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E-Notices November 25, 2008

On Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, November 27th, there will be a 10 am Mass, followed by our traditional Thanksgiving Shared Dinner in the Parish Hall. Please bring a dish of your choice to share.

**This Sunday at Christ Church, November 30th
1st Sunday in Advent**

Vigil Mass Saturday at 5:00pm

*Come join us! Share in worship, renewal, fellowship and song.
Music by Jim Geffert and friends*

8:00 am the Holy Eucharist

**9:15 am Christian Education for Adults
and Youth Sunday School**

10:30 am the Parish Eucharist

Under separate cover, we will be sending out pledge statements on Wednesday, November 26th via USPS.

Thanksgiving 2008

My dear Sisters and Brothers,

Thanksgiving is a holiday that unites. I love Thanksgiving because we all celebrate this day. On Thanksgiving, we are not Christian, Jew, Muslim or non-believers, black or white, rich or poor, gay or straight, legal or illegal. We pause on this day to remember those who sacrifices allow us to be one and enjoy our citizenship, with grateful hearts.

I have been sick with a common cold since Sunday and I am even thankful for that gift. It has allowed me to break out of my frantic pace and take stock. It is amazing how the old polemic politic is breaking down. Former political opponents and parties are working together to bring solutions to these economic times. Our President and President-elect teams are working together to find solutions. Economist and academics of all types are actually uniting to serve the common good of our nation and the world. There is an atmosphere of expectancy and hope for our common future. To use biblical terms, "the lion and the sheep are lying down with each other." This is what this nation and world needed. ***We are at the Advent of a turnaround.***

One thing that I discovered in my down time was an address that my former bishop gave a couple weeks ago. Bishop Alexander wrote:

Let me remind us all that no matter how difficult it gets before the turnaround is sure, most of us are still among the most advantaged people on earth. It hurts when I look at my meager investments. I know that there are those among us who already live on tight budgets, fixed incomes, and who face other downturn-related problems. I do not desire to minimize the pain and agony that all of us presently experience. I feel it and I know you feel it. But even the poorest among us are rich by the standards of most of God's world; even with all we have lost in recent weeks we continue to enjoy so much more than most of God's children.

Times such as these, as difficult as they are, are brimming with possibility. Perhaps we are being called to consider a new way of living, to discover our richness in something other than money, and to define ourselves by the depth of our relationships rather than by the things that we possess. One of those things that I learned when I was a young priest has served me well through the years and I believe it more profoundly today than ever: If you give the faithful people of God half a chance, they will come through every time! I believe that with every fiber of my being.

Thanksgiving 2008 is our time to give each other and ourselves an half a chance...to discover and re-discover the gracious love of God and to act for the common good. I am excited that in Phoenix, Arizona on Thursday it will be the first time since August that the entire Belmore family will be together. Emails, phone calls, Skype are great but being together will be wonderful. At the same time, I am thankful that food is being prepared in our parish hall for those who wish to gather with their parish family on Thanksgiving Day.

Christ the King Sunday was grand! We had wonderful worship, a great sermon, magnificent music and grand hospitality. The church was full. I was sad by some comments that the courtyard display was too political. Most of what the church does is political. We do not support political candidates or parties but our witness is political.

For example:

- Giving out tons of food each week at no cost and not earned is political
- To provide cheap clothing and household goods in our thrift shop where no one earns a salary competing with the market place is political.
- To post the Colors of the Nation and sing the National Anthem is a political statement on Veteran's Day Sunday.
- To bless relationships that are not marriages in the laws of Nevada is a political act.
- Ordaining women as deacons and priests was political.
- To respect the dignity of every person who comes to our doors is political.

This list could go on and on. I dare need to remind us that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments is the most political book on the shelf of your home or in our libraries. For it is God's story of bring all from their bondage into a land of promise.

Sometimes we all need to check our visceral responses when confronted with situations. Sometimes our 'gut response' is often the wrong one. If had followed my gut and not Jesus, I would be a racist, sexist, homophobic man.

Finally, let me say what a joy it is to serve as the rector of this great parish. I still have to pinch myself some days to make sure that the joy and the delight I feel in serving among you is not a dream. Where I have served you well, I am grateful to you for the privilege. Where I have failed or embarrassed you, I ask for your forgiveness. In all things and in all times, and particularly at this time of Thanksgiving, let us press forward toward that new creation that God has promised us in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Remember, "If anyone is in Christ they are a new creation; the old has passed away, behold the new has come. All of this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation." (II Corinthians 5:17-18)

Faithfully your servant in Christ
Kent Belmore, Jr.

ANNUAL ECW CHRISTMAS PARTY AT THE GRAHAM'S SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2008

From 6 pm to 9pm. Tickets on sale in the courtyard this Sunday.
\$15.00 each. Elana and Ben open their home for this yearly event;
Great food, music and fellowship.