

Link IV

News for and about Christian education/formation—linking Episcopal Christian Educators and churches at the local, diocesan, provincial, and National levels



St. Nicholas Ideas

Looking for something new? Try a St. Nicholas celebration. Go to the St. Nicholas Center at <http://www.stnicholascenter.org> for ideas and crafts. You can also go to the St. Nicholas Society at <http://www.stnicholassociety.com/>

St. Lucia Day

Lucia Day ' aka Saint Lucy's Day ' on December 13 ranks among the most important days on the Swedish calendar. It honors a young Christian girl, martyred in ancient Rome, who is always portrayed with her head encircled by a halo of lights. Though it's not officially part of Advent, for many Swedes Lucia Day forms the gateway to the Christmas season.

Web sites of interest:

http://www.ehow.com/how_7719_celebrate-st-lucia.html

http://www.knowledgehound.com/topics/saints_days.htm#lucia

http://rosylittlethings.typepad.com/posie_gets_cozy/2006/12/santa_lucia_doll.html
(This is for a Saint Lucia doll)



Christmas on the River

This program provides Christmas goodies to the men and women who work on the inland waterways during Christmas -- boats on the Mississippi don't stop no matter the day. In the past a small gift, homemade cookies and Christmas cards made by children were given to each crew member.

This year the coordinators have decided not to try to get lots and lots of cookies. Rather they really need the cards the children/youth make and then the following items: individual packets of hot chocolate, chap stick, individual candy - Halloween candy is good!, microwave popcorn, small hand lotion, puzzle books of any sort, chewing gum, breath mints, etc. (And they will still take cookies)

The Chaplain, Pam Stephens, is based in Houston and they will be packing boxes there in mid-November. Then she travels to New Orleans and we pack here the first weekend of December. This timing really doesn't work too well with our church calendar, but I don't suppose it hurts to work on advent projects early.

In every correspondence the Ministry on the River folks (they run Christmas on the River) send, they stress the importance of the Christmas cards that the children make. If you can collect items, that's great! If you can make cards and send them, that's super!! If you can do both, you get a gold star!!!

If you do decide to collect any items, you can pick just one or two and be the chap stick and hand lotion church or cast your net wide and see what you get. To get items to us: for anyone in the Gulf area, items can be shipped to us so that they have arrived before our packing day on November 15. The address is: Pam Stephens, Seamen's Church Institute, 9650 High Level Road, Houston, TX 77029.

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Stewardship—The Episcopal Church web site has lots of helpful information regarding stewardship. <http://www.ecusa.anglican.org/stewardship.htm>

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March 2009**

Just a Reminder

The Province does not make endorsements or recommendations of any of the materials mentioned in this newsletter. It is our responsibility to provide you with information on materials available, and for you as a parish to determine if they fit the needs of your situation.

Province IV to Offer One Day Training Event



**NUTS AND BOLTS:
A CHRISTIAN
FORMATION
TOOL BOX**

The Provincial Board will offer a one-day training at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Birmingham, AL on January 10, 2009 from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. This is in conjunction with the Diocese of Alabama's teacher training event. This is a hands-on workshop and you will come away with ideas to use in your classes on Sunday.

You may register by contacting:
Sarah Sartain
Diocese of Alabama
(205) 715-2060

**Radical abundance: a theology of sustainability
January 21-23, 2009**

Trinity Institute, in partnership with host-site The Center for Formation & Mission of The Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi, present a conference webcast "**Radical abundance: a theology of sustainability.**" On January 21-23, 2009, we will explore sustainability through the lens of liberation theology, which views Jesus not only as a redeemer but also liberator of the oppressed. Featured speakers include Majora Carder, Timothy J. Gorringer, David C. Korten, Nestor O. Miguez, and Sister Miriam Theresa MacGillis. Through keynote speeches and panel and small group discussions, this three-day conference will consider radical ideas about abundance, sustainability, and well-being. For registration information, please visit our website at www.dioms.org, News and Events, Diocesan Events. You may also contact The Rev. Debo Dykes at debo@dioms.org or debo@dioms.org

The annual **NAECED** (National Association of Episcopal Christian Education Directors) Tapestry Conference hosted by St. Mark's Episcopal Church in San Antonio, Texas will be **February 4 – 6, 2009**. The Tapestry Workshop model is designed to promote the balance of professional development and spiritual enrichment. Workshops feature engaging speakers who understand the challenges and passion of Christian Educators. Visit the NAECED.org website to become a member of NAECED and to find out more about the conference including hotel information and about one of the best resources in the Episcopal Church – the NAECED listserv. If you would like more information about NAECED, contact Debbi Rodahaffer at drodahaf@stmatk-ky.org.

