

THE ANGELUS

A Publication of the Church of Our Saviour

Advent and Christmastide

Though we can't be together this year, here are some images from last year showcasing the life and vibrancy of the Church of Our Saviour in this special season.



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DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE
The next issue of the *Angelus*, focusing on Epiphany, will be published on January 4. Deadline for articles is Wednesday, December 16.

From the Rector's Desk

In October, the Bishop authorized the re-opening of parish campuses, albeit in a very limited way for now. The Vestry and I have done the preparations that will allow us to begin worshipping together as a parish with as little risk as possible.

At this time, we can only re-gather outdoors, physically distant, masked, and without singing, and with Holy Eucharist in one kind (bread only, with a gluten free option available). Understandably, some of you will not be comfortable attending an in-person gathering; do not be concerned, we will continue to livestream Mass each Sunday morning at 10:00am, along with the various liturgies and offerings throughout the week.

A slight change to the requirements: The recommendation of attending Mass once a month is being removed. Anyone who is willing and comfortable with attending an in-person Mass is able to register online. For the time being, registration is set for a maximum of 25 parishioners who have pre-registered. The following requirements and expectations are still in place:

For the lowest risk and safety of those gathering, if you or anyone who lives with you has exhibited any of the following, we ask that you not attend, but invite you to join us online at 10:00am:

- ▶ Fever (100.4°F or greater) in the past 14 days
- ▶ Shown any signs/symptoms of COVID-19
- ▶ Been around anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 2 weeks
- ▶ Awaiting the results of a COVID-19 test

Furthermore, individuals who register for Mass are asked to bring the following items to participate fully in worship:

- ▶ *The Book of Common Prayer* (1979)
- ▶ *The Holy Bible*
- ▶ Lawn chair, blanket, and anything you need to be comfortable outside
- ▶ Face mask
- ▶ Phone/tablet to follow bulletin
- ▶ An open and ready heart to worship the Lord

In the event of rain or inclement weather, outdoor Mass will be canceled and will resume the following Sunday. In the event of poor weather, you are invited to join us online for the livestreamed 10:00am Mass. Please pay close attention to parish communications in the days leading up to the in-person Masses.

Please know that there will be assigned seating, and registered parishioners will be seated on a first-come, first-served basis. If you wish to register for any of the upcoming in-person Masses make sure you are receiving the parish's e-blasts and look for registration links in them.

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to Fr. Chris at rector@coosatl.org.

Advent and Christmastide

This issue covers the month of December and the seasons of Advent and Christmastide. Advent is the first season of the church year, so we begin Year B in our cycle of lectionary readings and propers. Fittingly for a first season celebrates the coming of Christ, looking backwards to the coming of the Christ Child on earth and forward to His Second

Coming from Heaven to establish His kingdom. Thus, like Lent, Advent is a season of preparation, of expectation and of waiting. Unlike Lent, which is a somber season of reflection, self-examination and penitence, Advent's penitential reflections are filled with hope and expectation. The liturgical color is either a bright purple for royalty or blue to remind us of Mary and her role. Major saints who have feast days during this time are Saint Nicholas (December 6) and Saint Thomas the Apostle (December 21). Other saints celebrated during this time include Saint John of Damascus (December 4), Saint Clement of Alexandria (December 5), Saint Ambrose of Milan (December 7) and Saint Lucia or Lucy (December 13).

Christmastide is the second season of the year. We call it Christmastide to remind us that it is a season, not just a day. Christmastide begins with the Christmas service and ends with Epiphany. Its liturgical color is gold or white and it is a season of joy and happiness. Major feast days include Christmas itself, which traditionally in the Church of Our Saviour is celebrated three times. (See the listing of this year's services below.) Feast and saints days include Saint Stephen (December 26), Saint John the Apostle (December 27), the Feast of the Holy Innocents, (December 28), and the Holy Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ celebrated on January 1. This year the season will include two Sundays, which traditionally celebrate the Holy Family. On Sunday, January 3 at 10am, COOS will have a Christmas Lessons and Carols service (available, as all our 10am Masses are, on Facebook). As we did with our Advent Lessons and Carols service there will be organ music, but no choir.



