

Adventurer

OF THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF THE ADVENT • BIRMINGHAM, AL

Advent



Vol. 49, No. 42

First Sunday of Advent

Week of November 30, 2025



News & Events

Christ in the Christmas Crunch Is December 4

Advent women and their guests are invited to the annual Christ in the Christmas Crunch on Thursday, December 4, 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. in Clingman Commons. Come for fellowship, lunch, Scripture meditations, and song, plus the Ministry Market. Register through your Realm account or at AdventBirmingham.org/Women. See page 2 for more information.

PZ to Offer "Twilight Zone" Series December 4 and 11

Dean Emeritus Paul Zahl will present a two-part series, *Christmas Hope from The Twilight Zone*, on consecutive Thursdays, December 4 and 11, 7:00 p.m. at Cranmer House. Over the two evenings, PZ will show the two episodes he considers the best of series creator Rod Serling's stories set during the Christmas season. See page 2 for details.

20s & 30s Christmas Party December 4

Adventers in their 20s and 30s and friends will gather for a Christmas Party on Thursday, December 4, 6:00-8:00 p.m. at the home of Carolyn and Stephen Greene. See page 2 for more information.



A Word from the Dean

"I'm writing this in part to tell you that if you ever wonder what you've done in your life, and everyone does wonder sooner or later, you have been God's grace to me, a miracle, something more than a miracle. You may not remember me very well at all, and it may seem to you to be no great thing to have been the good child of an old man in a shabby little town you will no doubt leave behind. If only I had the words to tell you."

Above are the words written by John Ames to his young son in Marilynne Robinson's novel *Gilead*, words Ames will seal and leave behind for his son to read at a later time. I believe he's right, we all wonder, sooner or later, what we have done with our life, what is our life worth, what are we worth? A friend recently joked, at the outset of a big event, that it would be another opportunity for a referendum on his worth.

What is the appropriate measurement of our worth? Who do we trust to calculate it?

At the outset, the words from the Prayer of Humble Access can land harshly upon our ears – fair! "We are not worthy to gather up the crumbs under thy table...." There it is, the question of worthiness.

One might argue that there is an appropriate and freeing penitential component to the prayer – a warning against presumption, and a word of honesty that leads to freedom, an invitation to the mercy of God. I believe that to be true, repentance is a gift. More than that, the prayer is more about God than us – the Father (and the Son and Holy Spirit) who looks upon us not as a frustration, but a gift.

God speaks a living word to our worth and its measurement, Jesus. How is it calculated and measured? In our output? How good a child we have been? No, it is calculated in the cross, in his blood, miraculously given in love that we might dwell in him, and he in us. We are remembered and loved.

- Craig

See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are.

- 1 John 3:10

This Sunday:

November 30, 2025

7:30 a.m. Holy Communion

Preacher: Dean Smalley

9:00 a.m. Holy Communion

In the Nave. Preacher: Dean Smalley

9:00 a.m. Holy Communion

In the Refectory. Preacher: Canon Pinter

11:00 a.m. Holy Communion

Preacher: Canon Pinter

We will livestream the 9:00 a.m. Nave service and the 11:00 a.m. service.

Visit AdventBirmingham.org/Live, Facebook Live, or YouTube to access our stream.

Adult Education (10:15-10:50 a.m.):

The Dean's Class (Refectory) – *The Apostle to the Mediterranean: The Heart of Paul's Theology and the God of the Ungodly* – Gil Kracke

Advent Themes (Chapter Room) – *Hello Darkness, My Old Friend* – Jay Gardner

Christmas Day AD 390: Caesar Augustus Knelt Before the Manger (Living Room) – Wilson Hunter

20s and 30s Class (Lower School Library) – *Advent at the Advent: This Season Has a Purpose (But You Don't Have to Overdo It)* – Will Fagan

Children's & Youth Education:

Our 3s and 4s classes meet at 9:00 a.m. Kindergarten through 3rd grade start the 9:00 service in church before leaving during the children's dismissal for Children's Church. 4th grade through 6th grade and Jr. and Sr. High youth have classes between the 9:00 and 11:00 services. See Sunday's worship bulletin for locations. The Nursery opens for our Infants, Toddlers, and 2s classes at 8:45 a.m. The Nursery is open for ages 6 weeks-5 years during the 11:00 service.



GET INVOLVED! SEE WHAT'S GOING ON!



spiritual growth & fellowship

Women's Ministry



Last Call for Christ in the Christmas Crunch

If you haven't already done so, please register now for Christ in the Christmas Crunch, happening Thursday, December 4, 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Clingman Commons.

Shop for great gift ideas from a variety of great ministries and fair-trade organizations. Partner with Oak Tree Ministries in their Christmas Village: MyRegistry.com/GiftList/OakTreeMinistries.