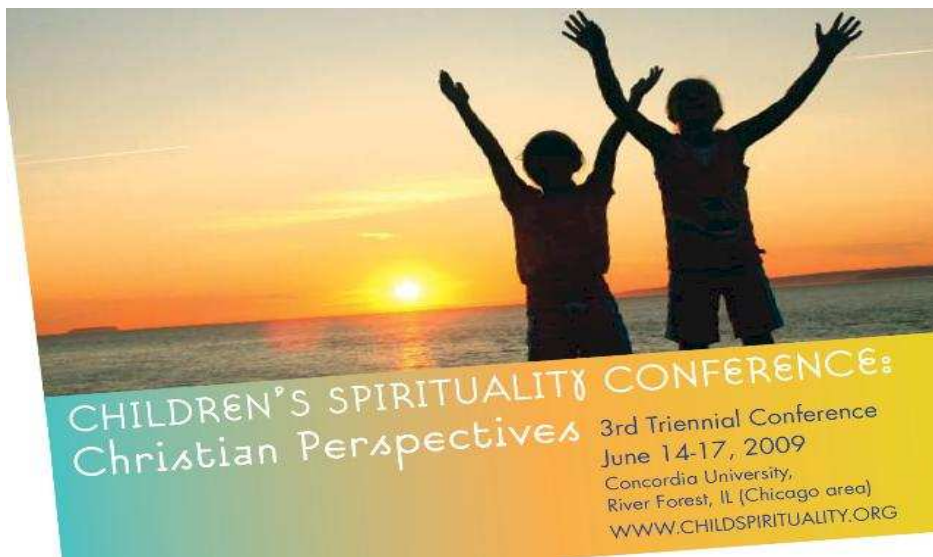


Kanuga Conference Center

June 14—19, 2009

**Making Disciples:
Proclaiming the Word**

A Week of Lifelong Learning for those who lead Christian education programs or simply want to nurture their family's faith. Attend one or both segments: Adult Faith Formation, June 14-17, and Children's Faith Formation, June 16-19. Keynoter: Dr. Fredrica Harris Thompsett, professor of historical theology, Episcopal Divinity School. Leadership certification will be offered for Education for Ministry (EFM), Disciples of Christ in Community (DOCC), Transforming Literature of the Bible, Godly Play and Journey to Adulthood.



**CHILDREN'S SPIRITUALITY CONFERENCE:
Christian Perspectives** 3rd Triennial Conference
June 14-17, 2009
Concordia University,
River Forest, IL (Chicago area)
WWW.CHILDSPIRITUALITY.ORG

Do You Know About Treasure Bear?

Treasure Bear resides in the Office of Children's Ministries and Christian Education, The Episcopal Church Center, 815 Second Avenue, New York NY 10017. Treasure Bear has had many adventures since 1992 and received his name, TREASURE in 1993. He was named after a group of his friends were discussing his travels and began reading and reflecting on Matthew 6:19-22, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Treasure's friends knew that he needed to be named for his ministry, that ministry he considers a "treasure." His heart is living the Gospel with children in all different parts of the world, Brazil, Indonesia, Cuba, Mexico, Africa, and he will visit Vietnam next in 2002! His miraculous mission experiences have provided Treasure's magazine, Treasure Magazine, with images, stories, songs, food, and glimpses into the history of many different countries. Treasure even has his own web location.

Through Treasure Magazine, Treasure Bear extends the invitation for children to take part in the Children's Mission Offering, so that children everywhere are considered CSMO Kids. Treasure Bear has also presented special magazines such as Kids for Peace I and II. You can find Treasure Bear at: http://www.ecusa.anglican.org/44385_48909_ENG_HTML.htm?menupage=47650.