Please check our weekly electronic newsletter for updates on all our Christmas services.

Christmas Special Services

Thursday, December 24, Christmas Eve, 4pm | In-Person Outdoor Spoken Mass*

A family-friendly Mass appropriate for all ages

If this Mass fills up a second outdoor Mass will be added at 2pm

Thursday, December 24, Christmas Eve, 10:45pm | Organ Prelude/Concert followed by a Solemn High Mass at 11pm (*Livestreamed on Facebook*)

Friday, December 25, Christmas Day, 11am | In-Person Outdoor Spoken Mass*

Sunday, December 27, Christmas I, 8:30am | In-Person Outdoor Spoken Mass*

10am | Spoken Mass (*Livestreamed on Facebook*)

Sunday, January 3, Christmas II, 8:30am | In-Person Outdoor Spoken Mass*

10am | Christmas Lessons & Carols – *A celebration of carols, readings and other music of the season (Livestreamed on Facebook)*

**Pre-registration is required for all in-person outdoor Masses.*

In the event of rain or inclement weather, outdoor Masses will be canceled.

Special Days this Season

Following are collects (prayers) traditionally said on these days.

SAINT NICHOLAS, BISHOP OF MYRA – DECEMBER 6

Grant, Almighty God, that your church may be so inspired by the example of your servant Nicholas of Myra, that it may never cease to work for the welfare of children, the safety of sailors, the relief of the poor, and the help of those tossed by tempests of doubt or grief; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

SAINT THOMAS – DECEMBER 21

Everliving God, who strengthened your apostle Thomas with firm and certain faith in your Son's resurrection: Grant us so perfectly and without doubt to believe in Jesus Christ, our Lord and our God, that our faith may never be found wanting in your sight; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

CHRISTMAS – DECEMBER 24 AND DECEMBER 25

O God, you make us glad by the yearly festival of the birth of your only Son Jesus Christ: Grant that we, who joyfully receive him as our Redeemer, may with sure confidence behold him when he comes to be our Judge; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

O God, you have caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light: Grant that we, who have known the mystery of that Light on earth, may also enjoy him perfectly in heaven; where with you and the Holy Spirit he lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

Almighty God, you have given your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and to be born [this day] of a pure virgin: Grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with you and the same Spirit be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

SAINT STEPHEN – DECEMBER 26

We give you thanks, O Lord of glory, for the example of the first martyr Stephen, who looked up to heaven and prayed for his persecutors to your Son Jesus Christ, who stands at your right hand; where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

SAINT JOHN – DECEMBER 28 (TRANSFERRED FROM DECEMBER 27)

Shed upon your Church, O Lord, the brightness of your light, that we, being illumined by the teaching of your apostle and evangelist John, may so walk in the light of your truth, that at length we may attain to the fullness of eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

**THE HOLY INNOCENTS – DECEMBER 29
(TRANSFERRED FROM DECEMBER 28)**

We remember today, O God, the slaughter of the holy innocents of Bethlehem by King Herod. Receive, we pray, into the arms of your mercy all innocent victims; and by your great might frustrate the designs of evil tyrants and establish your rule of justice, love, and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

THE HOLY NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST – JANUARY 1

Eternal Father, you gave to your incarnate Son the holy name of Jesus to be the sign of our salvation: Plant in every heart, we pray, the love of him who is the Savior of the world, our Lord Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

Christmas Flowers

Contributions are now being received for Christmas flowers in memory of departed loved ones. The names of the faithful departed in whose memory the church will be adorned will

be listed in the Christmas service leaflet on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. A minimum donation of \$25 is suggested, though any amount is welcome. Please mark your check or online gift “Christmas Flowers” and return it, along with names of those in whose memory you are making your donation, by Monday, December 14.



A New Year Begins: Some Thoughts About Calendars in Advent

By ORETA HINAMON CAMPBELL

Most of us live in several calendars at once. The secular year, January 1–December 31; the school year, August through the following May; the fiscal years of the various companies we work for. And then of course there are the

years as measured by other cultures, such as the Chinese year and the Jewish year. The church also has a year, which begins with the First Sunday of Advent, this year on November 29.

