

The Ambassador

December 2017

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
Monthly Newsletter

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



From Fr. Jamie

As we travel together through these wonderful seasons of Advent and Christmas, we are reminded that God is with us. That Spirit of our living, breathing God dwells with us. And God is being proclaimed in the message we carry within each of us. When we welcome people radically, when we embrace those no one else will embrace, when we love those who have been hated, when we are hated for loving those who are hated, we know that all we are doing is bringing the Kingdom of God not only closer, but we are birthing it right here in our midst. Paul tells us in his letter to the Thessalonians: "do not be weary in doing what is right."

Those words are our battle cry for our future here at St. Stephen's. Those words are the motto for the new Church we represent. Let us not be weary in doing what is right!

We are doing the work God has given us to do and we cannot be weary in that work. We are sustained. We are held up. We are supported by that God. But we must keep on doing so with love and humility and grace.

St. Stephen's is an incredible place. We know it. Others know it. God knows it.

So, as we move together toward the new year of 2018, let us be thankful. Let us continue our work – our ministries. And as we do, as we revere God's Holy Name, let see what happens. Let us prepare ourselves for the many blessings God will continue to bring to us.

-peace,
Jamie+



Pledge In-Gathering on December 3

We have heard these past few weeks that stewardship can be thought of as "all that we do with all that we have all the time." Guidance for thinking about our own stewardship, and that of the church, can be found in scripture.

A consistent theme across the lessons from our Thanksgiving Eve service is that God is the source of our bounty; our gifts, our treasures, and our very being. Therefore, we should be grateful for the abundance of God's blessings. As Paul writes, "God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work." (2 Corinthians 9:8).

Please keep this in mind as you are contemplating how you can contribute to ministry at St. Stephen's through the Time and Talent forms and the financial pledge card. **The pledge in-gathering is Sunday, December 3.** As an item of administration, the estimate of income for next year's budget is based on information provided on the pledge cards. Consequently, returning the time and talent forms and pledge cards by December 3, or very soon after, is important so we can budget for the coming year. Reminder: Recording Secretary, Laura Nylander, is the ONLY person who knows individual's pledge amounts.



Wednesday Night Eucharists during Advent

Once again this year we will have a rotation of special preachers at our Wednesday night Eucharists during Advent. James Mackay will be playing at these services as well. The Mass begins at 6:00 p.m. and supper at a local restaurant will follow.

Wednesday, December 6 - *Feast of St. Nicholas*
Dan Rice will preach

Wednesday, December 13 - *Feast of St. Lucy*
Annette Morrow will preach on St. Lucy

Wednesday, December 20 - *Eve of the Feast of St. Thomas the Apostle*
Amy Phillips will preach



Sunday, December 24 - IV Advent/Christmas Eve

11:00 am Holy Eucharist
Fr. Jamie, *celebrant/Sandy Holbrook, preacher*
James Mackay, *music*

7:00 pm - Holy Eucharist
Fr. Jamie, *celebrant/preacher*
James Mackay, *music*
Christmas tableau for the children during the reading of the Gospel

Monday, December 25 - Nativity of Our Lord
10:00 am Holy Eucharist
Fr. Jamie, *celebrant/preacher*
James Mackay, *music*

Wednesday, December 27 -The (transferred) Feast of St. Stephen
6:00 pm - Holy Eucharist
Fr. Jamie Parsley, *celebrant/preacher*

Dear Friends, Family, and Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Thank you for your continued prayers and support over the past several years through the discernment process while I consider if the Spirit is calling me to Holy Orders. I'm writing to provide you all an update on where I am in the process.

Both our parish of St. Stephen's and our Bishop, Carol Gallagher, have asked the Episcopal diocese governing Minnesota to consider admitting me into their program. After a discernment weekend, together this past summer with some of their members, they have asked for an additional year of time together to get to know me better. As such, they would like me to join their wider discernment group for the 2017-18 year, with us meeting once a month in central Minnesota. I will be attending this group and look forward to gaining their support as we get to know one another.

