

1 NEWSLETTER



Episcopal Parish of Ames

December, 2009

TRULY A SEASON TO ENJOY

I awakened one morning in the middle of November to the sounds of a Christmas carol streaming from the clock radio. I was taken back for a moment and then realized that one Des Moines station begins to play all Christmas music a couple of weeks before Thanksgiving. Unfortunately they also **stop** doing so on the day after Christmas! I used to fret over the commercialization of Christmas and the great push to get us to buy more. I have learned however to absolutely love this season by ignoring what I don't like or agree with, and deeply embracing all the rest.

So here is what I am going to enjoy and I invite you to do the same.

The fabulous smells of the season; pine, candles, spices in baking, butter cookies, peppermint, the fresh clean smell of new fallen snow, oranges studded with cloves, wood smoke, and hot chocolate.

The great sounds of Christmas; sleigh bells, carols, people humming, kids excitedly waiting to see Santa, the quiet of a new fallen snow, laughter and excitement at parties, the greetings of strangers in the store, the reading of the Christmas lessons in church, and the reading of The Night Before Christmas.

The great sights of Christmas; the colored lights that decorate houses, the wreaths on the door, the parish hall Christmas tree---bigger and better each year, the beautiful colors of red and green, the carefully wrapped packages, the stockings hung, the wonderful candies, cookies, and cakes that are so intently prepared, the nativity set in the church and the candle holders that we use only at this season, the smiles of hope on the faces of young children.

The mystery of the season: the goodwill shown to strangers, the deepened sense of care for those in need, the cards received from friends of long ago, the extra emphasis on peace, the unexpected notes or phone calls, a cup of tea or glass of wine with a new friend, the sight of the Toys for Tots bin overflowing, how mesmerizing sitting before the fire with loved ones can be, the story of the Incarnation---God coming down to us in human form, and the feeling of being loved.

Some of these things are deeply intertwined with the more commercial aspects of the season, but who cares? The important thing to remember at Christmas is love; God's love for each and every one of us, our love for God, and our love for each other. I can stand all the commercial pressure if I focus on the good that happens to each of us this time of year. We can choose to love Christmas and have it rekindle in us true Joy.

Joan, Becci, and Charlotte join me in wishing you all the blessing of this season.

Faithfully,

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

December 2009

In **Godly Play™**, the children hear a story called "*The Circle of the Church Year*". Through this story they see that time can be measured in a line. It is represented by a string. The newest part is just like being born; it is new. As time goes on, the part that was new becomes old but there is a new part of the string that is a beginning. Then the string ends and is laid in front of the children forming a line.

The line has a beginning that became old and an ending that became new. The class learns that the Church took the time line and tied the end that was like a beginning and the end that was like an ending together. This was to help us remember that for every ending there is a beginning and for every beginning there is an ending.

The Christian calendar does not begin January 1 but on the first Sunday of Advent, which is four Sundays before Christmas on December 25. The word Advent came from the Latin *Adventus* which means coming, and originally referred to just the feast of Christmas. Over time the season of Advent has taken a double meaning. It refers to the beginning or the "first coming" of Jesus Christ in his birth at Christmas. It also refers to the "second coming" of Jesus at the end of time.

From Welcome to the Church Year by Vicki Black we are reminded:

"When we arrive at church on the Sundays of Advent we not only hear Bible readings that are hopeful signs of the birth of the baby Jesus but we also hear sober warnings about the judgment at the end of time and a call to "forsake our sins" in preparation for Jesus' second coming. We celebrate the light of Christ coming into the world but the light comes to a world that is often broken and dark."

Advent is not just a time to remember the beginning; the birth of Jesus. It is also a time to remember the present and the future as we look toward Jesus' coming again. Here are some questions from Welcome to the Church Year by Vicki Black for you to reflect on this Advent:

"What can we do as the church to bring about God's reign of justice and peace today?
What can we do as individuals to reorder our lives in the light of God's love?
What would it mean to live as a people who believe in Jesus as the savior of all the earth and who expect him to come again at the fulfillment of time?"

I hope you will begin again this Advent and this hectic month of December by making time to pray and reflect about the real meaning of Christmas at the beginning, and the second coming of Jesus at the end.

See you at Church!

