

From Father Nik

During this season of Advent, we are using the Threefold Office of Christ—Prophet, Priest, King—to direct our hope for and exploration of the mystery of what we are waiting for. Last Sunday, we looked at how the line of prophets, leading all the way up to John the Baptist, serves to prepare our hearts for *the* Prophet foreshadowed by each of the prophets who came before. Christ is *the* Prophet because he is the Word that gave the words of hope to the prophets who anticipated his first advent. And we who await his second advent are also prophets insofar as we have a share in his Threefold Office through our baptism into him.

Reflecting on this, Jesus says that John the Baptist was the greatest of the prophets who prepared the way for him, but each of us who participate in Christ's own prophetic office are greater than John (Matt 11:11/Lk 7:28)! This may be difficult to believe. Didn't those prophets of old entertain angels and receive messages from the Holy Spirit, herself? Most of us can't claim to have had the kinds of experiences that those prophets of yore report, so where would we get the words to speak prophetically? In last Sunday's sermon, I suggested that Scripture provides us with the prophetic words we must speak in our age. And in every age, Christians who have immersed themselves in Scripture have given voice to the testimony and prophetic witness of those words in poetry, hymnody, theology, preaching, story-telling, truth-telling, and speaking the messages of hope, comfort, or conviction that a friend or stranger needs to hear.

We live in a culture obsessed with the new, the latest & greatest, and the next big thing. But we who have a share in the prophetic office of Christ know that it's the old, familiar words of scripture and tradition that actually speak of the new creation. Like those same, well-known Christmas carols that we look forward to singing again and again, year after year; we tell these same stories of Scripture, we give voice to these words of our Tradition, again and again, year after year. We do this because these words provide us with the gift of hope and point us, prophetically, to the one who is making all things new. We do this so that we may take hold of our share in his prophetic office and bear witness to the hope that is within us, to God's faithfulness, to our great High Priest, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Nik+

The Nativity Story

The Youth Group will be meeting this Sunday (Dec. 14) at 5pm in the parish hall for a viewing of the 2006 film, "The Nativity Story". All are welcome to come enjoy this excellent cinematic retelling of the Christmas Story.

Advent-Christmas Pageant

On Sunday, Dec.21 at 10am, the children will perform an Advent pageant.
(Rehearsal on Saturday 12/20 @ 10am in the parish hall)

Advent Evensong

The choirs of Fork Church & St. James the Less invite you to a joint Advent evensong at SJtL on Sunday, Dec. 21 at 5:30pm.

Fork Cookbook

The cookbook makes wonderful Christmas gift!
Buy yours today from any cookbook committee member.

Look What's Cookin – 2015 Stewardship'

The 2015 Stewardship Letter & Pledge Card have been mailed.
If you have any questions or need a Pledge Card,
please contact Scott Smythe (scott@virginiaberryfarm.com).

Christmas Memorials

Consider making your donation for Christmas Memorials soon.
Please use the Sunday Bulletin Insert.

Outreach Dinner

The next Outreach Dinner will be 5pm, Sunday, Dec 28 at SJtL.

A Public Service Announcement

In the best interest of the spiritual & mental health of Fork Church, it is necessary for volunteers from the congregation to sign-up to make coffee & provide snacks and refreshments for “coffee hour” after Sunday Eucharist. Failure to volunteer shall subject you to such medieval penalties as being required to do liturgical dancing during a service, play the role of Goliath for the Godly Play kids, or worse.

Such dire consequences can be avoided by contacting Mac Chenault via telephone, 804-730-7175 or email: mchenault@chenaultlawoffices.com.

Christian Education

Godly Play is currently in session. Children are invited to hear the Word in a fun, learning environment in the Parish House during the first half of our Sunday morning worship; after which, they join their parents in church for Communion.

J2A Youth Group meets twice a month for fun, fellowship, food, & formation. **Movie this Sunday afternoon, Dec. 14, 5pm.** We'll make cookies in our new kitchen on the 20th @ 10am & deliver them after church on the 21st.

Adult Forum meets Sunday mornings at 9am. Through Advent, Don Schubert and Fr Nik are co-leading a study exploring the question: “*What are we waiting for?*” Come join us for coffee and good conversation.

Small Groups

The Women's Book Group meets every other Thursday at Kathy Thomas' house from 10am-noon. Please contact Kathy for directions or more info: boysthree@embarqmail.com

The Men's Book Group will meet Thursday, Dec. 18 at 7:30am at Ashland Coffee & Tea. They are reading *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony* by Stanley Hauerwas & Will Willimon – (pages 43-53).

Christian Formation

If you are seeking Baptism, Confirmation, Reception, or would like to reaffirm your baptismal covenant, please contact Fr Nik – KNicholasForti@gmail.com

Nik's Calendar

Monday, Dec 8 – Meeting with Fr. Ed Bushong, noon
Tuesday, Dec 16 – Clericus at SJtL, 9am-noon
– Clergy & staff lunch, 12:30pm
Monday, Dec 29 – Meeting with Fr. Bushong, 10am

Looking Ahead

Sunday, Dec, 14 – Youth Group, 5pm
Thursday, Dec 18 – Men's Book Group, 7:30am
Saturday, Dec 20 – Rehearsal, Advent Pageant 10am
Saturday, Dec 20 – Youth Group makes cookies, 10am
Sunday, Dec21 – Youth Group delivers cookies, 11:30am
Sunday, Dec 21 – Godly Play Advent/Christmas Pageant @ 10am Eucharist
Sunday, Dec 21 – Advent Evensong @ St James the Less, Ashland, 5:30pm
Wednesday, Dec 24 – Children's Eucharist, 5pm
– Midnight Mass, 11pm
Sunday, Dec 28 – Outreach Dinner at SJtL, 5pm