

On the mind of the Rev. Nathaniel Jung-Chul Lee...

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd... (Matthew 9.36)

It was a strange thing this past Wednesday to look up at them – the five of them. A year after it was first announced that there would be an election for the next Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of New York, here we were – a few hundred clergy and lay people – scattering the pews of St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church in Harlem, hearing the candidates speak for the first time.

As I watched each of them address the various questions posed by the audience, I was struck by a strange thought – one of these people will soon be my pastor. As the chief pastor of the Diocese, bishops serve as priest to the clergy. As long as I’ve been a priest, I’ve never been a part of choosing my pastor before. And as I thought about the various bishops I’ve served under – and knowing just how much influence they have on all that serve under their care – a thought came to me with some urgency: *I really hope we get this right.*

Each of the candidates who are standing for bishop are exceptional priests, and each brings different gifts to the table. Some are caring pastors. Some are gifted teachers. Some are inspiring leaders. Some are prophetic activists. Some are creative innovators. Some are incisive administrators. And in their various forms, each of those gifts were on display Wednesday night.

The Diocese of New York is a large and complex system, so it’d be fair to ask which particular combination of gifts are best suited for this time and place. And I think all of us should be willing to acknowledge that none of us knows the answer with certainty.

But there are two things I can say with absolute confidence. First, as we commemorate this very Christ the King Sunday, Christ alone is Lord and king – he is “the king of kings, and the Lord of Lords.” (Rev. 17.14). All “thrones and powers and rulers and authorities...have been created through him and for him” (Col. 1.16). Which is why we say that he – and not any priest or bishop – is, in the last analysis, the “head of the body; the church” (Col. 1.18). Perhaps it sounds a bit pious – perhaps even a bit mawkish – but I take great comfort in that truth. Whatever else may come, Christ still sits on the throne. And if we build our house – build this church – on that rock (Cf. Mt. 7.24-27), he will not let our foot be moved.

The second thing I know with absolute confidence is this: *we should pray.* Jesus rarely, apart from the Lord’s prayer, tells his disciples what to pray for. But in Matthew 9, after seeing some crowds who were “like sheep without a shepherd,” Jesus does just that. He turns to his disciples, names a problem and then tells them to “ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

In just over two weeks’ time, one of these five people will be our “bishop-elect.” (Learn about each one at bishopsearch.diocesenyc.org/candidates.) So over the next two weeks, I’m going to ask that we pray as Jesus instructed his disciples. Let us all pray together that the Lord of the harvest will send his laborer in to *this* harvest.

TODAY AFTER CHURCH!

Please join us for Coffee Hour in the Assembly Hall following the 11:00 a.m. service. The Assembly Hall can be accessed through the door next to the pulpit. If you need the elevator, one of our sextons will escort you through the Parish House.

12:30 to 2:00 p.m. Vestry meets in the Parish Dining Room.

4:30 to 6:00 p.m. Discernment Small Group Gathering on Zoom to discuss restoration of the organ. To sign up for this – or another one of our Small Group Gatherings listed below – find Florin Georgescu at Coffee Hour or email eminder@churchoftheincarnation.org. (Grab a copy of the Discernment Brochure in the Narthex for more information.)

- **Monday, November 21**, 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. at the home of Monica Culoso (E. 35th Street)

- **Sunday, December 4**, 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. on Zoom

ADVENT BIBLE STUDY

Beginning **November 27**, our Sunday morning Bible study, held from **10:00 to 10:30 a.m.** in the Parish House, will take four weeks to examine how the Gospels approach the nativity story. We will spend a week on each of the three Gospel accounts of Jesus' birth – found in Matthew, Luke, and John – before spending a final week integrating what we've learned with the rest of the New Testament, and Christian history, into a reflection on what importance the incarnation has for us today.