The calendar we think of as the “normal” secular calendar can be said to have begun with the reign of Julius Caesar in Rome. Before this time, the Roman calendar was quite different, at one time containing ten months, which is why the name of December, the twelfth month in our year, is derived from the Latin word for ten. At the time of Julius Caesar, the year had changed to 12 months, with a short, variable length intercalation month inserted at the end of February at the whim of a board of priests called pontifices (which is one of the reasons classical historians have such trouble comparing modern and historical dates).

The word I used in the paragraph above, “intercalation,” may be unfamiliar to some of you (it was certainly unfamiliar to me until I started researching this article) but it refers to a phenomenon with which all of you are familiar. That is, inserting days in the calendar so that the calendar matches the seasons. You see, our calendar has to balance several astronomical events, the rotation of the earth around its axis, which gives us our days, the revolution of the moon around the earth, which gives us the phases of the moon, and the revolution of the earth around the sun, which gives us our year. It would be nice if all of these fit together neatly, but they do not. If you measure the length of a day (the earth’s rotation) by the time between the sun’s highest point each rotation, you will find that it varies from day to day. (The earth’s orbit is not a perfect circle and the earth speeds up and slows down at different parts of the orbit.) Measured by its own rotation around its axis, the earth’s rotation takes 24 hours. The month, as defined by the phases of the moon, is 20.53 days long. A year, defined as the time it takes for the earth to revolve around the sun, is 365 days, 5 hours, 59 minutes and 16 seconds long.

Are you confused yet? I am! But the basic principal is that a calendar based on the relationship of the moon to the earth (a lunar calendar) is not going to match up with a calendar based on the relationship of the earth to the sun (a solar calendar) and adjustments will have to be made. Before Caesar, these adjustments were arbitrary, but the calendar he created gave us a pattern: twelve months, with some months 30 days long and some 31 days long. February was set at 28 days in order to avoid interrupting an important festival, the Floralia. Because the year is not an even number of days, every four years an extra day would be inserted at the end of February (Leap Year). This calendar worked well for many years.

However, since the year is not exactly $365 \frac{1}{4}$ days long, eventually the actual position of the earth in its solar orbit was different from the position of the earth that the calendar predicted. In 1578 Pope Gregory reformed the calendar by deciding that centennial years (1700, 1800, 1900, for example) would not be leap years unless the year number could be divided by four. After many years of discussion and argument, this is the calendar most of us use now. (As an aside, no, Pope Gregory did not actually do the astronomical work himself, he relied on two astronomers, Aloysius Lilius and Christopher Clavius.)

Which brings us, in a roundabout way, to the church calendar. As you see, there is no reason that the secular and the sacred calendar must correspond, and since sometime in the seventh century AD, the church has decided that the new year begins on the Sunday nearest Saint Andrew's day (November 30). It should fall no sooner than November 27 and no later than December 3.

The church year, like our secular year, is divided into seasons. These seasons are not organized around the weather but instead organized around its most important festivals. Easter was the first recognized annual festival day and is still the most important festival of the church year – the Queen of Festivals. Lent is a preparatory season for Easter and culminates in the Triduum (Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday) and Easter itself. The date of Easter is not fixed, and can occur on different calendar days because Easter is a lunar holiday and, as we have seen, the lunar calendar and the solar calendar are not the same. If you are interested, a table for calculating the date of Easter is found on pages 880-885 of the *Book of Common Prayer*.

The festival of Pentecost occurs 50 days after Easter, and is followed by the season of Ordinary Time. The length of Ordinary Time is variable because it always ends five Sundays before Christmas, when Advent begins. Christmas is based on the solar calendar and always falls on December 25. The season of Advent precedes it, and the season of Christmastide and Epiphany follow it. The length of Epiphany is also variable so that it ends in time for Lent.

Thus, we have the seasons of the church year: Advent, Christmastide, Epiphany, Lent, Triduum, Eastertide, and Ordinary time.