THE MAGI OR WISEMEN

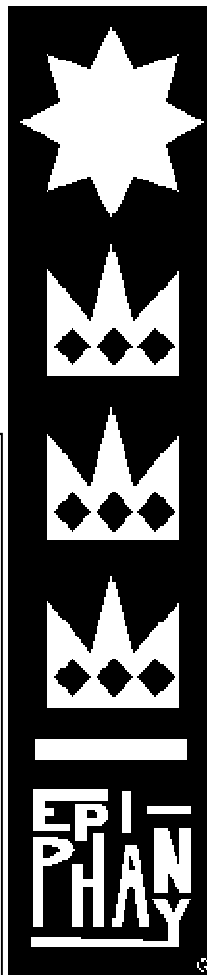
In ancient Iran--also known as Persia--a priest was called a "magus." The plural is "magi". The word "magic" comes from the same root. Magi were experts in astronomy. This was useful in determining the calendar and the end of winter and the spring planting season. They believed that stars and other celestial objects actually influenced, rather than merely coincided with, earthly events. One, or possibly a series of omens, led them to believe that a royal prince had been born in Israel. They were sent as ambassadors to provide tribute to the newborn. The bible does not say how many Magi visited. It is assumed that there were three because of the number of gifts.

EPIPHANY HOME BLESSING

The Holy Family welcomed the Magi on Epiphany. There is a beautiful tradition that has been inspired by this event. Take some chalk and either have it blessed by your pastor or say your own blessing over it with your family. Ask God to welcome strangers to your home during the coming year. Finally write these numbers and letters over the front door of your home:

20 + C + M + B + the last digits of the current year.

The letters represent the traditional names of the Wise Men--Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar.



Epiphany Craft Ideas

- 1) how about can candles? freeze water in a small can and when frozen use a hammer and nail to punch a star or crown design into the can. when the ice melts put a small tea candle in the can.
- 2) star streamers - 2 construction paper stars, crepe paper streamers, a dowel rod, glue, tape or stapler to fasten together. Put a streamer or two on each point of the star, glue two stars together leaving a small opening at the bottom and put the dowel into the opening. Then fasten star to the dowel.
- 3) Make sugar star cookies with a hole in the top before baking. Decorate and put yarn/ribbon in the hole and hang.
- 4) Cut an apple in half either cross ways or stem to stem. You will see a star. Fill small bowls with tempera paint and press apple halves into paint and then press firmly onto paper or fabric.
- 5) glitter stars - on wax paper outline a star with a thin line of white craft glue. Sprinkle glitter on the glue - cover completely. Shake off excess glitter. The problem with this project is that it takes time for the glue to completely dry but then you carefully peel the wax paper off and you can hang your star.

Christmas on the River You still can send things after that, which Pam can take to New Orleans for December 5 weekend packing as well. So the 'drop dead date' is to arrive to her is Dec 3rd.

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Book Resources

Eat This Book—Book and study guide by Peterson/Santucci

Back to the Well—Frances Taylor Gench

Always Open—by Richard Giles— Good for adult confirmation (before and after)



Advent Web Site: http://www.catholicmom.com/advent_kids.htm

Christmas Site: <http://www.sgmlifewords.com/christmas/index.html>

A.W.E: Children's Ministries—in the Episcopal Diocese of Bethlehem presents Advent to Epiphany These are materials for home study and worship.

<http://www.diobethkids.org/PDF/FFHAdventToEpiphany07.pdf>

Epiphany web site: <http://www.domestic-church.com/CONTENT.DCC/pages.dir/fridge.htm>



Christmas on the River—For folks who are located closer to the upper Mississippi River, and northern areas, or anywhere else in the US, they can send items to: Ann Mills, Coordinator of Special Projects, Seamen's Church Institute, 111 Kentucky Ave, Paducah, KY 42003

If folks you email are not sure which area they should send things to, or if they have any questions at all, they can call Ann or Pam at 800-708-1998 (the Ministry On the River number). And if folks feel inclined to donate to the Gulf area, perhaps because they realize how we have been affected by Gustav and Ike this year, they are welcome to send to the Houston address.