

The Ambassador

December 2011

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

A vital, eclectic Episcopal congregation committed to the ministry of all the baptized

From Our Priest

2011 Stewardship Letter

Dear St. Stephen's friends,

"The fundamental reason for all acts of stewardship – gratitude for the abundance we have been given."

- Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori,
Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church

I love that definition of Stewardship and I think it captures our own understanding of Stewardship here at St. Stephen's.

Certainly, we are experiencing God's abundance at St. Stephen's: yesterday – All Saints Sunday – we had almost 80 people in church as we welcomed four new members and fellow ministers into our midst and celebrated a baptism. In all, 24 new members have joined our congregation in 2011, which has put our membership over 100 members – the first time our membership has reached triple digits since the 1980s.

So, how do we respond to this abundance?

First, we should take a few moments and reflect on our place at St. Stephen's. In a congregation that is steadily growing, it might often be hard to find our place. But there are ways we can help and participate in this wonderful growth.

Second, we can (and should) pledge. All Episcopalians are asked to make a financial pledge based upon a percent of their income. This kind of giving is based on the scriptural and Episcopal Church standard of what is called the tithe (or ten percent of

one's income). In the Hebrews scriptures, the practice of tithing was simply a way of returning to God ten percent of all that had been received from God. The early Jews believed that by giving a portion of something away, the remaining part was made holy. This kind of sacrifice was, and is, a very practical way of dedicating all of life to God.

Third, we are faithful stewards by giving of our talents. Each of us has been blessed by God with various talents. These talents are what make us unique. Some of us have a gift for music, others for the physical upkeep of buildings, others for their artistic vision, others for their gift to make things beautiful, others for teaching. Each of us has something special that we can share here at St. Stephen's.

Fourth, we are good stewards by being faithful ministers. Each of us as baptized Christians is called by God to serve – to serve God and to serve others in love. Ministry here at St. Stephen's takes many forms – liturgically (in the worship service), musically, in outreach and in sharing God's goodness and love with others in whatever small ways

Finally, we are good stewards in our overall gratitude. We should give thanks to God and to each other regularly for the graces we have been granted to us as a congregation.

In all these ways, we show our gratitude for the abundance that God has granted to us here at St. Stephen's. In addition, we also share in the on-going and vital ministry of our congregation.

On **Sunday, November 20**, the celebration of gratitude will continue. **Stewardship Sunday** is the time in which we celebrate the exciting ministries at St. Stephen's and consider how we may show our gratitude for the abundance we have been given.

On Stewardship Sunday November 20, please plan on attending the 11:00 celebration of Holy Eucharist, and stay for the lunch following the Eucharist, which will be hosted once again by the Vestry.

As we near Stewardship Sunday, please consider tithing from your monetary income. But just as seriously consider the ways in which you serve God and God's people through the ministry each of us has been called to do here.

Finally, **THANK YOU**. Thank you to all of you who have worked so hard and so patiently to make St. Stephen's what it is. I am personally so grateful for each and every one of you as I pray for you by name through the course of the week in my daily prayers. I sometimes almost can not believe that God has been so good to call me to a place where I can serve alongside a community of people who are committed to God's love, justice and service to others. Thank you again and again!
-peace,
Jamie+

Thanksgiving Eve

Join us on Wednesday, November 23, at 7:00 pm for our Thanksgiving Eve Eucharist. We will once again be joining St. Mark's Lutheran and Elim Lutheran for our celebration. Pastor Sue Koestermann will preach, Pastor Mark Strobel will celebrate and Fr. Jamie will officiate.

A pie social will be held following the service.

Christmas Eve

Our Christmas Eve Eucharist will be at 8:00 pm on Saturday, December 24. Fr. Jamie will preside and preach and there will be a children's drama.

Around the Parish

Baptisms

Braxton Marshall Haugen, the son of **Whitney and Barney Haugen**, was baptized on November 6, 2011.

New Members

Four new members were welcomed at St. Stephen's. They are **Annie Lindley, Catherine and Michael McMullen and Dan Nygard**. Congratulations and welcome!