There is another calendar that is important to us as Episcopalians. If you check the back of your *Book of Common Prayer*, you will find on page 888 a Lectionary. This lists the readings you will hear in church on Sunday, and is arranged in a three-year cycle. Thus, this Advent begins Year B. However, in 1994, a new lectionary was created, the *Revised Common Lectionary*, which is the lectionary we currently use. It is based on the same principles so we are still beginning Year B.

As long as we are in the back pages of the *Book of Common Prayer*, on page 933, there is another lectionary. This is for readings for the daily offices, and is arranged in a two-year cycle. It is a valuable resource for daily devotional readings.

We live in God's time, but we measure it in many ways. I find that having a sacred calendar that is different from the secular calendar is a useful reminder that while we live in the world, we belong to God, and we center our lives around His worship, not the goings and comings of the secular world.

Sources:

- ▶ Blackburn, Bonnie and Holford-Strevens, Leofranc. *The Oxford Companion to the year: An Exploration of Calendar customs and time-reckoning*. Oxford University Press. 1999.
- ▶ Pyle, Dr. Daniel. "Happy New Year: The Liturgical Year Starts Anew," *The Angelus*: December 2016. p. 4-5.
- ▶ "History of Calendars." *Wikipedia*. Accessed November 21, 2020. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_calendars
- ▶ *The Book of Common Prayer*. Seabury Press: 1979

“...having a sacred calendar that is different from the secular calendar is a useful reminder that while we live in the world, we belong to God, and we center our lives around His worship, not the goings and comings of the secular world.”

Parish News

CHANGES TO THE PRAYER REQUEST FORM

As brothers and sisters in Christ, we are continually striving to deepen our bonds as a parish. The Pastoral Care Committee is taking a small step in strengthening our unity to each other in Christ by revising the Prayer Request form. The revised form will offer an opportunity to include, if wanted, the name/relationship of the person submitting the prayer request. Example: *Pray for Sue, sister of June Brown, Parishioner.* This small addition not only allows us to pray for both “Sue and June”, but hopefully the additional context allows for closer bonds to form within our congregation as we open ourselves up to the love and support around us. We certainly understand that not every prayer request can or should be shared and this is not an attempt to intrude on a person’s privacy. We view this as an easy way for all of us to grow in love and trust as brothers and sisters and we encourage everyone to practice it if able. Please also bear in mind that while all of the information will be printed in the Bulletin, only the requested name will be read during the service by the Priest.

WEEKDAY EVENTS

Wednesday Night Bible Study, 7:30pm–8:15pm

Bible Study is offered via Zoom as part of Christian Formation. Make plans to join Fr. Chris and others as they explore the Book of Ezekiel. Following Bible Study, Compline is offered at 8:30pm via Facebook Live.

Holy Rosary Thursdays, 11:30am

We pray the Mysteries of the Rosary each Thursday via Zoom.

To log into either event, go to zoom.us, select “Join a Meeting” and enter the meeting ID and passcode, or call the number below and follow the call-in instructions.

Details for both Bible Study and Holy Rosary

Zoom Meeting ID: 275 751 9986 / Passcode: COOS1068 or

Call-in: (929) 205-6099 US; Meeting ID: 275 751 9986 / Passcode: 84047014

PARISH ANNUAL MEETING

On January 24, 2021, we will have our annual parish meeting, virtual or zoom, as required by the canons of the church. The main order of business will be the election of new vestry members. The vestry will make nominations and members of the congregation may also make nominations. We will be electing three people to three-year terms. For a parishioner to nominate someone they must first have the consent of the person they are nominating. In accordance with our By-Laws, all nominations must be submitted at least thirty days in advance of the meeting—this year, on or before December 23. Every recognized parish organization is asked to submit a report of its activities. If it holds funds which are not under the Treasurer’s control, the report must include a financial summary. Please send a copy of the report (written or electronic) to the secretary. Every person who worships at Our Saviour is encouraged to attend the Annual Meeting and to take part in its discussions, asking questions and speaking. Voting members of the parish are those who are baptized, 18 years of age or older, attend and receive communion regularly, and who contribute to the mission and ministry of the parish. A preliminary list of qualified voters will be available by Sunday, December 27. If you want to make sure you are on the list, please call Dowman Wilson, the parish registrar at 404-816-4374. The exact method of voting will be announced later. We thank those vestry members who have completed their terms for their service to the parish.

