

The Ambassador

February 2018

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church Monthly Newsletter

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



Our Sympathy and Prayers

Our sympathy and prayers to Fr. Jamie on the death of his mother, Joyce Parsley, on January 28, 2018. May she rest in eternal peace.

Fr. Jamie on Vacation

Fr. Jamie is on vacation January 29 through February 14. While he is gone:

John Baird will officiate at Morning Prayer and William Weightman will preach on February 4.

Sandy Holbrook will officiate at Morning Prayer and Jessica Miller will preach on February 11.

There will be no Wednesday night services on January 31 and February 7.

If there are any pastoral emergencies, please call the church and leave a message. One of the wardens will be checking messages daily.

Adult Education – February 25

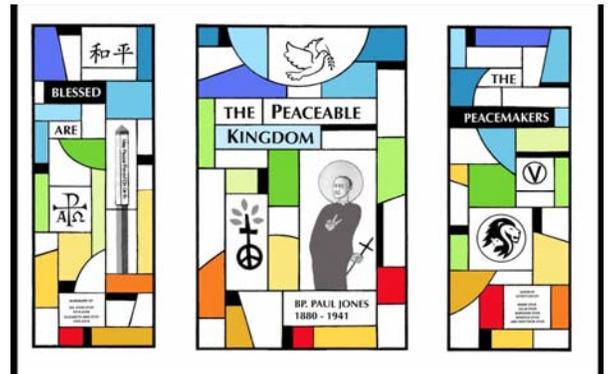
On Sunday, February 25, at approximately 12:45 p.m., Dan Rice will facilitate a discussion of "What Does the Bible Mean to Me?" This will be an opportunity for session participants to talk about the Bible's meaning to them individually and to all of us collectively. No advance preparation is necessary.

Shrove Tuesday/Mardi Gras



We will once again have a Shrove Tuesday pancake supper beginning at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 13. Please plan to celebrate the last day before Lent begins! Free will

offer. Net proceeds will go to Churches United for the Homeless – overflow project.



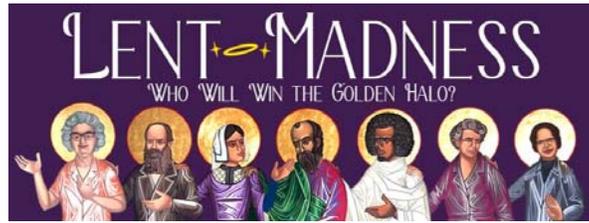
Stained Glass Window News

The next stained window, The Peaceable Kingdom window, will be dedicated and blessed on March 11. This window, commemorating our ministries of Peace and Social Justice, will be dedicated in memory of Dr. John and Elizabeth Spur by their children. The central figure in the window will be Blessed Paul Jones. Jones was the former Bishop of Utah and the founder of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship.

The final window, The Blessed Sacrament, will be dedicated next summer.

Heart-felt thanks to all the many wonderful contributors who have made these wonderful windows a reality. Thank you also to Gin Templeton for designing these beautiful windows and for the Michael Orchard Studio in Fargo who are building and installing them.





Lent Madness - the Sainly Smack Down!

For the ninth year running, people worldwide are gearing up for Lent Madness, the “sainly smack-down”, in which thirty-two saints do battle to win the coveted Golden Halo. Based loosely on the NCAA basketball tournament, this unique competition pits saints against one another in a single-elimination bracket as voters choose their favorites throughout the penitential season of Lent. William Weightman has ordered materials so that St. Stephenites can participate if we choose.

William will share more about Lent Madness on Sundays and will have the materials available. Check out this novel option and gather with William during fellowship time after the service to learn more about Lent Madness.

Here is how it works: on the weekdays of Lent, information is posted at <http://www.lentmadness.org> about two different saints. Each pairing remains open for 24 hours as participants read about and then vote to determine which saint moves on to the next round. Sixteen saints make it to the Round of the Sainly Sixteen; eight advance to the Round of the Elate Eight; four make it to the Faithful Four; two to the Championship; and the winner is awarded the coveted Golden Halo.

The first round consists of basic biographical information about each of the 32 saints. Things get a bit more interesting in the subsequent rounds. You’ll see as Lent goes along.

This year Lent Madness features an intriguing slate of saints ancient and modern, Biblical and ecclesiastical. The 2018 heavyweights include Peter, Paul, Esther, and Anna. The full bracket is online at the Lent Madness website.

This all kicks off on “Ash Thursday,” February 15. If you are looking for a Lenten discipline that is fun, educational, occasionally goofy, and always joyful, join the Lent Madness journey. Lent need not be all doom and gloom. After all, what could be more joyful than a season specifically set aside to get closer to Jesus Christ?



Lenten Wednesday Night Eucharists & Soup Suppers

We will, once again, be commemorating the 40 Days of

Lent with special liturgies on Wednesday nights. Mass is at 6:00 pm each Wednesday, with soup and bread following the liturgy.

We will also be hearing a series of preachers at our Wednesday evening services.

