

NEWSLETTER

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Episcopal Parish of Ames

April 2009

WE ARE EASTER PEOPLE!

I know that we bear the name of Christian, which sounds more like Christmas than Easter, but we really are **EASTER PEOPLE**. Our faith finds all of its meaning in the empty tomb. Because Jesus was raised from the dead the old enemy, death, was finally conquered. Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we too will be raised when we die and enter into the nearer presence of God.

We do not have to wait until we die to benefit from the sacrifice made on our behalf by Jesus. Because he is the expiation (making amends) for our sins we can go through this life without debilitating guilt. We simply have to ask for the forgiveness of our sins and it is given! We do not have to buy it or in some way earn it—it is God's free gift to us. We call this grace.

I often think about the lives that have been devastated by unnecessary guilt. People do things that they are not proud of; make mistakes, and hurt other people. Long after the people they have hurt and God have forgiven them they continue to beat themselves up by wallowing in their bad feelings. They allow their failures to damage their sense of worth and become paralyzed by their inability to get beyond past behavior. So they continue to make bad decisions based on their feelings of being unworthy and the cycle goes on and on.

The truth of the matter is that **NONE** of us are worthy of God's forgiveness, but God gives it anyhow! It is the gift of a loving and caring God. More than anything else in creation we need to accept God's gift and move forward in our lives with a clean slate. Because of the cross and the empty tomb we have this amazing, unwarranted gift! It is profoundly better than any gift we receive at Christmas or any other time.

Let us celebrate together the empty tomb on Easter morning knowing that it transforms our very lives.

Faithfully,

Al

Christian Formation Focus
Formation is one's life-long growth in Christ

April 2009

Sunday night, at EYC, we were playing a game of UNO. While I was enjoying this game with St. John's teenagers, I was remembering my friends and colleagues from the Youth Ministry course I took in Austin, Texas. It was in Austin, through these individuals, that I learned the value of simple fellowship, such as playing games, in building community. Anyway I was thinking about a particular friend and how much fun we had playing UNO. When I got home from EYC, I did a quick check on email and found a short note from this person. WOW! I hadn't corresponded with her in several months. What a coincidence that I had been thinking about her within the last hour and during that same time, she sent me an email.

Have you ever wondered why we receive these little brain nudges? The ones that make you think about a person that maybe isn't in your daily or weekly schedule. The story I told above is not the first time this has happened to me. Many times a name of someone I haven't seen or spoke to in awhile pops into my head. I have learned to try to follow up with a note or phone call and often find the correspondence is very much appreciated. Sometimes the person is in real need of someone to talk to or in a time of crisis or something wonderful has happened in the person's life and they wanted to share.

Why did I decide to share these thoughts with you this month? I believe these little nudges is one of the many ways God speaks to us. As we move from Lent to Easter, from a time of reflection to celebration, I'd like to encourage you to follow-up with a nudge or a thought of someone else when you receive one. We all can be ministers to each other in times of celebration or crisis by listening and offering a caring presence in the world.

See you at Church!

Diane Bjorklund, Director of Christian Formation
Office (at home): 233-4715 or Email: DianeBjorklund@mchsi.com

Please contact Diane by email or phone if you have any questions
about the Christian Formation programs at St. John's or would like to help.

EPISCOPAL PARISH OF AMES

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Rector
The Reverend Donald R. Payer, Deacon

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James Tener, Chaplain and Music Director
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Vestry, 2009

Scott Saienga, *Senior Warden*
Jim Stone, *Junior Warden*
Deb Fisher, *Treasurer* Mary Kay Abbott, *Clerk*
Margaret Dempsey Jim Fisher
Bronwyn Frame Coralie Lashbrook
Jeremy Long Helen McRoberts
Bob Ozinga Carol Vleck
Dorothy Yoerger

Newsletter, April 2009, Vol 15, Num 4

This publication, Newsletter, is published monthly except July by the Episcopal Parish of Ames, a non-profit organization, 2338 Lincoln Way, Ames, Iowa 50014. Comments or inquiries may be sent to the church office. The **deadline for the next Newsletter is Monday, April 27.** Submit articles to Jeannie at St. John's or via email to church@stjohns-ames.org and jgalyon@iastate.edu

April Birthdays

1 Chuck Deppe
4 Anne Iles
6 David Vleck
7 Joan Herwig
8 Doug Haviland, Stacy Joiner, and
Cori Peterson
10 Grace Warren
14 Alex Galyon
15 Jacob Baker
17 Katherine Klingseis
18 Lisa Frangos
19 LeAnn Hillier
20 Jim Fisher
21 Alex Fales, Bill Gutowski
22 Sherry Washburn
23 Katie Joiner, Abby Rioux, and
Vicki Saienga
25 Marilyn Forsling, Paul Gierasch
26 Kevin Osgerby
29 Samantha Margetta

April Anniversaries

7 Barbara & Harold Martin
11 Sandra & Chuck Deppe
18 Shannon & Jesse Hostetter
22 Wendy Ware & Gene Warren

April Coffee

5 8 a.m. Jane Montgomery
10 a.m. Carol and David Vleck
& Susan Masters
12 EASTER BRUNCH
19 8 a.m. VOLUNTEER NEEDED
10 a.m. Jane Zaring
26 8 a.m. VOLUNTEER NEEDED
10 a.m. Dorothy & Charlie Yoerger

Summer Coffee Hour Schedule

During the months of June, July and August we would appreciate people signing up for coffee hour. All supplies, food and drink will be furnished by the church. People are needed to set up, make coffee, serve and clean up.