Children's Chapel Update

This year the children will be decorating the Advent Jesse Tree in the nave. Each Sunday in Advent they will add the Jesse Tree ornaments corresponding with the dates leading up to Christmas. They will also have lessons on the Advent Wreath, the church liturgical calendar, St. Nicholas, Christmas and Epiphany.

This past fall the children completed lessons on Creation, Noah, the life of Moses, the call of Abraham and the Sacrament of Baptism. After Epiphany the lessons will focus on the life of Jesus.

We have a good team of dedicated leaders who prepare the lessons each Sunday. Our hope is that more children will attend regularly and that they will look forward to this special time prepared for them.

YWCA Unique Boutique

The Unique Boutique is a program of the YWCA that provides families utilizing the services of the YWCA an opportunity to shop for presents for their immediate family members. Donations of

new gifts are needed – see the list below. **Please bring your gifts to St. Stephen's NO LATER THAN Sunday, December 4**, for delivery to the YW (thanks to Carol Spurbeck who has volunteered to do the delivery). You may drop off your own gifts through Monday, December 5.

Infant/Toddler

- Learning & musical toys
- Duplo & soft blocks

Children

- Toys (non-violent)
- Games (electronic, board, cards)
- Legos
- Sports equipment
- Action figures (non-violent)
- Doll accessories
- Craft sets (bracelets, stencils, etc.)

Teens

- CDs/DVDs
- Sports Equipment
- Clothing
- Jewelry
- Movie passes & gift cards
- Girl & boy bath sets

Women

- Purses
- Robes, pajamas, slippers
- Manicure sets
- Hair straighteners
- Candles, pictures, art
- Perfume or bath sets

Men

- Wallets & watches
- Tool sets & gadgets
- Sports equipment
- Clothing & gloves
- Sports memorabilia
- Electronics
- DVD players
- Digital cameras
- CD & MP3 players

Christmas Eve Liturgical Drama

Following up on the popular success of our children's nativity drama last year, we are continuing this year. During the service while the nativity gospel is read, the children act out the story in costume. There are no large time commitments or lines to memorize. This year, the service will be earlier in the evening so that all children can attend. We are casting for Mary, Joseph, shepherds, angels, and a variety of animals. Please contact William Weightman at weightmanw@gmail.com with child's name, desired role, and approximate clothing sizes.



New Directories Available

The new St. Stephen's directories are available at church. Pick up a copy on the counter in the entry way. Because no publication is perfect, here are a few additions to the new directory. Please add these to your copy of the directory.

In the main section of the directory:

add Annabel DuFault (daughter of Beth);

b. June 24

add Annie Lindley (contact information not yet available)

add Parker Montgomery; b. February 5

PO Box 2164

Fargo, ND 58107

701-293-0305

change Laura Nylander's e-mail address to

peachlj@aol.com

In the "Other" section of the directory:

add phone # for Joanne Droppers

207-767-5426 (in addition to cell #)

change Larry Volk's address by adding

Apt. #1

Any other corrections or additions may be passed along to Fr. Jamie or to Sandy Holbrook.

Editor Kim Baird
kbaird@cableone.net

Mosquito Net Update

In 2011, congregations in our diocese contributed a total of \$6768 for the Millennium Development Goals/Episcopal Relief and Development effort to purchase treated mosquito nets. The nets are distributed in 17 countries in sub-Saharan Africa where malaria is endemic. Over a million people die each year from malaria; the majority of those deaths are children. Use of treated mosquito nets has proven to be very successful in reducing malaria deaths.



The 2011 amount is enough to purchase 564 nets @ \$12, which includes the education and monitoring needed to use them effectively. The mosquito net project will continue in our diocese during 2012. The goal is to gather enough donations for an additional 436 nets to make a grand total of 1000. Please continue to put your coins and bills (checks are always accepted, too - please mark "mosquito nets") in the milk jug or the table jars in the undercroft to help supply treated mosquito nets. During the 2011 effort, St. Stephen's was a major contributor to the total diocesan collection.

