

# The Ambassador

January 2012

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

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

## From Our Priest

Dear friends at St. Stephen's,

As we head into the season of Epiphany and the new year of 2012, I can't help but look back and realize how wonderful the seasons of Advent and Christmas were. The church was filled on both Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings and at Christmas Eve and Christmas morning Eucharists.

This past Sunday (January 8) I shared in my sermon a wonderful quote from Barbara Brown Taylor, an Episcopal priest and one of the best of the current crop of spiritual writers. Brown writes:

"When I hear people talk about what is wrong with organized religion, or why their mainline churches are failing, I hear about bad music, inept clergy, mean congregations, and preoccupation with institutional maintenance. I almost never hear about the intellectualization of faith, which strikes me as a far greater danger than anything else on the list. In an age of information overload, when a vast variety of media delivers news faster than most of us can digest--when many of us have at least two email addresses, two telephone numbers, and one fax number--the last thing any of us needs is more information about God. We need the practice of incarnation, by which God saves the lives of those who

intellectual assent has turned as dry as dust, who have run frighteningly low on the bread of life, who are dying to know God in their bodies. Not more about God. More God."

I love her quote and I especially love how she articulates very well what is happening here at St. Stephen's. We are putting our money where our mouth is, so to speak. We are doing the ministry we have been called to do and we are worshipping the God we have been called to worship. Rather than talking about ministry and worship, we are actually doing them. And that does make a difference.

We see this most clearly in how people stepped up to the plate during Advent and Christmas. I would like to thank all you who helped out in various ways and I apologize in advance if I left anyone out.

Thanks especially to our wonderful musicians - **James Mackay** and **Michelle Gelinske** and **William Weightman** and **Leah Elliott**. The music was particularly beautiful.

Thank you to all of all the **acolytes**, **worship leaders**, **lectors**, **greeters** and **ushers** and everyone who worked hard behind the scenes. The **Altar Guild** did

a wonderful job once again of making our church beautiful.

Thank you to the **Children's Chapel leaders** who ably led Children's Chapel.

Thank to **William Weightman** for his patience and care in making the children's Christmas tableau such a beautiful success.

Thank you once again to **Annette Morrow** and the **Morrow family** for the donation of the absolutely lovely nativity set, which is has been the source of much praise.

Thank you for **Sandy Holbrook** for finding a Christmas tree for the nave.

Thank you to **Alice Hauan** for preparing gifts for the children.

Thank you to **Joy Coffey** for coordinating Christmas flowers.

Thank you also to **Fr. Oliver Herbel** for leading a very meaningful discussion of St. Stephen following our St. Stephen's Day Mass.

Thank you to **Stephanie Ness** for making the King's Cake for the Epiphany Mass and for **John Baird** for setting up and cleaning up for the time of fellowship following the Epiphany Mass.

My personal thanks to everyone who remembered me with wonderful gifts for Christmas.

I am deeply grateful to each and every one of you for being part of this wonderful family of St. Stephen's.

My love, prayers and blessings be with each of you for a safe and prosperous 2011. And I ask your prayers as well as we look forward to a very bright future together at St. Stephen's in 2011 and beyond.

peace,  
Jamie+

### Fr. Jamie on vacation

Fr. Jamie will be on vacation February 6-20. Pastor Mark Strobel of St. Mark's Lutheran Church will cover any pastoral emergencies during that time. Please contact Pastor Mark at St. Mark's Lutheran Church (235-5591) if you have any pastoral concerns or emergencies.

Pastor Mark will preside and preach at St. Stephen's on Feb. 12 and Fr. Charles Cherry will preside and preach on February 19.

Our lay leaders will lead us in Evening Prayer on Wednesday Feb. 8 and Feb. 15.

### Around the Parish

**Annual Meeting** The annual meeting of St Stephen's Church will be Sunday, January 29, 2012. A potluck will precede the meeting in the undercroft. More information will be arriving soon in a postcard.

