



THE MESSENGER



Parish News of St. John's Episcopal Church, Saginaw, Michigan

Volume 29, Issue 11

December 2011

The Messenger is published monthly by St. John's Episcopal Church, 123 N. Michigan Ave., Saginaw, MI 48602. This publication is mailed to our parishioners at no cost to them.

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Many people believe that the Episcopal Church has no common faith statement or set of beliefs, however this is simply not true. While individuals vary widely in the Episcopal Church on theological and political issues, our official doctrine is as follows: *"The Doctrine of the Church is to be found in the Canon of Holy Scripture as understood in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds and in the sacramental rites, the Ordinal and Catechism of the Book of Common Prayer"* (Constitution and Canons, Canon IV.15, p. 171). To simplify, we Episcopalians read the Bible as our source of doctrine and understand it by the teachings of the Creeds and the Prayer Book. So if you want a summary of what Episcopalians believe, you need only look to the Prayer Book. In it you will find the Creeds and the Catechism, which explain our understanding of the Bible.

A little known fact about our Church is that each of the different seasons of the Church year correspond to a different teaching in the Creeds. Advent is the season where we contemplate Christ's coming into the world. This corresponds to the following lines of the Nicene Creed: *"For us and for our salvation [Jesus] came down from heaven;"* and also, *"He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end."* These two comings of Christ are the bookends of salvation history and they are the motif that runs through the advent readings. Christmas season corresponds to the next line in the Nicene Creed: *"By the power of the Holy Spirit [Jesus] became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man."* My hope is that this Advent and Christmas seasons may be times for reflecting on the deep spiritual meaning of our Episcopal faith as taught in the Creeds.

Christ's Peace,
Fr. Daniel+

Warden's Report

From your Vestry, greetings and wishes for a peaceful, holy and joyful season! I know Father Daniel was a bit taken back by the early start to the holiday season in Saginaw what with Holidays in the Heart of the City, PRIDE Christmas Parade, Saginaw's traditional holiday lighting all happening before Thanksgiving. Honestly it did seem a bit early to me, too. But St. John's was again a central site for activities, hosting the Saginaw City Band and the many, many people who stopped by to hear them. And the best part - we heard so many good comments about our church and its role and image in the city. Being active and visible in the community is a key piece of our Parish Profile. Well done, us!

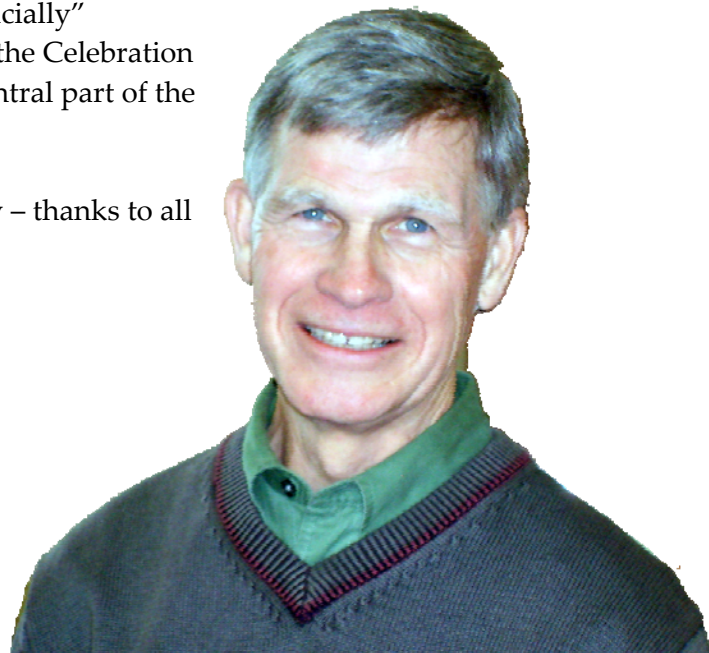
And just to bring everybody up to speed, here are a few other things the Vestry is actively working on:

1. **2012 Budget/Stewardship:** Together with the Finance Committee, we are in the process of finalizing next year's budget for approval at the January Annual Meeting. No easy task – particularly trying to anticipate income. (Ahem - have YOU returned your pledge card yet?)
2. **Nursery:** With Father Daniel leading the charge, we are working hard to set up and staff a nursery program. We're getting closer – our "Safe Church" designation requires two people in the program at all times, and finding folks is no easy chore. Let us know if you have ideas or interest in helping.
3. **Outreach:** Coordinating our Holiday Basket outreach for the residents of Rosien Towers is in full swing. The Giving Tree is up – please take an "ornament" and bring all the goodies by Sunday, December 11! We'll be filling the baskets on Sunday, December 18. Please plan to stay after the service and help.
4. **Bishop's Visit:** Bishop Ousley will be here on **January 8**. Plan to attend – we'll be "officially" welcoming Father Daniel as the Celebration of New Ministry will be a central part of the visit.

St. John's is an exciting place to be lately – thanks to all of you for contributing to that excitement.

Faithfully,

Burris Smith
Senior Warden



Happy Birthday!

- 2 Paul Ilkka
- 2 Tanya Brown
- 4 Samantha Barshaw
- 4 Olivia Corcoran
- 5 Herb Spence III
- 6 Herb Spence IV
- 8 Ellen Redfield
- 8 Jane Vondrasek
- 9 Benjamin Donaghy
- 15 Myrna Endean
- 16 Dennis Thom
- 21 Derek Cittel
- 21 Gerald Lockhart
- 22 Paige Cittel
- 23 Christopher Corcoran
- 24 Tyler Rump
- 26 Laurie Seibert

Happy Anniversary!

- 13 Susan & Dennis Daugherty
- 18 Christine & Paul Schaub
- 26 Betsy & Dennis Greenwood
- 27 Tanya & Jim Brown
- 31 Sonni & Jim Magyar

Thank You

Thank you **Kathy Hadrill** for your help organizing our 2011 Flu Vaccine Clinic!

Thanks to **Nancy Birdsall** and **Sallie Swanson** for helping host our Thanksgiving Evensong reception.

Many thanks also to **Al & Jane Vondrasek, Pam Renna, Marcia Hoffman, Jan Young, Sue & Jack Luxton, John & Diane Carter, and Amy Simons** for your efforts hosting the Saginaw Area Concert Band as part of this year's Holidays in the Heart of the City!

Is there someone in our parish who has gone above and beyond? If you would like to offer thanks, please call the office at 793-9575.

Good Samaritans:

Dec. 4—Dec. 10	Lou Smith	799-5583
Dec. 11—Dec. 24	Michael Keenan	790-8721
Dec. 25—Jan. 7	Sue Luxton	684-9196

Vestry Members:

Janet Cosenza	401-0853	janetcosenza@charter.net
Bill Frederick	781-0002	wfrederick@tm.net
Jane Girdham	790-8712	kgirdham@svsu.edu
Connie Grantham	695-2088	grantham@hotmail.com
Marcia Hoffman	793-8354	hoffman1982@sbcglobal.net
Sue Marquardt	790-0656	r-s-keyofc@sbcglobal.net
Duncan Redfield	799-7893	redsailor7@yahoo.com
Burris Smith	792-4775	smithbr@chartermi.net
Dennis Thom	793-9562	dennisthom@sbcglobal.net

Christmas Baskets 2011

For several years now the parishioners of St. John's have contributed their time, talent and resources to make the Christmas season a bit brighter for a significant number of our Old Saginaw City neighbors. Each Christmas we've prepared over 100 baskets filled with food, household necessities and a few holiday surprises for each of the residents of Rosien Towers.