ADVENT SERMON TALKBACKS

During the Sundays of Advent, we'll be bringing back the "Sermon Talkbacks" that were so popular this past Lent! Talkbacks will take place in the Assembly Hall from **12:30 to 1:15 p.m. on November 27, December 4, and December 18**. Grab your coffee and a folding chair for a roundtable discussion with the preacher about the sermon. This will be a time when you can ask questions, give feedback, and help us all to deepen the conversation that the sermon has only just begun.

20s/30s ST. NICK'S PARTY

The biggest party of the year for 20s/30s in the Episcopal Diocese of New York (EDNY) is the annual EDNY "St. Nick's Party." This year, the celebration will take place on the evening of **Saturday, December 3** (start time TBA). The party will be held at Trinity Church Wall Street's version of a "parish house" – Trinity Commons, located at 79 Trinity Place. It's sure to be a festive night, full of all that the season holds. Contact the Rev. Dr. Nate Lee at nlee@churchoftheincarnation.org to RSVP, and he'll keep you posted on details as they come out.

COMMITTED TO CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH

Parishioners are encouraged to look for ways, however modest or ambitious, to offer your time and talents as we seek to share the love of Jesus Christ with one another and the world. We welcome volunteers on Sunday mornings (e.g., ushering, lay reading, altar guild, hospitality at Coffee Hour) as well as help with mission and outreach initiatives and one-off events – including the Christmas Fair! (See enclosed flyer.) Contact the Rev. Adrian Dannhauser at adannhauser@churchoftheincarnation.org to deepen your involvement in service at Incarnation.

EVERY WEEK AT INCARNATION

Sunday Bible Study: Bible Study is held in the Parish House (and via Zoom) from 10:00 to 10:30 a.m.

Sunday School for Children: During the 11:00 a.m. service, children ages 3 to 12 depart the service with their teachers for Sunday School in the Parish House. (All teachers have been vaccinated.) Nursery care is provided in the Parish House from 10:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.

Wednesday Holy Eucharist: Join us each Wednesday at 12:15 p.m. for this Rite I spoken service of Holy Eucharist, which includes a brief homily, organ music, and healing prayer with holy oil.

Thursday Candlelight Communion: Join us each Thursday at 6:15 p.m. for Candlelight Communion, a service of Holy Eucharist that incorporates chant and silence as well as elements of contemporary worship. This service is informal and contemplative, with music led by a Cantor and a brief reflection by one of the clergy. You can also stream this service at youtube.com/churchoftheincarnation. **PLEASE NOTE THERE WILL BE NO SERVICE OF CANDLELIGHT COMMUNION ON THANKSGIVING DAY.**

Daily Office: Services of Morning Prayer, Noonday Prayer and Compline are held via Zoom. To view the weekly schedule, go to churchoftheincarnation.org/worship.

To receive access information for offerings held via Zoom, join our email distribution list by filling out the yellow Connect Card found in your pew or signing up through our website.

THE CHRISTMAS FAIR RETURNS!

**Saturday, December 3
11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.**

We are excited to bring back Incarnation's Christmas Fair! The Christmas Fair dates back to 1942 and is one of Murray Hill's most anticipated events. The Fair includes a Silent Auction, a Christmas Boutique, a Café and Bake Sale, as well as the sale of lovely holiday gifts.

Contact Lenore Ritter if you can serve in the Café and/or donate baked goods.

Contact Monica Culoso to volunteer in any of the following capacities:

- **Donate or solicit an item for the Silent Auction.** Examples include gift certificates to local restaurants, tickets to shows and sporting events, pieces of silver, jewelry, and items for gift baskets (nice wines, fancy mustards, gourmet coffee, etc.).
- **Donate gently used housewares and other saleable items.** (Please note we cannot accept clothing.)
- **Give an hour or two of your time for set-up.** We'll be setting up in the Parish House the week prior to the Fair (November 27 to December 2).
- **Serve customers** and help with logistics during the Fair, 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- **Help with clean-up** immediately after the Fair, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Thanks for making Incarnation's 78th Christmas Fair a success!