Peace, Diane Bjorklund, Director of Christian Formation
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EPISCOPAL PARISH OF AMES

Parish Office

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Clergy

The Reverend Canon Alexander A. Aiton, Jr.,
Rector

The Reverend Donald R. Payer, Deacon

Parish Assistants

Jeannie Garcia, Secretary

James Tener, Chaplain and Music Director

Diane Bjorklund, Director of Christian
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Jane Ringwald, Organist

Wendy Ware, Organist

Jane Galyon, Newsletter Editor

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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, December 2009, Vol 15, Num 11

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

Wednesday, December 30. Submit articles to

Jeannie at St. John's or via email to

church@stjohns-ames.org and

jgalyon@iastate.edu

Births

Zara Allison Bowler

December Coffee Hour

6 8 VOLUNTEER NEEDED

10 Leigh Ann Long

13 8 VOLUNTEER NEEDED

10 Phyllis Heffron & Connie Post

20 8 Dorothy and Charlie Yoerger

10 VOLUNTEER NEEDED

27 8 VOLUNTEER NEEDED

10 Pat & Marie

December Tools for the Christian Journey Schedule

December 6 NOOMA series

December 13 NOOMA series

December 20 NOOMA series

December 27 NO Tools for the Christian
Journey - Christmas Break

Lectionary for December

December 6

First Lesson: Baruch 5:1-9

Canticle: Canticle 4

The Second Lesson: Philippians 1:3-11

Gospel: Luke 3:1-6

December 13

The First Lesson: Zephaniah 3:14-20

Canticle: Canticle 9

The Second Lesson: Philippians 4:4-7

Gospel: Luke 3:7-18

December 20

The First Lesson: Micah 5:2-5a

Canticle: Canticle 3

The Second Lesson: Hebrews 10:5-10

Gospel: Luke 1:39-45

December 24 - Christmas Eve Service

The First Lesson: Isaiah 9:2-7

The Psalm: Psalm 96

The Second Lesson: Titus 2:11-14

Gospel: Luke 2:1-14 (2-15)

December 27

The First Lesson: Isaiah 61:10--62:3

The Psalm: Psalm 147:13-21

The Second Lesson: Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7

Gospel: John 1:1-18

A Message from Bishop Scarfe

I am writing to invite you to attend the All Commissions Day Retreat on Saturday December 5, from 10 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. at St. Timothy's Church (1020 – 24th Street) in West Des Moines. This is a new time for the annual event in which we seek to bring all of the Diocesan wide ministry groups together for planning for the upcoming year, and for sharing of our common mission focus for 2010. This year I would like to see if we could not also gather with us any interested members of the Cursillo community. In June we are expecting to host the National Episcopal Cursillo Committee and it would be good to begin preparations for that event. As Cursillo also helps create strength in congregations particularly through its efforts to gather people weekly for mutual discipleship support, I think this would be an appropriate time to have them join other Diocesan ministries. All are asked to [RSVP online](#) by **Monday, November 30**. (click on the word RSVP to register or use this URL: http://iowaepiscopal.siteoncall.com/events/register_online.php?event=61) and take special note to check the box: *I am a Cursillista* as that applies.

A Message from Marilyn Forsling

I would like to thank everyone for coming to Bethany Manor to have service. It was a wonderful time of fellowship. Thank you again, Marilyn

Flower Fund

If you would like to contribute to the Flower Fund for the traditional Christmas poinsettias in the sanctuary, 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.

Ministry of Hospitality

Are you called to a ministry of hospitality? For some time now three members of the congregation have managed our Sunday coffee hours: Judy Kavanagh, Effie Lingren, and Milly Ozinga. They have done a fabulous job of seeing that people volunteered, that all necessary supplies were available, and that the kitchen was left in good order. We thank them for their

ministry that allows us to have fellowship and fun after worship. In the past Marie Anderson and Suzie Shierholtz have served in this capacity. We are grateful to all of them for their leadership in this ministry of hospitality.

The time has come for someone new or a group of people to take on this role. We will continue to provide the supplies (coffee, creamer, sugar, etc.), and have some simple snacks on hand to serve if the person signed-up for a particular Sunday wishes to use them. We would also consider having paper cups on hand if a person would prefer not to use the china ones (though the dishwasher instructions are being rewritten to make them easier to understand). People in the congregation will still be asked to volunteer to sign up to host a coffee hour after a Sunday service.