Your Year-End Giving Makes a Difference

Pledge payments and other contributions received through the year is the revenue that affords salaries for our Rector, Organist/Choirmaster, and other staff, as well as expenses for the buildings, hospitality, and education programs. Salaries, which are the majority of our expense, are part of the mission of the Church, providing the sacraments of worship, pastoral care, and education.

We are deeply grateful for each and every gift received and work to ensure that we are faithful stewards of the funds entrusted to us. We humbly give thanks to God, whose providence sustains us all.

If you have an outstanding balance on your current year pledge or intend to offer additional contributions for the current year, kindly note that contributions should be received in the parish office or postmarked by December 31; online giving is available on our website (www.oursaviouratlanta.org/give) at any time. If your circumstances have changed and you find you are unable to fulfill your pledge, please let the Treasurer or Fr. Chris know so that the leadership can better manage any budget implications.

More importantly, if you are facing personal or professional hardship, please let Fr. Chris know, so that he can offer pastoral support and prayers.

CONSIDER DONATING APPRECIATED SECURITIES

History's fastest bear market was also the shortest. After losing 36% of its value in a month, the S&P 500 has recorded the biggest five-month gain in its history and has surpassed the year's highpoint. The continued appreciation brings the potential for taking capital gains – and paying accompanying taxes – for investors. If you have been participating in the stock market gains, why not consider a gift to the Church of Our Saviour by donating long-term appreciated securities (stock, bonds, or mutual funds)?

Donating appreciated securities to the Church of Our Saviour could reduce your income tax liability and avoid capital gains tax on those assets. When you donate appreciated stock, you can (generally) eliminate capital gains tax exposure and take a charitable deduction for the amount of the fair market value of the shares. Please consult a professional advisor for guidance on your specific individual tax circumstances, and contact the parish treasurer to assist with a securities transfer.

“We are deeply grateful for each and every gift received and work to ensure that we are faithful stewards of the funds entrusted to us.”

Even though we weren't able to gather together to build our Advent wreaths this year, we know many of us either built our own (from the COOS kits or from our own supplies) or bought pre-made ones. We want you to take a photo or photos of your Advent wreath – in use, lit, unlit, with family members, or without – and email them to the parish (admin@coosatl.org) so we can highlight them in the weekly e-blasts and in the next Angelus.



Looking Back

COOS DURING COVID TIMES

Though we were not able to have our usual Blessing of the Animals service this year, Fr. Chris arranged for us to have a walk-by version from 1 to 3 pm on October 4. Luckily, this year the 4th fell on a Sunday, so it worked out very nicely and we had families, both from the church and the neighborhood, coming by to have their pets blessed. People got out of the house, waved to each other from an appropriate distance, and the pets got a blessing and a St. Francis medal.

On October 21, Fr. Chris sent an e-blast to the parish to let everyone know that we were going to start having outdoor, in-person, spoken-word Low Masses beginning on Sunday, November 1, at 8:30am. We continued, and will for the foreseeable future, having our 10am livestreaming service on Sunday



Our Nov. 1 in-person, outdoor Mass

mornings, but the opportunity to have a small (no more than 25 people) in-person service is a great step forward. Due to the fact that the service is held in Highland Woodworking's parking lot (across North Highland from the church), we have been able to take a giant step forward in proclaiming our message to the neighborhood. No longer having walls around us makes sure that anyone traveling on North Highland between 8:30 and 9:30 on a Sunday morning will see, and hear, what we're all about. Whenever the weather is inclement we won't be having this service, but so far the weather has been good to us.

The same can't quite be said about Fr. Chris' luck as he and his family had to go into quarantine two weeks later due to COVID exposure and positive test results for his sons. Everyone made it through the experience without a bad outcome, but it did reinforce for all of us just how easy it is to be exposed to the virus, catch it and be asymptomatic.

