots of parties and often they involve dogs and kids, and when everyone starts running around and jumping and barking, I hate that. I have even been known to run up to a wildly barking dog and snarl for them to be quiet. I mean, they should be more dignified. The old Rev sometimes calls me the “fun police,” and all because it falls to me to discipline those who get a little too excited.

You know, I think I am a contemplative. I like my quiet time to meditate and quietly think about the world and God and his beloved Son, Christ. This month is always full of activities with Blessing of the Pets and Halloween and all kinds of outdoor activities. I still like the quiet moments when I can bask in the sun with cool air beginning to seep in.

So this month I will share some of my theology: that of a Christian mystic dog. Martha Ainsworth has a wonderful website about the topic, but among the most interesting things she reminds us not to get lost in the words. She says:

A Note On Terminology: Contemplative spirituality was once called “Christian mysticism.” The word “mysticism” was intended to convey the sense that humanity cannot fully understand God; God is a “mystery.” Unfortunately, fundamentalists and others have now co-opted the word “mysticism” and use it to describe occult practices. Such things have never been an element of Christian mysticism. The classic tradition of Christian mysticism is unrelated to the paranormal or occult; it involves no secret knowledge, no divination, no special powers, and nothing outside the Bible. It is 100% orthodox Christianity. Christian mysticism, also called contemplative spirituality, is a way of focusing one’s life completely on God, through prayer, living in love, and an awareness of God’s presence. To avoid misunderstanding, what was once called “Christian mysticism” is now more frequently referred to as “contemplative spirituality.”

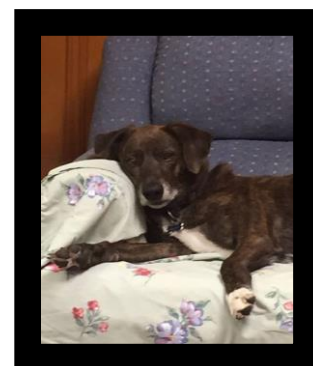
So I am like St. Benedict or Julian of Norwich, who were also Christian mystics. And all of this is based on the fundamental

wisdom saying of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount:

"...when you pray, go to your inner room, close the door and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father, who sees in secret, will repay you." Matthew 6.6 (*New American Bible*)

Maybe we can learn to pray quietly side by side. Just don't get too excited.

Love,



Keeping Up with Camp Allen

There are still some things coming up at Camp Allen this fall.

Contact Toni Christopher for information.
936-825-7175
tonic@campallen.org

- Fishers of Men Oct. 9-11
A men's weekend of fly-fishing and spiritual programming.
- C.S. Lewis Retreat Oct. 30-Nov.1
Of This & Other Worlds - C.S. Lewis & the Call of Deep Heaven. A unique mix of faith, learning, & the performing arts.

Announcements

- ❖ If you did not get a newsletter in the mail for September, please let Cathy know. Also, all newsletter submissions need to be turned in on the 15th of each month to Aubrey.
- ❖ Sunday pew bulletins and inserts can be taken home with you. If you miss a Sunday and would like that pew bulletin, please let Cathy know and we will be sure to get it to you.



Learning with Mrs. Kay in the Chapel!



Super awesome acolyte, Skye Youngblood.

Confirmation Class 2015

Confirmation Date, **Sunday January 3, 2016 at 10:00 AM**; please add this important date to your calendar now. Bishop Dena Harrison will be confirming this class and you will meet with her before the Confirmation to meet her and let her get to know you.

Class Schedule; **we will meet ONLY 4 more times**, so it is important that you attend each class and do the homework in between. All the classes will be held in the Common Room next to the Rectors Office from 11:30-1:30 with lunch served.

Upcoming:

- **October 18**
History: The Nicene Creed
- **November 15**
Episcopalian/Anglican I: The Book of Common Prayer
- **December 13**
Episcopalian/Anglican II: The Church Year
- **December 27**
Spirituality and Dress Rehearsal: Eucharist

All members are invited to attend the classes and may be a refresher to each of you. If you plan on attending, let Reverend Wendy know so she makes enough copies of the materials.

We will be using the Confirm Not Conform Curriculum and offering supplemental readings for this class which will include both youth and adults.

Blessing of the Animals

Families loves their pets, both dogs and cats. And, we are celebrating that love on Sunday, October, 4 at the City Gazebo behind the post office from 1 to 3. Adding to the festivities will be Richard Paul Thomas, a major singer in the Texas Music Festival.