What we need is a volunteer (or volunteers) to oversee this ministry. It would involve getting people to sign-up, checking to see when we need to replenish supplies, and see that instructions are available for the people who volunteer to serve coffee. If you think you can help with this, please make yourself known to a member of the vestry or the rector.

Matthew 25 House News

We now have five residents, with four working and one job searching. All are attending one of our four mentoring churches. We have need of a used dining room table (5-6 ft long x 36-42 inches wide) and 5-6 chairs. Thank you all for your help and prayers and in particular for visiting with the men when they come to church.

Don and Jan Payer

Please Return 2010 Pledge Cards As Soon As Possible!

Your vestry is working hard to have a responsible and balanced budget. That is impossible to do without having a clear picture of what our expected income will be for next year. Please consider your pledge carefully and prayerfully. Then return the card to the parish office or put it in the offering plate as soon as possible. There are extra copies on the welcome table. Thanks!

Parish Survey of Interests

Last month your newsletter included a Parish Survey of Interests. If you have not yet returned your completed copy, please do so as soon as possible. Extra copies are available on the welcome table.

Food at First

It is always challenging to find people available to help during the holidays, so please consider joining us on Saturday, December 26. Please call me if you have any questions.

Ed Gillott

Delightful Delight in Giving

On behalf of the Vestry and Stewardship Committee sincere **thanks** to everyone who participated in this year's "Delightful Delight in Giving to St. John's"!

To the 'cast' of the skits: Liz Keys (actor/director), Bruce Bjorklund (also power point expert), Helen McRoberts, Laurie Bryant and Nick Yancey) and of course our special "angel", Ian Warren; the parishioners who spoke on 'What St. John's Means to me': (Sally Greve) and 'How I Approach Stewardship", Jim Stone and Bill Gutowski (who graciously stepped in due to family emergency); Katie Joiner and Liza Domek who, like children, everywhere ask questions; Jim Stone who designed the flyers; Deb Fisher, who wrote the parish 'budget' letter, Marie Anderson who re-wrote the scripts to fit St. John's; Mary Kay and Alan Abbott who set up and decorated the Parish Hall; the musicians: Wendy (McCay) Nutini and Gabe Burns who played and Jane Ringwald who accompanied. Plus the wonderful Kitchen Crew headed by Joanna Muggli and Bronwyn Frame and assisted by Laurie Bryant, Margaret Dempsey, and many others! The desserts were delicious! Special thanks to everyone who pitched in to help with the clean up!

If you missed the skits this year please make a note to attend next year! If you were able to attend, please take a moment to thank these folks who helped with these stewardship evenings!

Church Picture Directory Project

Sponsored by the Episcopal Student Center

We have decided to extend the picture directory project to January 1 so that more church members can have their pictures included in the directory. There has been a huge interest in this project. Many of you have stopped in to have your pictures taken and many of submitted digital photos and paper prints to be included. Nancy will be taking pictures again on Nov. 29 and throughout December on Sunday mornings, and other times can be arranged. There is no charge for the photo shoots but there will be a charge for the completed directories in order to help the student center offset the loss of program funds from the diocese. Our goal is to have the directories available at the Annual Meeting.

Jim Tener, chaplain

Altar Guild News

Nineteen Altar Guild Members attended the Annual Meeting of the Altar Guild held on Saturday, November 21 at 9 a.m. in St. John's library. The meeting began with a short social time with refreshments. During this time members signed up for the 2010 schedule.

The business meeting opened with prayer by Fr. Al.

Changes in altar work which has been implemented this past year was covered. Fr. Al contributed information regarding reasons for the changes.

The Flower Chair, Ruth Swenson, contributed information regarding Monday Daisy's.

December 16, 2009 was announced as time reserved for cleaning brass and silver and general house cleaning in the Sacristy.

A drawing was held with Marie Anderson, Eileen Marshall, Jeannie Garcia, and Bob Elzer receiving door prizes.

Since the General convention will be held in late October 2010, the Annual Altar Guild meeting will be held the first Saturday in November 2010. This will avoid the conflict with the Ames Fair.

At the close of the meeting, all members gathered in front of the fireplace for a picture taken by Jeannie for the newsletter (see last page).