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church Prayer Chain - 2011

If you would like to request prayers for any reason, please contact any of those listed below, and they will contact others on the Prayer Chain:

Betty De La Garza	218-456-2293	bettypatnaude@yahoo.com
Sandy Holbrook	232-1667	slholbrook@cableone.net
Lavonne Marubbio	280-0436	mlavonnemarubbio@msn.com
Laura Nylander	h: 233-6016 w: 284-2276	lnyles@aol.com
Jamie Parsley+ (cell)	701-793-1953	apium@aol.com
Betty Spur	235-3917	(none available)
Gin Templeton	701-371-5544	gin-su@hotmail.com

Schedule of Ministries at St. Stephen's for December - January

Schedule	December 4	December 11	December 18	Christmas Eve December 24	December 25
Acolyte	Meister	Weightman	Holbrook	Marubbio	Weightman
Altar Guild	Spurbeck	Spurbeck	Holbrook	Holbrook/ Hauan	Holbrook
Worship Ldr/ EM	Meister	Stewart	Marubbio	Hauan	Baird
Lector	Marubbio	Baird	Johnson	Stewart	Hauan
Usher	Baird	Holbrook	Stewart	Marubbio	Hauan
	Marubbio	Nylander	Wilking	Wilson	Coffey
Euch. Visitor	Baird	Holbrook	Hauan		Holbrook
Coffee	Nylander	Mackay/ Weightman	Templeton		Baird
Cleaning	Marubbio	Nylander	Nylander		Holbrook
Children's Chapel	Stewart	Templeton	Hegge		no chapel
Schedule	January 1	January 8	January 15	January 22	January 29
Acolyte	Holbrook	WayneGuite	Marubbio	Meister	Weightman
Altar Guild	Marubbio/ Lindley	Marubbio/ Lindley	Nylander	Nylander	Spurbeck
Worship Ldr/EM	Hauan	Holbrook	Wilking	Meister	Stewart
Lector	Holbrook	Johnson	Stewart	Meister	Nylander
Usher	Baird	Nylander	Wilking	Coffey	Marubbio
	Marubbio	Stewart	Wilson	Holbrook	Nylander
Euch. Visitor	Baird	Hanan	Holbrook	Marubbio	Baird
Coffee	Holbrook	Berger	Gelinske, B&T	Marubbio	Ranney
Cleaning	Holbrook	Ranney	Ranney	Coffey	Coffey
Children's Chapel	no chapel	Ranney	Stewart	Templeton	Hegge

*Communion is available for those who are unable to attend Sunday worship. Please call the church to request communion after the Sunday service.

**If you are unavailable to serve on a date when you are assigned, please find a substitute and let James (evensong2@gmail.com) know who the substitute will be as early as possible so he can include the correct names in the bulletins. THANKS.

December 2011

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 <i>Nicholas Ferrer/C. de Foucault</i>	2 <i>Channing Williams</i>	3 <i>Francis Xavier</i>
4 2 ADVENT 11:00 H.E. Children's Chapel	5 <i>Clement</i>	6 <i>Nicholas</i>	7 <i>Ambrose</i> 6 pm H.E.	8 CONCEPTION B.V.M.	9 <i>Fr. Jamie's day off</i>	10 <i>Karl Barth/Thomas Merton</i>
11 3 ADVENT 11:00 H.E. Children's Chapel	12	13 <i>Lucy</i>	14 <i>John of the Cross</i> 6 pm H.E.	15 <i>J. Holden/R. McDonald</i>	16 <i>Cram, Upjohn, LaFarge</i>	17 <i>Garrison & Stewart</i>
18 4 ADVENT 11:00 H.E. Children's Chapel 6 pm Lessons & Carols	19 <i>Lillian Trasher</i>	20	21 ST. THOMAS 6 pm H.E.	22 <i>Henry Budd</i>	23 <i>Fr. Jamie's day off</i>	24 CHRISTMAS EVE 8 pm Christmas Eve H.E.
25 CHRISTMAS DAY 11:00 H.E. no Children's Chapel	26 ST. STEPHEN 6 pm H.E.	27 ST. JOHN 6:30 pm Healing H.E.	28 HOLY INNOCENTS 6 pm H.E.	29 <i>Thomas Beckett</i>	30 <i>F.J. Gaudet</i> 5:30 Wedding (off site)	31 <i>S.A. Crowther</i>