That does adjust our potential schedules a little bit. Assuming everything happens at its earliest possibility, we'd be looking at the following possibility:

Fall 2018: Enter Postulancy

Fall 2019: Enter Candidacy

2020/21: Ordination to Diaconate

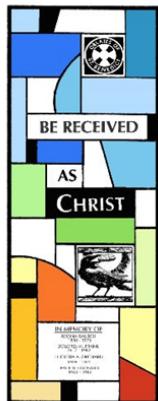
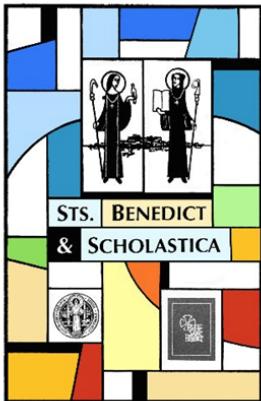
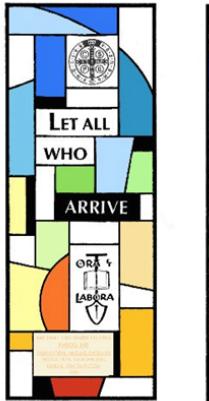
2021/22: Ordination to Priesthood

As for where such orders would lead us to serve, that has yet to be revealed. The future of the church is one relying on bi-vocations: in other words, part-time clergy that have an outside job to support themselves. As such, I am continuing to develop myself in Information Technology and my career there.

I ask for your continued prayers, thoughts, and support as I listen for the Holy Spirit.

Your brother in Christ,

William



Gaudete Sunday – Dedication of Sts. Benedict & Scholastica Window

Join us on Sunday, December 17, as we celebrate "Rose" Sunday or Gaudete Sunday. We will also dedicate and bless our next stained glass window, commemorating Sts. Benedict and Scholastica.

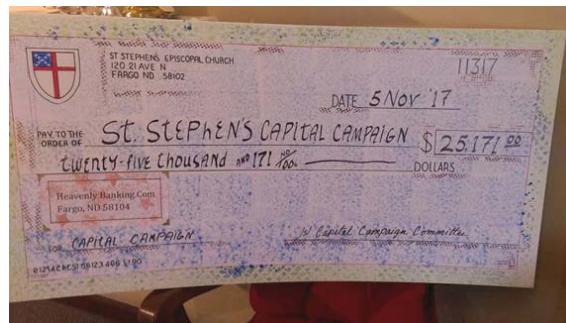


Adult Education Session

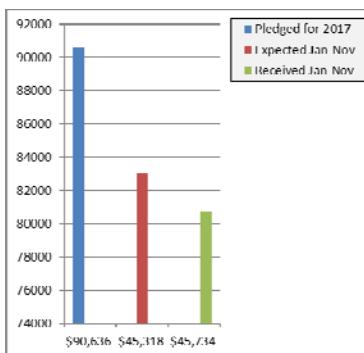
On December 3, Mike Morrissey will be facilitating a discussion of "The Christian Church in Chaucer's Canterbury Tales." This Adult Education session will examine the Christian religion through the eyes of Geoffrey Chaucer's pilgrims as they wend their way to Canterbury – what were they saying about their faith as they traveled their journey? All necessary materials will be furnished. Everyone is welcome!

2017 Capital Campaign

The capital campaign ended on October 29, 2017, but contributions were collected for an additional two weeks from those who were successful bidders on silent auction items and those who attended a wine tasting event at the church on November 8, 2017. The total raised during the seven-week campaign which began on September 10, 2017, was \$18,781. When added to the \$7,800 already designated for capital improvements, the resulting grand total was \$26,581. This far exceeded the original goal of having \$20,000 available to fund new undercroft windows, new front doors, an upgraded electrical system, new carpet in the rectory, and other projects. Thanks go to the many generous members and former members of St. Stephen's, and its many friends, who made the campaign such a success.



"We are deeply grateful at the close of a very successful month-long capital campaign. A deep and heartfelt thank you to everyone who contributed so generously. Thank you also to an incredible Capital Campaign Committee of Leo Wilking, Mike Morrissey, Beth Demmons, and Amy Phillips." — Fr. Jamie



2017 Pledge Update

Many thanks to all those who have been faithful and timely with their pledge payments for this year (2017). Unfortunately, as we approach the end of the year, our pledge income has fallen behind the anticipated pledge amount.