Enjoy Christmas cheer and a delicious lunch. Listen or sing along to music by Lowana Wallace. Let readings from Holy Scripture and reflections from Frederick Buechner's *The Magnificent Defeat* remind you of the wonder of the Incarnation.

Register soon through your Realm account or at AdventBirmingham.org/Women.

Women's Advent Quiet Day with Mary Zahl December 6

*Come, thou long expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.*

The Women's Ministry will host an Advent Quiet Day led by Mary Zahl on Saturday morning, December 6, from 9:00 a.m. to noon at the church.

Bring your Bible, pen, and paper. We will be spending time in Scripture, in prayer, and in silence, guided by Mary. This is an opportunity to prepare your heart and mind to receive Jesus afresh this Advent. Register through your Realm account or at AdventBirmingham.org/Women.

*By thine own eternal spirit
rule in all our hearts alone.*

20s & 30s Ministry

Christmas Party Is December 4

Adventers in their 20s and 30s and friends are invited to our Christmas Party on the evening of Thursday, December 4, 6:00-8:00 p.m. at the home of Carolyn and Stephen Greene (101 Pine Crest Road, 35223). We'll enjoy dinner, Christmas music by Lowana Wallace, and festive cheer to kick off the Advent and Christmas season. Sign up to attend through your Realm account or at AdventBirmingham.org/20s30s. Contact Will Fagan (Fagan@CathedralAdvent.com) for details.

Christmas Hope from The Twilight Zone

PZ to Present Two-Part Series December 4 and 11

Dean Emeritus Paul Zahl wrote the following about his upcoming series "Christmas Hope from The Twilight Zone."

Rod Serling (right) was born on December 25, 1924. Although he came from a secular Jewish background in upstate New York, he felt "imprinted" – in a good way – by his date of birth. He returned often – I mean, like 12 times – to a Christmas setting for his TV scripts throughout a long career.

His two best of these, in my opinion, are "The Changing of the Guard" (1962), starring Donald Pleasance, and "The Messiah on Mott Street" (1969), starring Edward G. Robinson. The first was written for the original *Twilight Zone*; the second, for his later series *Night Gallery*.

On two consecutive Thursday evenings during the season of Advent, December 4 and 11, 7:00 p.m. at Cranmer House in Homewood (2814 Linden Avenue, 35209), PZ is going to show each of these episodes, starting with "The Changing of the Guard."

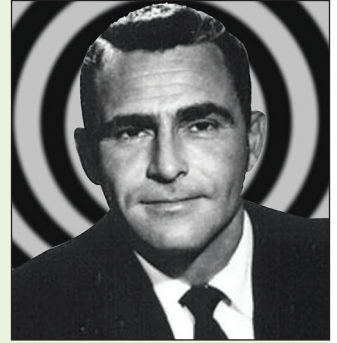
Each is a poignant supernatural masterpiece.

Maybe you know them already, maybe they're new to you. But each carries the Christmas Hope like a hidden jewel box.

Oh, and the second, "The Messiah on Mott Street," is IMO the zenith of Jewish-Christian assimilation in mainstream network history. There's been nothing like it before or since.

Please join me if you can on either or both of those nights. Each program will start at 7:00 and finish a little after 8:00.

LUV, PZ



Men's Ministry



Above: Seventy-five men gathered on November 12 for a vibrant lunch and to hear Dean Emeritus Paul Zahl give a talk entitled, *How to Be a Good Father to a Difficult Child – of Any Age!* You can hear a recording of the talk at AdventBirmingham.org/Audio.

For more information our Men's Ministry, please contact Canon Young (Adam@CathedralAdvent.com, 205-226-3519).



worship

Lighting the Advent Wreath

This Sunday, November 30, the Wright and Gamble family, Drew and Rita Wright, Luke (1st grade), Lily (1st grade), and Isaac Gamble (Kindergarten), will lead the lighting of the first candle on our Nave Advent wreath at the beginning of the 9:00 a.m. service.

In the Refectory service, the Wilson family, Clay and Meg, Carter (11th grade), Lucy (9th grade), and Jane (5th grade), will lead the lighting of the first candle on our Advent wreath at 9:00 a.m.

Service of Advent Lessons and Carols

Seasonal Services Set for December 7

Each year the Cathedral Choir prepares music for our Advent Lessons and Carols services, which will take place on the Second Sunday of Advent, December 7, at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. in the Nave. These services include prayers, lessons, and carol-anthems that celebrate the Advent season, as we prepare our hearts for the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

We hope you will join us for these services, and if you like the music you hear, we encourage you to purchase the choir's recording, *A Service of Advent Lessons and Carols*, available on CD in the Advent Bookstore.