EASTER BRUNCH

Traditional Easter Brunch will be served on **Easter Sunday, April 12** between services. Please sign up to bring casseroles, baked goods, or fruit. Beverages will be provided. Help will be

needed for set-up, assistance prior to and during the brunch between services and especially clean-up afterwards. Sign up sheets are posted. Guests are welcome! Looking forward to Holy Week and Easter

United Thank Offering

Dear friends of UTO,

We appreciate that these are difficult economic times for many, making it even more important to encourage everyone to give thanks for the blessings they do have. A daily prayer accompanied by a coin in the blue box is a simple act. Joined with the prayers and coins of many, it becomes a potentially life-altering force throughout the world. Please encourage everyone to join the circle of thankful people and make a difference.

Gratefully yours,

Pamela Stewart

Convener, Communications Committee

Please note: St. John's will have the UTO Spring Ingathering Sunday, May 24. Your contributions will be appreciated.

Barb Martin, St. John's UTO Coordinator

Flower Fund for Easter

If you would like to contribute toward the Flower Fund for lilies and spring flowers for Easter, please contact Ruth Swenson (268-5212). The Flower Fund also is used to provide altar flowers on Sundays when there are no specific contributions as memorials or in celebration.

Notice to Altar Guild Workers

Wednesday, April 1st has been scheduled for the Annual Spring General cleaning of the Sacristy and altar area, and polishing of the silver and brass.

Please mark your calendar. Come and leave as your schedule permits from 8:30 a.m. – 11 a.m.

Food at First

The next Food at First dates are April 25, May 23, and June 27. Sign up sheets are in the parish hall. Hope to see you there.

Christian Formation/Education News

Nursery: Nicole Gish has given notice that she has moved to Des Moines and will leave St. John's when a new Sunday morning child care giver is hired. The position is from 7:45 to 11:45 each Sunday morning including holidays. If you know of someone qualified and interested in the position, please contact Diane Bjorklund for an application.

Safeguarding God's Children: New vestry members, anyone who works with children and youth, and church leadership are required by the Diocese to attend this training, please check the Sunday bulletin for more information. Training is now available online or St. John's can schedule a class with our own certified trainer, Effie Lingren.

Godly Play:

THANK YOU to **Charlie & Dorothy Yoerger, Effie Lingren, Nancy & Gordon Port, Helen McRoberts, Ruth & Clayton Swenson, Marrie Williams, Coralie Lashbrook, Cate & Colin Scanes, Nicola & John Bowler, Tim & Joanna Muggli, Doug & Wanda McCay, Bob & Milly Ozinga, and Don & Jan Payer.** Only 5 of the 18 stories on the wish list remain. If you would like to donate a story please contact Diane Bjorklund for more information.

Godly Play story schedule

- 3/ 29 Combined Class-Good Shepherd and
World Communion
- 4/5 GP1- Resurrection Eggs
GP2- Faces of Easter VI & VII
- 4/12 EASTER No Class
- 4/19 GP1- Holy Families and Mystery of
Easter
GP2 - Parable side by side
- 4/ 26 GP1 - Baptism
GP2 - St. Catherine of Siena

Currently six leaders are covering the two classes but more help would be appreciated. Any adult is welcome to join a Godly Play class any week. They begin at 9 a.m.

EYC (Episcopal Youth Community) Thank You to the **Galyon's**, the **Aiton's**, the **Muggli's**, **Laurie Bryant**, and the **Stone's** for meals that were provided in March

EYC Schedule:

- 4/5 Journey Night -- Long dinner
- 4/12 EASTER -- NO EYC
- 4/19 Journey Night -- Joiner dinner
- 4/26 Project Night -- McRoberts/Ringwald dinner

Happening: Five of St. John's high school students participated on the staff of Iowa Happening #26, which was held March 6 to 8, at St. Paul's in Des Moines; several parents and a few parishioners attended the closing service

About 40 high school youth from around the Diocese participated in the weekend by attending the event as new participants or helping out on staff. Youth came from the Episcopal churches in Algona, Fort Dodge, Mason City, Ames, Ankeny, West Des Moines, Perry, Des Moines, Iowa City, Coralville, Cedar Rapids, Davenport, and Clermont. There were also five youth that came as friends from other denominations or do not currently have a church home.