To help families care for their dogs and cats, Animal Friends of Washington County will offer low cost rabies and core vaccinations. Also, micro chips for identification, and heart worm testing. Check their website for pricing, www.afvet.org.

The Rev. Wendy Huber, pastor at St. Bartholomew Episcopal Church will be blessing pets in the tradition of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals.

Amy Vaegquist, senior behavior technician at FurEver Home will be giving free training sessions for dogs and their families. FurEver Home was just rated one of the five best trainers for German Shepherds by Thumbtack.com.

4 Paws Farm, Pet Adoption Team will have wonderful dogs and cats looking for families to love.

The Memorial Day storms scared hundreds of dogs. In their panic, they lost their way home. FindingRover.com uses face recognition software to store your pet's image and, should they become lost, anyone who finds them can upload the pet's image and compare it to millions of pets. It's a free service. Bring your pets for photographing and registering.

The City of Hempstead is one of fewer than ten cities in Texas to save over 90% of the pets in their animal control facility. We will celebrate two years of operating a "no kill" animal facility. Quite an honor!

Bring your pet and family for a celebration of Pets in Our Lives. It will be a fun way to meet other pet owners and to gain great information about giving your pet a better live. And, the veterinarian services are outstanding and the cost is extremely reasonable.

By Harry Stoorza, Ph.D.
Animal Activist with 4 Paws Farm in Hempstead



Image of St. Francis of Assisi found online
<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2013/01/14/rich-man-poor-man>

Lay Ministry

Sunday 10/4

Altar Guild	Volunteer, Volunteer
Chalice Bearer	Bobby Drew
Lesson Lector	Helen Panetti
Prayer Lector	Susan LaFitte
Acolyte	Skye Youngblood
Ushers	Darrel LaFitte, Gerald Ladig

Sunday 10/11

Altar Guild	Volunteer, Volunteer
Chalice Bearer	Charlie Menke
Lesson Lector	Nancy Wilson
Prayer Lector	Open
Ushers	Tom Scholl, John Allen

Sunday 10/18

Altar Guild	Volunteer, Volunteer
Chalice Bearer	Gerald Ladig
Lesson Lector	Helen Panetti
Acolyte	Skye Youngblood
Prayer Lector	Susan LaFitte
Ushers	Carl Nettles, Tom Scholl

Sunday 10/25

Altar Guild	Volunteer, Volunteer
Chalice Bearer	Bobby Drew
Lesson Lector	Helen Panetti
Prayer Lector	Susan LaFitte
Ushers	Darrel LaFitte, Gerald Ladig

www.stbartshempstead.org
www.facebook.com/pages/St-Bartholomew-Episcopal-Church-Hempstead-TX/1637244059838215

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If you have any suggestions or ideas that you would like to be in the newsletter, email Aubrey.



Yoga Eucharist is Here

Beginning October 13 from 5-6:30pm in the Parish Hall we will gather together with our yoga mats (we will have a few for sale) and guided by Personal Trainer Janet Melnar and Rev. Wendy through a gentle stretching and intentional series of yoga poses which will be related to scripture, prayer and culminating in Eucharist at the end of the session.



Yoga had origins in Indian culture but just as the very tree we place our presents under during Christmas, we as Christians have realized we can remain fully Christian and stretch and quiet our breathing while worshipping God and His Son Christ.

According to the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and other sources, the origins of the Christmas tree are closely tied to pagan winter rites and even tree worship among pre-Christian Europeans. What did Christians do? They took something that had been used in pagan rituals (the tree) and re-interpreted it, giving it new meaning as a symbol of the Christian faith. There is even a story that Saint Boniface cut down an oak tree that

German pagans were worshipping and replaced it with an evergreen tree, showing how its triangular shape reminded one of the Trinity and how it pointed to heaven.



St. Augustine said, "Wherever truth may be found, it belongs to the Lord." Sometimes this sentiment is expressed as, "All truth is God's truth"—the point being, if something is true and good, it is ultimately a gift from God, wherever it is found.

So if stretching our muscles, breathing deeply, and staying present in the moment can actually help heal and restore our bodies and minds—then isn't it essentially of God?

Our Yoga class will be a body prayer to our Lord and Savior and finish by celebrating the most Holy Meal—Holy Eucharist. Join us!