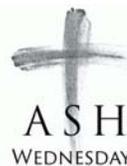
Wednesday, February 21 –Dan Rice

Wednesday, February 28 – John Anderson

Wednesday, March 7 –Sandy Holbrook

Wednesday, March 29 –Annette Morrow

Wednesday, April 5 – Amy Phillips



Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday Eucharist will be held on Wednesday, February 14, at 7:00 p.m.

I recently found the following practical ways of observing Lent that I hope will help you as well during this Lenten season . - Fr. Jamie

Five Things To Do During Lent

By + David McMannes

Here are five things to do with single-mindedness this Lent which, if you do them, will give you a clearer vision of the Risen Christ, come Easter.

Fasting and Abstinence

Here's a simplified elucidation of fasting and abstinence: Abstinence lowers the quality of food (usually by not eating meat) and fasting lowers the quantity, and usually means not more than a light breakfast, one full meal, and one half meal daily each fast day. Therefore, the rule is "keep it smaller and keep it simpler. " Smaller portions of food, and simpler menus. Don't eat so much during Lent. Not because you necessarily have to lose weight, but because the practice will give you strength in your spiritual life by weakening the attractions of the sensate pleasures. Fasting makes the waistline shrink and the heart get larger, and abstinence makes the heart grow fonder. Indulge in both fasting and abstinence during Lent, and you will have a clearer vision of the Risen Christ, come Easter.

Praying

For the forty days of Lent, start and end each day with prayer. Read Morning and Evening Prayer and/or **Family Prayer**. Dust off that old grace you used to say before eating - spend some table time in quiet reflection and prayer instead of chattering and chomping. Pray daily, making sure you indulge in all the qualities of Christian prayer - adoration, thanksgiving, petition, penitence, and invocation. Pray daily, and you will have a clearer vision of the Risen Christ, come Easter.

Bible Reading

Do this daily also, and if you haven't availed yourself of reading the Daily Office of morning and evening prayer, you are missing out on the opportunity the Church has given you for daily study and reading of Holy Writ. There's solace, insight, encouragement, grace and a whole lot more in scripture, and that can't be said about any other book in your library. The Good Book is precisely that, and those who read it daily learn how to be good - godly - themselves. Read Holy Writ daily, and you will have a clearer vision of the Risen Christ, come Easter.

Corporate Worship

Corporate worship is a basic Christian duty. Our prayer book puts it succinctly, telling us that part of our bounden duty is to **worship God every Sunday in God's Church**. Doing so brings us understanding, strengthens our faith, gives us hope, fills us with encouragement, and gives us the first-hand experience of being loved by God - and that gives us the ability to love others more fully. There is nothing we can do on Sunday morning that is more important than being in God's House and being fed by His grace-filled presence in the Blessed Sacrament. Make a commitment not to miss one single Sunday in God's House this Lenten season. Jesus told us to *this do*, (**Luke 22:19; 1Cor 11:24-25**) so let's do it together, every single Sunday, and you will have a clearer vision of the Risen Christ, come Easter.

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Works of Mercy

The final step is to, as the prayer says, **do all such good works as ... [God]...has prepared for us to walk in.** There are fourteen 'works' which enable us to put our faith in Christ into action in our life. They are both spiritual and temporal and are as follows:

Spiritual Works Of Mercy

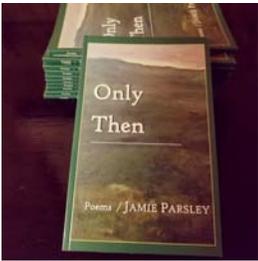
(1) converting the sinner, (2) instructing the ignorant, (3) counseling the doubtful, (4) comforting the sorrowful, (5) bearing wrongs patiently, (6) forgiving injuries, (7) praying for the living and the dead.

Corporal Works Of Mercy

(1) feeding the hungry, (2) giving drink to the thirsty, (3) clothing the naked, (4) harboring the stranger, (5) visiting the sick, (6) ministering to prisoners, (7) burying the dead.

Finally, and no doubt most importantly, let your Lenten lapses and failures, whatever they may be, serve only to increase your dependence upon God. None of us will do all we want to do during Lent. That's the human condition. The point is not to get a good grade; the point is to increase your capacity to love God and your neighbor.

After all, Lent is a time to learn how to love - God's way - once again. That's the whole point of the season!



Fr. Jamie Publishes 13th Book of Poems

Fr. Jamie has published his thirteenth book of poems. *Only Then*, a book of 51 new poems, was published on January 22nd by Pilgrim Soul Press in West Fargo, North Dakota. Pilgrim Soul Press is run by Dan Nygard, a member of St. Stephen's. Pilgrim Soul also published collection of poems by our own Ken Bennett. The cover art is by St. Stephen's own Gin Templeton.

Denise Lajimodiere, author of *Dragonfly Dance*, wrote of *Only Then*, "What a remarkable collection! In *Only Then*, Jamie Parsley's rich poetics, and musical language, reveal a purity of emotions - poetry of heightened awareness. Jamie's lyrical poems are meant to be read, re-read, and lingered over, the reader returning to them transformed. Parsley reminds us 'But now it is the time for the poems to awake...' And indeed they do in this elegant collection. You will love this book."