I wish to thank Coralie Lashbrook, Jean Griffen, Jane Zaring, Jeannie Garcia, and Bob Elzer for the great help in the cleanup process after the meeting.

Orvilla Elleby

Service of Lessons and Carols

You are all invited to the Service of Lessons and Carols at St. John’s on Sunday, Dec. 13 at 7 p.m. The choir is preparing a nice selection of Advent and Christmas anthems, the Piano Trio will play, there will be plenty of Christmas carols to sing, and there will be a nice reception afterward. Write this on your calendar. Where else can you find such great music during the holidays? An offering will be received to benefit the choir scholarship fund.

Choir Recordings Available

The Student Center has decided to make recordings of the choir available for sale as a way to offset the loss of program funds from the diocese. There will be a variety of recordings available, including anthems sung over the last five years, services of lessons and carols, including the Britten Ceremony of Carols that was performed in 2005, the Lamentations of Jeremiah, and others. These CD’s are being produced in house and copied by the students to save on costs. We hope you will all want to own some of these recordings performed by one of the top church choirs in central Iowa. The CDs sales will begin on Dec. 13 and will continue to be available until there is no more demand.

**Christian Formation/Education News
Sunday Programs for Children and Youth**

December Godly Play Story line up:

Date	G P Classic	G P Extreme
Dec 6	St. Nicholas	Circle of the Church Year
Dec 13	Advent story	St. Nicholas & Teresa of Calcutta
Dec 20	NO CLASS	NO CLASS
Dec	NO CLASS	NO CLASS

Godly Play Classic is especially for children ages 3 to kindergarten but also a great place for children new to Godly Play to start. These students will meet in the east half of the parking lot level classroom. They will hear the basic stories of Godly Play which are also the foundational Christian and Episcopal stories important for all of us to know in our hearts and minds.

Godly Play Extreme is for children 1st through 6th grade. These students will meet downstairs in the northwest classroom. In addition to the foundational stories, they will hear more about individuals in the old and new testaments as well as some of the saints we recognize throughout the liturgical year.

EYC (Episcopal Youth Community) Schedule

Date	Sunday mornings	Sunday Evenings
Dec 6	9 am Teen class (7 th to 12 th)	5 pm Journey Night (7 th to 12 th)
Dec 13	9 am Teen class (7 th to 12 th)	5 pm Angel Tree Gift Wrap (6 th to 12 th)
Dec 20	NO CLASS	NO EYC
Dec 27	NO CLASS	NO EYC
Jan 3	Youth Breakfast	NO EYC

EYC Meals: Thank you to **Anita Nichols and Milly Ozinga** for dinner on Nov 1, to **Leigh Ann Long and Susan Fritzell** for dinner on Nov 15, and to **Judy Kavanagh and Marie Anderson** for dinner on Nov 22. December meal signups include: **Jen Matthews** on Dec 6 and the **Levis family** on Dec 13.

Save the Date for future St. John’s Events:
Godly Play Orientation and Door Person Workshop January 10, 2010 - more info to follow.

Confirmation Class: In preparation for the Bishop’s visit in February, St. John’s started confirmation classes on November 18. The following class dates are on Wednesdays from 7:15 to 9:15: Dec 2 Lesson 2, Dec 16 Lesson 3, Jan 6 Lesson 4, Jan 20 Lesson 5, Feb 3 Lesson 6,

and Feb 10 Wrap-up and rehearsal for Sunday Feb 14 service. Please keep those preparing for confirmation and reception in your prayers. From the Book of Common Prayer pg 819 "O God, you prepared your disciples for the coming of the Spirit through the teaching of your Son Jesus Christ: Make the hearts and minds of your servants Jim, James, Ian, Sicily, Andrew, Zach and Jennifer, ready to receive the blessing of the Holy Spirit, that they may be filled with the strength of his presence; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen"

Save the Date for future Diocesan Events:

Ski Trip January 15 to 17, 2010 Dubuque

Happening #28 March 26 to 28 in Des Moines

New Beginnings #4 April 23 to 25 at Pictured Rock Camp in Monticello

Episcopal Diocese of Iowa Camp for 3rd to 12th graders June 27 to July 2 at Pictured Rock Camp in Monticello

Ministry Retreat July 23 to 25 in Grinnell

Day with the Bishop August 21 in Des Moines

Happening #29 September 4 to 6 location TBA

New Beginnings #5 October 8 to 10 location TBA

Diocesan Convention and Youth Conference October 29 to 30

Looking for a way to help at St. John's?

