On the mind of the Rev. Adrian Dannhauser…

Today is Christ the King Sunday, the last Sunday of the church year and a fitting time to celebrate Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords. Because we no longer bow to earthly kings, this day reminds me of the time in biblical history when there *were* no kings, at least not for the nation of Israel. In the first book of Samuel, YHWH tells the Israelites that *he* is their king and warns them against having an earthly ruler.

But the people were insistent. They believed that having a king made you a nation among nations. They wanted to be like everyone else. Specifically, they cried for "one who would go before us and do battle on our behalf" (I Sam. 8:20) – as if two kings would duke it out on the battlefield and leave the people safe and snug at home. I imagine that was part of David's appeal when he took on Goliath with nothing more than a slingshot and five smooth stones. Yes, please. Let's have *him* as king!

YHWH warned the Israelites that's not how it would go. Warned them their sons would be conscripted into battle and their daughters pressed into the king's service… in various ways. This, and much worse, proved to be true. Our rulers do not fight our battles for us. It always turns out to be the people that face enemy fire. And if King David was the best of the lot, even he was often not so good.

Yet for Christians, our king is like none the world offers up. He is a king who metes out forgiveness rather than vengeance and dies willingly on a cross. Perhaps the story of Christ the King reveals that God finally gave Israel the king they had longed for: the one who would go before them and fight on their behalf. The one who could defeat the greatest enemy of all – death – in a battle only God could win. God, through Christ, has won the war. Death, the enemy, is done. But as soldiers on the front lines know, even after a war is won and victory declared, there are still battles to be fought.

So it is for us who claim to be Jesus' disciples. We are called to follow in his footsteps, to go where Jesus went, to do what Jesus did, to become, as the people of God knit together across time and geography, the Body of Christ – loving, healing, teaching, suffering, dying to sin and being raised again. We can only do this by truly making Jesus Lord of our lives, the only source of our hope and our salvation. And that is what allows us to declare, with absolute sincerity, "Christ is King."

CARING FOR OUR PARISH

We had a great Commitment Sunday! Thanks to everyone who participated in worship and to those who have pledged to support Incarnation in 2027. As of today, **41 households have pledged a total of $184,822**. Will you join them? Commitment Cards are available at the back of the church near the double doors.

The heart of Christian giving is the yearly pledge to one's church. Each year members of Incarnation pledge how much we intend to give in the following year, so the Vestry can make a responsible budget to support the church's mission and related expenses. We are at our best and strongest when we all work together to minister to the needs of our parish and community. Thank you for your generosity and support of God's work at Incarnation as we walk in love.

SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY

Sunday, November 29, 10:00 to 10:40 a.m. Join us in the Parish Dining Room for the final session in an eight-part series on the biblical meaning of redemption: "Jesus-Style Redemption in Paul's Letters: Part 2."

FAMILY FRIDAY – ADVENT WREATHS & PAGEANT REHEARSAL

Friday, December 4, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Children and families are invited to the Assembly Hall for Advent Wreath crafts AND to rehearse for the Christmas Pageant! Alongside a pizza dinner, we'll also talk with Rev. Adrian about how the four weeks of Advent help us prepare for the coming of Jesus at Christmas.

20s/30s ST. NICK'S PARTY

Friday, December 4, 8:00 p.m. The biggest party of the year for 20s/30s in the Episcopal Diocese of New is the annual St. Nick's Party. This year, the celebration will take place at Cathedral House on the grounds of the Cathedral of St. John the

Divine (1047 Amsterdam Avenue between West 110th and 113th Streets). It's sure to be a festive night, full of all that the season holds. All young adults are welcome! Contact the Rev. Adrian Dannhauser to RSVP.

BLOOD DRIVE

Saturday, December 5, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Roll up your sleeves and live out our mission of love by joining us in the church for our upcoming community blood drive. Every single donation has the power to save up to three lives and provide vital support to patients in need. Please note that donating blood takes 45 minutes to 1 hour. The minimum age is 17, and donors aged 76 or above must provide a one-time doctor's note confirming they are in good health and eligible to donate. Scan the QR code or go to bit.ly/3W8M4JT to schedule your appointment.

VOLUNTEER FOR THE CHRISTMAS FAIR!

Saturday, December 5, **11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m**. Incarnation's 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, and a Café and Bake Sale. Parishioners are essential to the Fair's success. Here are ways you can help:

- **Donate an item for the Silent Auction.** Examples include gift certificates to local restaurants, theater tickets, 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.
- **Serve customers** and help with logistics during the Fair, 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Speak to Laurie Mygatt or Monica Culoso if you can volunteer for the Fair and/or solicit items for the Silent Auction. Speak to Susan Ridgeway if you can volunteer for the Café or donate baked goods.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Sunday, December 6. Meet at 10:30 a.m. / Service at 11:00 a.m. Children of all ages are invited to participate in a short and simple pageant, held in place of the sermon, during the 11:00 a.m. service. There will be one rehearsal on Friday, December 4. (See above). Contact Amanda Bell (abell@churchoftheincarnation.org) if your child would like to participate so we can plan for parts and costumes.

NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2027 VESTRY

Want to recommend yourself or a fellow parishioner for Vestry? The Vestry of Incarnation plays a vital leadership role in carrying out the mission of our parish, providing counsel, and caring for our facilities. The Vestry Nominating Committee has been formed and is beginning to identify and develop a slate of candidates for the next Vestry class. To suggest someone for consideration, contact the Rev. Adrian Dannhauser (adannhauser@churchoftheincarnation.org) and share briefly why the person you are recommending would be a good leader of the parish through the work of our Vestry.

All names must be received by **Sunday, December 13**. The final slate will be presented to the congregation for approval at the annual meeting on **Sunday, January 24, 2027**.

SAVE THE DATE FOR LESSONS AND CAROLS!
Sunday, December 13, at 6:00 p.m.

An Incarnation tradition, Lessons and Carols is one of Incarnation's most beloved services we present each year. Based on the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols at King's College, Cambridge, it consists of readings from Scripture interspersed with music and a brief homily. The lessons, which cover the fall of humanity, the promise of the Messiah, and the birth of Jesus, are read by representatives of the parish.

Followed by Incarnation's Christmas Party from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. The party will be in the church, and volunteers are needed. Contact the Rev. Adrian Dannhauser if you can help!