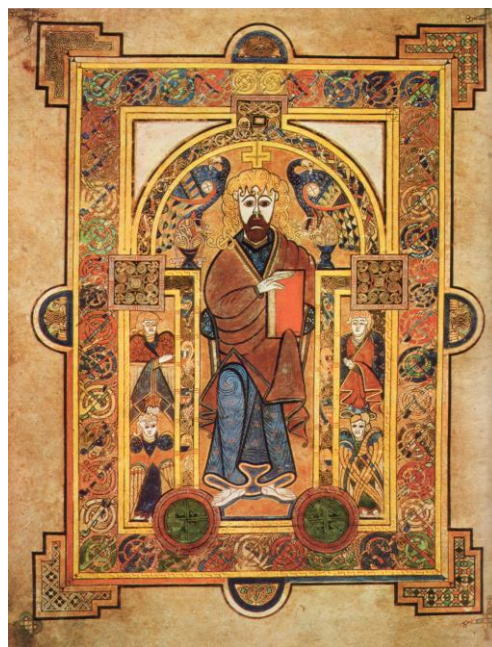
Mandalas and More

Beginning October 5 from 1-3 pm we will meet at the church and color together. We will create and color Mandalas or just color in some of the wonderful “grownup” coloring books we are gathering.

The word Mandala (pronunciation mon-dah- lah) means "circle". A Mandala represents wholeness, a diagram reminding us of our relation to infinity, extending beyond and within our bodies and minds. The mandala appears to us in all aspects of life, the Earth, the Sun, the Moon and more obviously the circles of life encompassing friends, family and communities. Mandalas are circular designs symbolizing the notion that life is never ending. Many mandalas have spiritual significance to an individual or group of individuals. The Hindus were one of the first people to use a mandala as a spiritual tool, but the mandalas have been used through the ages in many faith traditions and cultures. Think of the Labyrinth or the Rose Window in so many of our churches.



Within the Christian tradition, the use of geometric designs as a part of prayer and reflection has a rich history. Among the Celtic Christians, monks copied the scriptures and illuminated the text with intricate designs, shapes, and creatures, showing that they had a love for the written word, amazing focus and skill, and a sense of humor. One of the greatest of these Gospel books is the 9th century Book of Kells.



In the 11th century, a nun and abbess named Hildegard of Bingen, writer of plays, music, and handbooks of medicine, designed complex mandalas based on visions she had during prayer.

Mandalas can be created by individuals to symbolize their journeys through life. Mandalas can also tell a story of where an individual has been. In some cases they will reveal the individual's path in life. Groups can create mandalas that will reveal what they should be doing in order to grow and develop as a group.

October Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
				1 Meals on Wheels 10:00	2	3 Birthday: Geneva Bayh
4 Worship 10:00 Birthday: Liz Tomkins	5 Mandalas and More 1:00 ECW Book Meeting 6:30	6 Crafts 10:00	7	8 Meals on Wheels 10:00	9	10 Birthday: Russell Bayh
11 Worship 10:00 Birthday: Debbie Flint	12 Mandalas and More 1:00 ECW Book Meeting 6:30	13 Crafts 10:00 Anniversary: Geneva & Russell Bayh Yoga Eucharist 5:00	14	15 Meals on Wheels 10:00	16	17
18 Worship 10:00 Confirmation Class 11:30 Birthday: Allice Burland	19 Mandalas and More 1:00 Birthday: Debbie Mathis	20 Crafts 10:00 Birthday: Gabrielle Allen Yoga Eucharist 5:00	21	22 Meals on Wheels 10:00 Anniversary: Cathy & John Allen	23	24
25 Worship 10:00	26 Mandalas and More 1:00 ECW Book Meeting 6:30	27 Crafts 10:00 Yoga Eucharist 5:00	28 Anniversary: Sheila & Larry Dennis	29 Meals on Wheels 10:00	30	31 Birthday: Gene Hawkins Hannah Allen Cullen Allen

Note: Go to the next page for a full schedule for the Gifts of Imperfection book meeting schedule.

Gifts of Imperfection Meeting Schedule

<i>Date</i>	<i>Session</i>	<i>Gifts Reference</i>	<i>Scriptural References</i>
Sept 21	Wholehearted Living	Pgs. 1-47	The Letter of James
Sept 28	Authenticity and Self-Compassion	Pgs. 49-62	Hebrews Chapter 11
Oct 5	Resilient, Joyful, Faithful	Pgs. 63-92	I Thessalonians
Oct 12	Creativity and Rest	Pgs. 93-104	Mathew, Mark, Luke and John
Oct 26	Quiet and Finding Meaning	Pgs. 105-116	Quiet Moments in the Gospels (More of Above)
Nov 2	Laugh and Remain Playful	Pgs. 117-126	Scriptural Laughter

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