In doing so we have made good friends and created a tradition that all of us – both residents and parishioners – look forward to. When we look at this program, together with the year-round lunch bag outreach, we touch the lives of our immediate community in very significant ways.

The more the merrier for the event. Planning is well underway. The Giving Tree is up and we're rapidly working toward our delivery date of **December 19**. During that time, we'll need volunteers to shop, organize transportation, work with the wonderful staff at Rosien Towers, set up and fill baskets, complete Christmas cards, and lots more. **But we've got a bit of a time crunch this year – we're missing one Sunday in our giving cycle! So, give lots, give often, but above all – GIVE FAST!** We need all items turned in by Sunday, December 11 – only a week or so away.

The holidays can be an exciting and hectic time for many of us. But they can also be a time of loneliness and pain for others. There is nothing better to keep the season in perspective than taking time out to help others who may be in that unenviable position. It seems to fit so nicely with the sharing, caring and loving that is such a big part of our mission. And since we hand deliver all the baskets to each resident, we have the great fortune to see directly the results of our efforts. It's hard to tell who is receiving the greater gift.

Sure it's a big job, but many hands make for quick and enjoyable work- and above all – this is a FUN event. Hey, what's not to like when you're rubbing elbows with old friends, making new ones, and making a difference in the lives of our neighbors. **Please take a minute to add your name to the signup sheet in the Community Room.** We've listed several ways in which to become involved, but even if you're uncertain as to how you can help, sign up anyway.

We'll definitely put you to work!



What is “Lessons & Carols?”

The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols was first held on Christmas Eve 1918 at King’s College in Cambridge, England. It was planned to provide a more imaginative worship service during the Advent season. Sometime in the early 1930's the BBC began broadcasting the service on the World Service. It is estimated that there are millions of listeners worldwide!



Here, at St. John’s, we continue the tradition by hosting the guest choir, **Exultate Deo**, and organizing readers from both within, as well as, outside our parish. Nine lessons are read beginning with the creation story and ending with the birth of Jesus. Each lesson is then paired with special choir anthems and/or carols that complement the readings. Interesting, reflective, and joyful, it’s a great opportunity to share the good news of a savior while enjoying the best of what our style of worship has to offer. Mark your calendars for **December, 18 at 7:30pm** and start making the tradition of Lessons and Carols YOUR tradition this year!

Special Christmas Services

Lessons & Carols

December 18th. 7:30pm

This service will be full of scripture readings and music that tell the Christmas Story. Come and listen to *Exultate Deo*, a guest choir made up of singers from around the Tri-Cities who will lead our celebration!

Christmas Eve - Crèche Service

December 24th. 6:30pm

Our 6:30 service will be a family oriented crèche service filled with the music and symbols of Christmas. **Children of the congregation are invited to participate in the living nativity.**

Christmas Eve - Musical Prelude

December 24th. 10:30pm

Beat the rush for the parking lot and join us for our 10:30 Musical Prelude as our choir and guest musicians prepare us for worship!

Christmas Eve - Festive Choral Eucharist

December 24th. 11:00pm

The 11:00 service will be a traditional Choral Eucharist.

Christmas Day - Holy Eucharist

December 25th. 10:30am

Our Christmas Day service will be a traditional Eucharist with carols and homily.

Parish Potluck

December 11, 2011

December 11th, join us for a **parish potluck** and celebration of the Advent season! We will gather together following the 10:30 service for food and fellowship. Some of the afternoon's activities will include:

- reading of the Saint Nicholas story
- decorating our Christmas Tree
- kicking off our Christmas Outreach Basket project

Last names beginning with A-L please bring a dessert to share and last names beginning with M-Z please bring a hot side or salad. If you will be joining us for the first time today, please be our guest!



Bishop's Visitation

January 8, 2012

Don't let the new year catch you by surprise! January 8th St. John's will be visited by our bishop the Rt. Rev. Todd Ousley.

