



St. Jude's Episcopal Church, Northeast Harbor, Maine, Philip S. Steel, Artist

Parish of St. Mary and St. Jude The Town of Mt. Desert, Maine News and Events—December 2011

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Watercolor of St. Jude's Church by Phil Steel of Salty Dog Gallery, Southwest Harbor

Christmas Blessings to All Near and Far!



Christmas Worship

**Christmas Eve, 4 pm—Family service with Pageant
and Holy Communion**



Christmas Day—10 am Holy Eucharist with Carols

**Feast of The Holy Name (January 1)—
9 am Holy Eucharist**

O Come let us Adore Him!

Parish Hall packed for Caroling, Greening, Potluck

Girl Scouts and their parents and siblings joined us for caroling, potluck and a mitten tree on January 11 and packed the parish hall with joyful noise and excitement of the coming of Christmas. Beth Renault organized the caroling. Izaak Giberson and Peter Vaux led the folks in the chapel, hanging live wreaths and garlands. The Episcopal Church Women received the food and set the tables, organized the buffet and provided mittens and socks for all the children. It was a joy-filled community event!



Dear Friends in Christ,

I own a reproduction of a Renaissance fresco that tells the story of the birth of Jesus. In the foreground of the right corner, the largest figures in the picture are Mary, Joseph, the child Jesus who sits on Mary's knee, facing outward. To the right are three kings who have come to see him. One of the kings is kneeling and bowing and Jesus has his hand on the man's head in a gesture of blessing. And behind them are throngs of people winding their way through the street approaching the house (or cave). The people are of all sorts, straining forward to get a glimpse of this child.

I was reminded of this fresco last Friday night when I walked down Main street to join the gathering throngs at the Northeast Harbor Festival. George and I headed straight for the crèche and Gingerbread House display. Through the generosity of the Redfield Gallery we were able to set up our nativity scenes and the gingerbread houses made by our Sunday School children indoors in the adjacent gallery to Redfield (used by the bronze sculptures in the summer). The room was well-suited for our purpose and the lights showed the display well from the streets. While I was standing there a young member of our parish walked in with several friends in tow to show them the gingerbread houses. The eager faces approached and gave their approval and then moved on to gaze at the variety of crèche scenes. Awed faces pointed and discussed and asked questions.



Outside the excitement was building as folks circulated past the bonfire into the museum for some "chowdah" and fellowship. Soon the fire engine was proceeding down the street with Santa Claus on board. It was a melee of activity. Not long afterwards, folks gathered to sing carols (led by our own Peter Vaux). Many continued to gather and the crèche display was crowded. "This", I thought, "is what it must have been like in Bethlehem". There was a sense of excitement and greetings in the air and an anticipation that something wonderful is happening—even for those who have no idea what that is or why it might be important.

The mix of sacred and secular at Christmas has been with us from the beginning of this great festival. And it makes sense! The biblical story tells us that Jesus came in the midst of a great social political event and began a transformation in humanity that continues to this day. It is a transformation for all people. Those of us who profess faith in Christ carry that faith on behalf of humanity. God promises that all will be fulfilled, that peace will come, that blessing will prevail.

In the midst of wherever you may be this wonderful season may you know the blessing of Christ that even now is working its way in your life. In the midst of melee of Christmas, hear the deep call of peace on earth and share God's good will with all.

Christmas Blessings to you and yours!

Patricia+