Nursery: The playroom is sometimes very full on Sunday mornings at the 10 am service. Would you be willing to be a child care helper on call? To keep the children safely supervised we should have 1 adult for every 5 children. This fall we have had 10 to 12 on some Sundays. We are preparing a list of adults to be on call to help Katie if needed. If you are willing to serve in this way, please contact Diane Bjorklund at 233-4715 or DianeBjorklund@mchsi.com for more information.

Godly Play: One or two additional adults are needed to help when our regular leaders are out of town or individuals are under the weather. There will be an orientation and training on Sunday January 10. If you are interested please contact Diane Bjorklund at 233-4715 or DianeBjorklund@mchsi.com or speak to Greta Levis or Jen Matthews on Sundays at St. John's.

EYC: The teenagers at St. John's need adults (not just parents) to transport and attend with them Diocesan youth events. St. John's should send 1 adult for every 5 youth when an event is scheduled. For an explanation of what is required to be a chaperone, please contact Diane Bjorklund at 233-4715 or DianeBjorklund@mchsi.com.

October 20, 2009 Vestry Minutes

Fr. Al Aiton called the meeting to order at 7:00pm with the Order of Evening Prayer. Members present were Mary Kay Abbott, Margaret Dempsey, Jim Fisher, Bronwyn Frame, Jeremy Long, Helen McRoberts, Bob Ozinga, Scott Saienga, Jim Stone, Carol Vleck and Dorothy Yoerger. Coralie Lashbrook was absent. Also present were Fr. Al, Jim Tener, Diane Bjorklund, Ed Gillott, Nick Yancey and Victoria Farwell.

For our Time of Study, Fr. Al introduced Pastor Martha Kester and Chris Arnold. Martha and Chris told of their parish experience in hosting a Faith Alive Weekend at St. Luke's in Des Moines.

Minutes: Minutes of the September 15th meeting were approved as e-mailed.

Ministry Area: Diane Bjorklund reported the New Beginnings Weekend was a great experience and thanked the volunteers who helped to make it a success. Diane's report on Christian Education is attached. Jim Tener, Nick Yancey and Victoria Farwell spoke of their desire to help raise funds to contribute to the activities of Campus Ministry in programs and Student Outreach. Three ideas were presented: Recycle bins for cans and bottles at St. John's, producing a parish picture directory of families, students and individuals and Tee Shirts such as "Ten Reason's to be an Episcopalian" to be sold. Dorothy Y. reported the Stewardship Skits are organized and will be presented on Nov 1 and Nov 2 at 7:00pm

Property Area: Ed Gillott reported that he and Jeff Iles are getting bids on landscaping the East slope of the parking lot where trees were removed. There is a need to take steps to prevent erosion. Ed provided the first estimate from

Country Landscapes, Inc. Additional estimates will be presented in the near future. Plantings around the building will need to be eliminated or replaced in the spring as well as some preventative maintenance. Estimates will be forthcoming. Fr. Al reported the lower level ladies room is completed and air conditioning repairs were made this past month.

Parish Life Area: Scott S. reported that there is a need for new leadership in the coffee hour. Scott will talk to the present leaders about a training session for volunteers and a search for a director.

Financial Area: Jim Fisher submitted the current Financial Statement. Scott S. moved and Jeremy L. second. The attached report is approved. Carol V. and Dorothy Y. moved and seconded to approve our Diocesan Pledge for 2010. Jim F. presented the attached 2010 Proposed Budget. Helen M. and Scott S. moved and seconded to accept this budget. Motion approved. Fr. Al announced the Endowment Committee will be meeting soon. Members are: Fr. Al, Scott S., Doug McCay, and Alan Abbott.

Unfinished Business: Scott S. and Carol V. volunteered to develop job descriptions and begin a search for leadership in the Faith Alive Weekend.

New Business: ISU Political Science and PEO have asked for permission to serve alcohol at their November meetings. Jim S. and Carol V. moved and seconded. Motion approved.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.
Respectfully submitted, Mary Kay Abbott, Clerk