This will be a festive service where we formally welcome Fr. Daniel as our new rector as well as baptize, confirm, and receive other members!



Annual Meeting

January 29, 2012

Mark your calendar for Sunday, January 29th. Our annual meeting will be held between the services at 9:15am. We'll review and discuss important issues of 2011 as well as what is to come in 2012. Chief among our duties will be electing new Vestry members and convention delegates and approving the budget. Don't miss the opportunity to fully participate as members of St. John's. This is another way we give of our time, talent, and treasure.

Ringling in the Undercroft

On November 5, 2011, a group of 9 men and women attended a one-day handbell workshop at Zion Lutheran Church, in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The workshop was sponsored by the Area V region of the Handbell Musicians of America (formerly the American Guild of English Handbell Ringers, aka AGEHR). There were seventy ringers in attendance, representing six church choirs and one community-based choir from around the state of Michigan. We rang from 9:00 am until 2:45 pm, taking a small lunch break.

I can speak for our nine ringers who represented the community-based choir that we were giddy with exhaustion at the day's end and ready to unload the bells and pads to free us up for our evening events with our families.

So, how is this news to the St. John's Episcopal Church congregation?

Of the nine who attended that workshop, two are members at St. John's: Jan Young and myself, Betsy Greenwood. St. John's handbells were also in attendance.

For several years now, Jan and I have kept the Schulmerich* handbells ringing. For four years, we rehearsed and performed as "the Healing Bells," ringing predominantly for services and special events at St. Mary's of Michigan Medical Center. We were rehearsing weekly and performing almost every month.

Due to a series of events, we've reorganized. Our current membership is made up of multiple denominations of ringers and our vision is still in formation. We are committed to learning and evangelizing the art of handbell ringing. Our numbers allow us to easily produce three-octave music. But we've promised ourselves at least nine months of learning and rehearsing prior to any kind of formal presentation.

If anyone who attends services at St. John's would be interested in joining our group, now would be an ideal time. We have a few positions open in our current configuration. If there is enough interest, I'd be happy to work with folks to start up another choir.

We rehearse on Monday's at 5:00 pm and run until 6:30 pm in the undercroft at St. John's. We enter the church through the garden entrance. Contact Jan Young or myself for additional information. Jan can be reached at the church by calling 989-793-9575 or at jan@stjohns-saginaw.org. I can be reached at 989-695-4779 or by email at betsy.greenwood@yahoo.com. Walkins are welcome, as well. The ability to read music is beneficial, although not required. We would love to share our ministry with you.

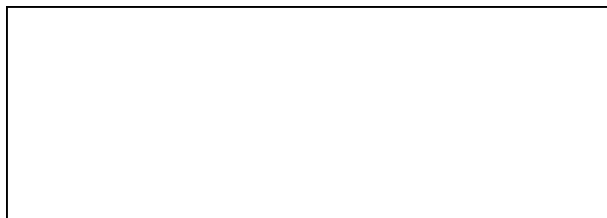
In Christ,
Betsy Greenwood

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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What are you doing for Christmas?

Parish Potluck
Dec. 11 - 11:30am

In addition to worship, the day will include:

- Kicking off of our Christmas Outreach Project
- Decorating
- Reading of the St. Nicholas Story

Lessons & Carols
December 18th
7:30pm

This service will be full of scripture readings and music that tell the story of Christmas.

Come and listen to guest choir *Exultate Deo!*

Christmas Eve
December 24th

Family Service - Our 6:30 service will be a family oriented crèche service filled with the music and symbols of Christmas!

Festive Choral Eucharist - The 11:00 service will be a traditional Choral Eucharist with homily. *Join us at 10:30pm for a musical prelude.*

Christmas Day
December 25th

Holy Eucharist - Our Christmas Day services will be a traditional Eucharist with carols and homily.

ST. JOHN'S IS CALLED TO CARE, SHARE, WORSHIP, CELEBRATE, AND LOVE.