Lectionary

Sunday, November 30:

Psalm 122

Isaiah 2:1-5

Romans 13:11-14

Matthew 24:36-44



spiritual growth & fellowship

Ageless Adventers

Third Wednesday Luncheon Is Early in December

Ageless Adventers will gather for a Third Wednesday luncheon on Wednesday, December 10 (the *second* Wednesday of the month, a week earlier than usual), noon at Cranmer House (2814 Linden Avenue, 35209). Barbara Partridge will cook, and Dean Craig Smalley will speak.

Whether you are still active, newly retired, or have been enjoying flexibility for decades, you are welcome! So that we have an accurate count for lunch, please RSVP by Friday, December 5, to Robin Turner (205-226-3500, Robin@CathedralAdvent.com).



serving & outreach

Lenten Lunches

Lunch Ticket Presale Begins this Sunday

Presales of Lenten Lunch tickets will start this Sunday, November 30. Tickets will be available in Clingman Commons between the 7:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. services as well as the 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. services each Sunday through December 21. Tickets make great stocking-stuffers.

Behind the Scenes: Debby Tanner

Each weekday of Lenten Lunches is anchored by a delicious hot entrée. Every day, however, is complemented with our ever-famous pimento cheese. Debby Tanner (*right*) has been the driving force for this staple for more than 30 years. Whether it's a pimento cheese sandwich or a scoop of pimento cheese as part of the trio salad plate, your craving for this delicious treat will be satisfied. When you see Debby please give her a big thank you for her continued commitment to the Lenten Lunches ministry.



Local Outreach



Toy Drive to Support Oak Tree Ministries

We have the joy and opportunity to support the work of Oak Tree Ministries in Gate City by holding a toy drive the first two weeks of December. Christmas in the Village supplies new toys for parents and grandparents of children in Gate City to shop at 90-percent off retail price. The proceeds contribute to the summer ministry programming at Oak Tree. There will be a table in Clingman Commons on Sundays, December 7 and 14, to drop off toy donations. The Women's Ministry is also collecting toys for the Village at Christ in the Christmas Crunch on Thursday, December 4.

There are also opportunities for volunteers to serve by pricing and setting up the store (*photo above*) on Saturday, December 13, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., and Sunday, December 14, 2:00-5:00 p.m.

Visit AdventBirmingham.org/Mission to see a complete wish list, volunteer sign-up, and ways to donate treats to the cause.

diocesan staff

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Glenda S. Curry, Bishop of Alabama

advent staff

The Very Rev. R. Craig Smalley, Dean and Rector

The Rev. Canon Thomas P. Murray, Vice Dean

The Rev. Canon James "Jay" W. Gardner, III, Canon Pastor

The Rt. Rev. Brian Prior, Assisting Bishop of Alabama

The Rev. Canon Dr. Dean L. Pinter, Canon Theologian

The Rev. Canon Adam A. Young, Canon Missioner

The Rev. William J. Fagan, Curate

The Very Rev. Dr. Paul F.M. Zahl, Dean Emeritus

transitions:

Births: Miriam Eliana Nay, daughter of Mary Ellen and Andrew, on November 7; Eleanor Reagan Bush, daughter of Peyton and Eric, on November 10; Lillian Reese Lucas, daughter of Whitney and Michael, on November 11

Baptism: Katie Grace Montgomery, daughter of Eleanor Reaves and Tom Montgomery, on November 16

Marriage: Alice Elisabeth Bradford and Benjamin Outland, on November 15

Intercessory Prayer Available at Advent

House: Intercessory prayer is on-going through the Advent House Prayer Ministry. To schedule a prayer session at Advent House (2317 Arlington Avenue South, 35205), contact Kathy Logue (205-410-4622, Kathy@CathedralAdvent.com).



Cathedral Church of the Advent
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calendar:

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Nov 30 Regular worship schedule	Dec 1	2	3 YouthServe - 4:00 p.m.	4 Christ in the Christ- mas Crunch - Cling- man - 11:00 a.m. 20s & 30s Christ- mas Party - 6:00 p.m. PZ's <i>Twilight Zone</i> - Cranmer House - 7:00 p.m.	5	6 Women's Quiet Day - Advent - 9:00 a.m.
Dec 7 Regular worship schedule Advent Service of Lessons and Carols - 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. - Nave	8	9	10 Ageless Adventers Third Wednesday - Cranmer House - noon	11 PZ's <i>Twilight Zone</i> - Cranmer House - 7:00 p.m.	12 Caregiver Support Lunch - Cranmer House - noon	13

Monday-Friday: AA – Coe Conference Room, noon

Pastoral Notice: If you are going into the hospital, have need of prayer or counsel, or have a family member unable to attend church, please call the Pastoral Care Office at 205-226-3500.