### Births

**Julia Marie Breth**, the daughter of Janie and Adam Breth, and sister to Justin Rudnick, was born Dec. 30 in Fargo. Her baptism will be held at St. Stephen's on Feb. 5.

### Weddings

**Jennifer Ellefson** and **Justin LaGosh** were married at Gethsemane Cathedral on Dec. 30. Fr. Jamie officiated, James Mackay played organ and Michelle Gelinske played piano for the wedding.

### Deaths

**Penny Lundseth Johnson**, a former member of St. Stephen's, died Nov. 10, 2011 in Chandler, Arizona. When she was a member of St. Stephen's, Penny served in the choir. Her memorial service was held in Arizona.

**Kathryn Laclerc**, the mother-in-law of **Leo Wilking**, died Jan. 4, 2012. Her memorial service was held on January 9 in the Mavis Whiting Chapel, Bethany Retirement Living, Fargo.

## The Blessing of Chalk Homes at Epiphanytide

On Wednesday, January 4, we commemorated the Feast of the Epiphany at our regular Wednesday night Mass with a traditional "Blessing of the Chalk" and "Blessing of the homes of the parish"

Since the Middle Ages there has been a tradition that on (or near) the feast of the Epiphany we pray for God's

blessing on our homes, marking the entrance with chalk (an incarnational image reminding us of the dust of the earth from which we were made). We mark the main door of our home with the initials of the Magi and the numerals of the new year, connected with crosses:

**20 + C + M + B + 12**

The initials remind us of the legendary names of the Magi – Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar – and also stand for the Latin motto: *Christus mansionem benedicat*, "May Christ bless this house." In the Book of Exodus, the Israelites marked their doors with blood so that the Lord would pass over their homes; but in this ritual, we mark our doors with chalk as a sign that we have invited God's presence and blessing into our homes.

It is traditional to write the inscription on the lintel, above the door, but it can be written anywhere near the entrance. The following prayer may be said while the entrance is marked:

The three Wise Men,

C        Caspar,  
M        Melchior,  
B        and Balthasar followed the star  
          of God's Son who became human  
20       two thousand  
12       and twelve years ago.  
++       May Christ bless our home  
++       and remain with us  
          throughout the new year. Amen.

May this Epiphany Blessing be a reminder that Christ is incarnate in the

love and care we manifest to each other in our ordinary daily lives together.

Even if you are unable to make it to the Epiphany Eve Mass this year, the chalk will be available for anyone who would like to use it as a blessing on their homes.

*Text from St James the Great, Haydock, UK, via St. Paul's, Pawtucket.*

## Allotments

The Vestry has approved these year-end allotments:

this year's Christmas Offering of \$445.00 has been designated to go to the FM Rape and Abuse Crisis Center;

the 1% seminary money will be sent to Nashotah House (Fr. Jamie's seminary) for a female seminarian;

the MDG fund (0.07% of our disposable income) will go to the diocesan ERD/MDG mosquito net project.

Other budgeted contributions have been made to

the Sudanese Mission Fund,

the East African Scholarship fund

the Guatemala Mission Fund.

## Coffee Hour Hosts –

### try some team work?

A number of people, as part of their time and talent pledge, have offered to serve as a coffee hour host in this

coming year. If those who signed up would like to work together with another individual/family in this Sunday ministry of hospitality, please feel free to find someone(s) with whom to work. For scheduling purposes, let Sandy Holbrook ([slholbrook@cableone.net](mailto:slholbrook@cableone.net) or 232-1667) know you've teamed up with someone else, and she will adjust the monthly schedule to reflect the team.

If you would like to know who else has signed up to prepare coffee on Sundays in order to find a partner, e-mail Sandy for the list.

## Pre-Service Coffee Hour

St. Stephen's now has a pre-service coffee hour the second Sunday of each month. This is an informal gathering and a chance for people to talk and visit.

The pre-service coffee hour is not the responsibility of the person scheduled for the normal after service coffee hour. It is an informal gathering. The first person to arrive simply puts on a small pot of coffee and if desired can bring a few treats (completely optional).