On Sunday, November 29, the Church of Our Saviour resumed our 8:30am outdoor, in-person Masses. This same Sunday, at the 10am service, we had our annual Advent Lessons and Carols service, though without a choir, a reception afterwards or having it held in the afternoon. (How COVID has changed our traditions!) But we did have absolutely lovely music from our organist Sam Polk, and both Dowman and Alphus served and read several of the lessons along with Sam and Fr. Chris.

And last, but certainly not least, Fr. Chris celebrated his third anniversary with COOS on Advent I. A prime example of how time files!

READINGS, DECEMBER 2020 – JANUARY 2021

DECEMBER 6 (SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT)

Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
2 Peter 3:8-15a
Mark 1:1-8

DECEMBER 13 (THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT)

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Psalm 126
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8,19-28

DECEMBER 20 (FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT)

Isaiah 61:10-62:3
Psalm 147
Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7
John 1:1-18

DECEMBER 24 (4PM MASS)

Isaiah 9:2-7
 Psalm 96
 Titus 2:11-14
 Luke 2:1-20

DECEMBER 24 (11PM MASS)

Isaiah 62:6-12
 Psalm 97
 Titus 3:4-7
 Luke 2:1-20

DECEMBER 25

Isaiah 52:7-10
 Psalm 98
 Hebrews 1:1-12
 John 1:1-14

DECEMBER 27

Isaiah 61:10-62:3
 Psalm 147
 Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7
 John 1:1-18

JANUARY 1

(HOLY NAME OF JESUS)
 Numbers 6:22-27
 Psalm 8
 Galatians 4:4-7
 Luke 2:15-21

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES*Birthdays in December*

5 Scott Roberts, III
 11 William Krape
 12 Kathie Spotts
 17 Michael Palmer

18 Oreta Campbell
 Andrea Shepherd
 19 Jane-Elizabeth
 Hudson
 21 John Trout

22 Dali Bartharès
 24 Connie Moon Sehat
 27 Cathy McAfee
 29 Afton Warner
 30 Ann Harris Doyle

CLERGY, STAFF & VESTRY

The Reverend Christopher Miller, Rector

678-538-5549, rector@coosatl.org

Staff

Sam Polk, Organist and Choir Master

404-872-4169, ocm@coosatl.org

Cathy McAfee, Parish Administrator

404-872-4169, admin@coosatl.org

Brian Mullaney, Treasurer

treasurer@coosatl.org

Ellen Hopkins, Bookkeeper

Mary Burgess, Nursery Attendant

404-874-4262

Stefka Babadalieva, Nursery Attendant

Dowman Wilson, Parish Registrar & Vestry Secretary

Mary Sommers, Communications

Vestry

Jennifer McGlynn, Senior Warden

Roger Press, Stewardship

Ken Molinelli, Junior Warden

Mary Sommers, Hospitality

Suellen Henderson, Strategic Vision/Growth

Alphus Spears, Christian Formation

John Miller, Worship/Liturgy

Dowman Wilson, Mission & Outreach

Meg Pagán, Pastoral Care

EDITOR'S NOTE

Once again, we want to apologize for the lateness of this issue. Complications of time, work and illness (no not the Covid) caught up with all of us, and we did not allow sufficient time to meet our deadlines. However, we are well into preparing the next issue and will be working to get it out according to the schedule noted on page 1.

THE ANGELUS

Advent 2020

The Church of Our Saviour
985 Los Angeles Ave NE
Atlanta, GA 30306

Address Service Requested

Dated Material – Please Do Not Delay

Christmas (excerpt)

BY JOHN BETJEMAN

And is it true,
This most tremendous tale of all,
Seen in a stained-glass window's hue,
A Baby in an ox's stall?
The Maker of the stars and sea
Become a Child on earth for me?

And is it true? For if it is,
No loving fingers tying strings
Around those tissued fripperies,
The sweet and silly Christmas things,
Bath salts and inexpensive scent
And hideous tie so kindly meant,

No love that in a family dwells,
No carolling in frosty air,
Nor all the steeple-shaking bells
Can with this single Truth compare –
That God was man in Palestine
And lives today in Bread and Wine.