Pilgrimage: The J2A class is busy planning their pilgrimage to the boundary waters. They have identified June 12 to 19 for their trip. The trip

includes a stop at the Grotto, a possible service project in the twin cities such as a homeless meal, five days in the boundary waters canoeing and camping, and maybe a stop on the way home. The next planning meeting is scheduled for March 29 and a parent meeting is scheduled for April 5.

Rite 13 celebration: St. John's has two young people that will be turning 13 within the next six months. Please mark your calendar for Sunday May 5 for this special liturgy.

Pentecost Service: It has been suggested that since Pentecost falls before the end of the school year that we look at the youth doing the readings in several languages. They could offer French, Spanish, German, and sign language. Others in the congregation may have more languages. It would be helpful to have a small group help with the planning of this service. Please contact Diane Bjorklund if you are willing to help.

SAVE THE DATE:

New Beginnings #2: April 24-26, Pictured Rocks Camp, Monticello. This is a junior high retreat.

Spring Faith Formation Forum and Youth Lock-in: May 8-9 St. John's Ames more information to come. Hosts needed.

HELP NEEDED: Adults are needed to step up and be willing to attend Diocesan youth events with the teens. St. John's should send one adult for every five youth when an event is scheduled. Bruce and I are not always available. Some others that have helped in recent years are Ed and Diane Gillott, John and Greta Levis, Leigh Ann Long, Jane Ringwald, Liz Keys, and Helen McRoberts. Attending youth events is a great opportunity to meet other Episcopalians from around the state, laugh, and have fun with the kids. Most events are only one overnight. Air mattresses can be borrowed.

February Vestry Minutes

Fr. Al Aiton called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. Members present were: Mary Kay Abbott, Meg Dempsey, Jim Fisher, Bronwyn Frame Coralie

Lashbrook, Jeremy Long, Helen McRoberts, Bob Ozinga, Scott Saienga and Jim Stone. Also present were: Fr. Al, Diane Bjorklund and Jim Tener. Absent members were Carol Vleck and Dorothy Yoerger.

Fr. Al opened the meeting with the Order of Evening Prayer. For a time of study, Fr. Al read from the "Military Edition of Our Daily Bread". The subject was Spiritual Defeats and how it can affect everyone, especially those under severe stress. Fr. Al welcomed new members to the Vestry: Jim Fisher, Bronwyn Frame, Coralie Lashbrook and Jim Stone.

Election of Officers: The following people were elected unanimously: Sr. Warden, Scott Saienga, Jr. Warden, Jim Stone, Treasurer, Deb Fisher, Assistant Treasurer, Doug McCay and Clerk, Mary Kay Abbott.

Minutes: Minutes of the December meeting were approved as e-mailed to the Vestry Members.

Ministry Area: Diane Bjorklund provided the attached report for Christian Formation and Education and emphasized the need for more adults to volunteer time with the youth. Jim Tener provided the attached report on Campus Ministry. Fr. Al gave a report on Visitation Ministry and the Stewardship letter that was sent out to people who have not returned a pledge card. Vleck, Saienga and Ozinga will be making follow up calls.

Property Area: Fr. Al reported that water is still leaking into the NW corner of the church and also, in the lower level ladies restroom. Jeff Iles and Ed Gillott have agreed to continue working with WTI to correct the problems. The Ames Fire Dept. completed the annual inspection of the property. The only requirements to be met are to put new batteries in all the Exit signs and the back up emergency lights. This has now been completed.

Parish Life: Helen McRoberts asked that a statement be printed in the Sunday bulletins to

explain the difference in the printed psalms and those in the Book of Common Prayer.

Financial Report: No printed report. Fr. Al reported that a sum of money will be coming to St. John's from the Elizabeth Orr Trust at First National Bank. This money will go into the Endowment Fund. Jim Tener asked about the possibility of parishioners having the option to have pledges automatically deducted from their checking accounts into the St. John's checking account. There would be an expense to St. John's to set up such an arrangement. No action taken.

Unfinished Business: The Vestry Retreat/Planning Meeting is set for Saturday, March 7 at 9:00am to noon. The question of the possible sale of "Last Supper Tapestry" was discussed. Coralie Lashbrook offered to search for an appraiser. Fr. Al announced that Don Payer is looking for an individual to Chair the Evangelism Committee.

New Business: Fr. Al explained that we have no paid ads in the Tribune due to the high costs. The telephone answering machine gives information about services and how to reach staff. Jim Tener noted that the St. John's Website needs to be updated and would be a better source of information. He would be willing to help update the Website.

Announcements: Lenten Offerings: Sundays – Tools for the Christian Journey NOOMA new series on spiritual direction; Wednesdays – Potluck/A Walk in Jerusalem; Everyday – Peace and Compassion to Heal A Hurting World .

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:05p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Kay Abbott, Clerk of the Vestry