The next pre-service coffee hour is February 12. If you are attending, you can plan to arrive between 10:00 – 10:15 AM. The pre-service coffee hour concludes at 10:45 AM for the 11 AM mass.

## Contributions welcome but. . .

Contribution of paper products (toilet paper, paper towels, paper napkins) are most welcome. Currently, we could use more toilet paper and paper towels. If you wish to contribute in this way, please drop off your paper items on a table in the undercroft or on the kitchen counter by the refrigerator. THANKS.

Although many donations are welcome at St. Stephen's, leaving food in the church refrigerator is generally not one of them. Bad things happen to food left in our refrigerator.



In an effort to keep our refrigerator clean and sanitary, please offer any leftovers

from coffee hour or potlucks to someone who can use them or take them home. It's the "right" thing to do. Thanks.

FM Veg will host

## Occupy Fargo-Moorhead Chili Feed and Fundraiser

Saturday, January 28, 6:00 p.m.,  
at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

Robin Monahan, who works with MoveToAmend, will be the guest speaker. He will be speaking about corporate personhood. Robin is a member of St. Christopher's Episcopal Church in Roseville, MN and is well-known for as a political agitator for social justice at St. Christopher's.

## YWCA needs

The YW's emergency shelter and transitional housing programs are in need of the following items. You may leave donations in the narthex in the basket marked "YWCA" and they will be delivered.

- Gas and grocery gift cards
- Kids toothbrushes and toothpaste
- Unscented lotion
- Deodorant
- Toilet paper
- Hair conditioner
- Hand sanitizer
- Baby wipes and lotion
- Body wash
- Shaving cream/razors
- Cold sore meds, Imodium, Pepto-Bismol, nighttime cold medicine

A complete list of needs is available at [www.ywcacassclay.org](http://www.ywcacassclay.org)

### St. Stephen's Episcopal Church Prayer Chain - 2012

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
Mark Meister	701-388-9437	markmeister123@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 February and March

The following schedule of ministries for February and March reflects time and talent pledges for 2012.

Schedule	February 5	February 12	February 19	February 26
<b>Acolyte</b>	WayneGuite	Marubbio	Holbrook	Meister
<b>Altar Guild</b>	Spurbeck	Coffey	Coffey	Marubbio
<b>Worship Ldr/ EM</b>	Baird	Holbrook	Meister	Marubbio
<b>Lector</b>	Stewart	Templeton	Weightman	Wiling
<b>Usher</b>	Stewart	Wilson	Coffey	M. McMullen
	Wiling	Holbrook	Coffey	Nylander
<b>Euch. Visitor</b>	Baird	Holbrook	Marubbio	Baird
<b>Coffee</b>	Stewart	Templeton	Baird	Berger
<b>Cleaning</b>	Stewart	Stewart	Wilson	Wilson
<b>Children's Chapel</b>	Ranney	Stewart	Templeton	Hegge
Schedule	March 4	March 11	March 18	March 25
<b>Acolyte</b>	WayneGuite	Holbrook	Marubbio	Meister
<b>Altar Guild</b>	Marubbio	Holbrook	Holbrook	Nylander
<b>Worship Ldr/EM</b>	Stewart	Wiling	Holbrook	Baird
<b>Lector</b>	Baird	DuFault	McMullen	White
<b>Usher</b>	Wiling	Stewart	Coffey	Holbrook
	White	Wilson	Coffey	McMullen
<b>Euch. Visitor</b>	Marubbio	Holbrook	Baird	Marubbio
<b>Coffee</b>	Coffey	Huan	Holbrook/ DuFault	Nylander/ McMullen
<b>Cleaning</b>	Wiling	Wiling	Coffey	Coffey
<b>Children's Chapel</b>	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](mailto:evensong2@gmail.com)) know who the substitute will be as early as possible so he can include the correct names in the bulletins. THANKS.*