Marjorie Buettner, author of *Some Measure of Existence*, wrote, "[In] this new book of poems...there are palpable images which reach deeply into a subterranean realm, subconscious images which sing to the hidden heart. There are poems of disturbed sleep, restless dreams, and a longing that leans into the next life. He utilizes short Marianne Moore-like line breaks which pause then leap like a gazelle into the next stanza all of which captivates...This book will open your heart and speak intimately of that liminal place where dreams do come true, and poems 'wake from their dreaming,/to open their once-silent mouths/and sing.'" Copies of the book are available at local book stores, on Amazon, or from Fr. Jamie himself.



New Stewardship Committee Requesting ad hoc Membership

The vestry voted at its January meeting to create a stewardship committee that would develop a stewardship education plan for St. Stephen's congregation; a plan to be implemented in 2018. The plan will incorporate the broader awareness of stewardship as "all that we do with all that we have all of the time." One focus of the plan will be on providing information to the congregation about the importance of, and ways to make, financial contributions to, St. Stephen's (such as pledging, planned giving, etc.). The committee, which is currently comprised of two vestry members, invites volunteers to join the committee on an ad hoc basis to carry out the development and implementation of the stewardship education plan. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Steve Bolduc at srbolduc@gmail.com

New Refrigerator

The new refrigerator has arrived - funded by money raised during last year's Capital Campaign. Lots of very ancient and unusable food from the old refrigerator was discarded. Please do not leave leftovers from potlucks and Sunday coffee hour in the new refrigerator; take it home so it is not wasted!

laugh

A faithful parishioner stumbles through pouring rain past hamburger huts and steak houses into the monastery at Mount Angel and requests shelter. He's just in time for dinner and was treated to the best fish and chips he's ever had.

After dinner, he goes into the kitchen to thank the chefs. He's met by two brothers, "Hello, I'm Brother Michael, and this is Brother Francis."

"I'm very pleased to meet you. I just wanted to thank you for a wonderful dinner. The fish and chips were the best I've ever tasted. Out of curiosity, who cooked what?"

Brother Michael replies, "Well, I'm the fish friar." The man turns to the other brother and says, "Then you must be . . ."

"Yes, I'm afraid I'm the chip monk."

Daily Meditations for Lent

One of the resources available for our Lenten observance comes from Episcopal Relief & Development. They offer a daily meditation to which you can subscribe to electronically by going to <https://www.episcopalrelief.org/church-in-action/church-campaigns/lent> OR you can download a hard copy of the daily meditation booklet at the same site. This year's devotional focuses on early childhood development and features reflections written by faith leaders from across our Anglican family. These meditations explore how children inform our spirituality and what we can learn from their spiritual lives.

Stewardship:
*All that we do
with all that we have
all of the time.*



"As if Sunday isn't enough, he now wants us to introduce religion into our everyday life."

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

120 21st Ave N, Fargo, ND 701-232-2076 Church
701-793-1953 Fr. Jamie's cell

St. Stephen's web site: ststephensfargo.org
St. Stephen's blog spot: www.ststephensfargo.blogspot.com
St. Stephen's Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/52039214842/
St. Stephen's Twitter: twitter.com/ststephensfargo
St. Stephen's Instagram: www.instagram.com/ststephensfargo/

Schedule of Ministries at St. Stephen's for February-March

Schedule	February 4	February 11	February 18	February 25
Acolyte	Anderson	Rudnick	Katie Sando	Kristofer Sando
Altar Guild	Marubbio	Marubbio	Phillips	Phillips
Worship Ldr/EM	Baird	Holbrook	Sando	Anderson
Lector	McMullen	Morrissey	Holbrook	Nylander
Usher	Phillips	K Sando	Anderson	Baird
	Rice	P Sando	Anderson	Clark
Euch. Visitor			Anderson	Baird
Coffee	Phillips	Clark	Morrissey	Sandos
	Rice	Templeton	Huan	
Cleaning	Rice	Holbrook	Holbrook	Bolduc
Children's Chapel	Leader: Bolduc Assist: Weightman	Leader: Clark Assist: Wilking	Leader: Gelinske Assist: Gelinske	Leader: Morrissey Assist: Holbrook
Schedule	March 4	March 11	March 18	March 25
Acolyte	Anderson	Holbrook	Meister	Rudnick
Altar Guild	Sando	Sando	Nylander	Nylander
Worship Ldr/EM	Baird	Meister	Holbrook	Sando
Lector	Phillips	Rice	P. Sando	Templeton
Usher	Marubbio	K. Sando	Hill	Wilking
	Marubbio	P. Sando	Nylander	Wilson
Euch. Visitor	Clark	Holbrook	Weightman	Anderson
Coffee	Marubbio	Tacklings	Andersons	Baird
	McMullens			Holbrook
Cleaning	Bolduc	Clark	Clark	Marubbio
Children's Chapel	Leader: Rice Assist: McMullen	Leader: Bolduc Assist: J. Tackling	Leader: Clark Assist: Templeton	Leader: Gelinske Assist: Gelinske

*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) now 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.