The graph shows the level of shortfall. Please note that pledge income is the primary source of financial support for our congregation's life, mission, and ministry. We have a number of budgeted, one-time commitments to be paid in December. Those commitments increase the normal monthly expenditures, so pledge income will be particularly important this month. If you are uncertain about whether your pledge is current, please contact Laura Nylander at 218-233-6016 or peachlj@aol.com. If, for any reason, you are unable to maintain your 2017 pledge, please contact Laura as well.

Rectory Christmas Party

Please join Fr. Jamie in the mid-century wonder that is the St. Stephen's Rectory (117 20th Ave N, right behind the church) anytime after 7:00 pm on Friday, December 15, as he hosts the congregation. He will have his authentic 1955 aluminum Christmas tree set up.



Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting for St. Stephen's will be Sunday, January 28, following our morning service of Holy Eucharist. Please join us for this important meeting.

Around St. Stephen's



In case you might not have seen it, we are now proudly flying the Episcopal flag in front of the church. Thank you to Steve Bolduc for setting up the flag pole for us.

Other News

Fr. Jamie officiated at the re-committal service for **George Mitchell** at Riverside Cemetery on November 8.

The ashes of **Dr. George Osland** were buried on November 11, at Mayville Cemetery, Mayville, ND. Fr. Jamie officiated at the committal service.

Be tender to someone today; and you will be the face of God. Perhaps someone will be tender to you, and you will see in them the face of God.

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

120 21st Ave N, Fargo, ND 232-2076
Fr. Jamie's cell 793-1953

St. Stephen's web site: ststephensfargo.org
St. Stephen's blog spot: www.ststephensfargo.blogspot.com



St. Stephen's hosted a wine tasting on November 8 as part of its Capital Campaign. The evening was a rousing success and there was much learning about ecclesiastical wine through the ages.



New windows were installed in the undercroft in November.



Giving Tree of Hope

During Advent, St. Stephen's will again participate in the Giving Tree, sponsored by First Link. This project provides Christmas gifts to children and special needs adults who would otherwise not receive them. Starting December 3, a tree will be in the gathering space decorated with tags indicating the age and gender of someone who needs a gift. Sheets with suggestions and instructions will be placed near the tree. Gifts are due back at church by December 17, and will be distributed by First Link on December 19.

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

Schedule	December 3	December 10	December 17	December 24	December 31
Acolyte	Anderson	Kristofer Sando	Meister	Katie Sando	Holbrook
Altar Guild	Nylander	Sando	Sando	Bolduc	Bolduc
Worship Ldr/EM	Holbrook	Meister	Weightman	Wilking	Anderson
Lector	Templeton	Weightman	Wilking	Anderson	Baird
Usher	Phillips	Sando, K	Wilson	Anderson	Baird
	Rice	Sando, P	Wilking	Anderson	Clark
Euch. Visitor	Anderson	Baird	Clark	Weightman	Holbrook
Coffee	Phillips/Rice	Nylander	Sando	“treat potluck”	Tackling
		Rice			
Cleaning	Bolduc	Bolduc	Clark	Clark	Holbrook
Children's Chapel	Leader: Morrissey Assist:Tackling	Leader: Morrissey Assist: Templeton	Leader: Bolduc Assist: Weightman	No Children's Chapel	No Children's Chapel
Schedule	January 7	January 14	January 21	January 28	
Acolyte	Rudnick	Anderson	Kristofer Sando	Katie Sando	
Altar Guild	Hauan	Hauan	Holbrook	Holbrook	
Worship Ldr/EM	Baird	J Sando	Holbrook	Meister	
Lector	Bolduc	Clark	DuFault	Hill	
Usher	Bolduc	Marubbio	McMullen	Nylander	
	Hill	Marubbio	McMullen	Wilson	
Euch. Visitor	Anderson	Baird	Clark	Weightman	
Coffee	Andersons	Baird	Marubbio	Clark	
		Holbrook	Wilson	Templeton	
Cleaning	Holbrook	Marubbio	Marubbio	Rice	
Children's Chapel	Leader: Clark Assist: McMullen	Leader: Gelinske Assist: Gelinske	Leader: Morrissey Assist: Holbrook	Leader: Rice Assist: Tackling	

*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.

NOTE: January schedule is based on 2017 Time/Talent pledges since 2018 Time/Talent pledges are not yet available.