

The Ambassador

January 2018

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

Monthly Newsletter

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



From Fr. Jamie

I recently re-read 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...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 whose 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.

As we journey through the season of Epiphany, please do seek not only to know more *about* God, but seek to actually *know* God. And know that I am, in my own life, seeking the same. It's a great journey to be on together.

-peace,
Jamie+



Fr. Jamie on vacation

Fr. Jamie will be on vacation January 29-February 14. While he is gone there will be no Wednesday night masses, January 31 and February 7. Presiders and preachers at our liturgies will be announced in the Sunday bulletin.

If there are any pastoral emergencies, please call the church and leave a message. The messages will be checked daily by vestry members while Fr. Jamie is gone.



Annual Meeting - January 28

St. Stephen's will hold its annual meeting on Sunday, January 28, following Holy Eucharist.

We will enjoy a congregational potluck, elect wardens and vestry members, approve our operating budget, and review reports about the work of the church in 2017. If you have additional agenda items, please contact Fr. Jamie, senior warden Catherine McMullen, or junior warden Steve Bolduc.

Please plan on joining us for this important day as we plan for another year of service and ministry.

Adult Education – January 14

St. Aelred of Rievaulx was a 12th century Cistercian monk and abbot in Yorkshire, England. Aelred was a prolific author, writing biographies, histories, and spiritual works. On January 14, Steve Bolduc will lead a discussion of Aelred's book, *Spiritual Friendship*, in which he examines both the theoretical and practical aspects of friendship in light of faith in Christ. No prior reading is necessary, but Steve will be using the Christian Classics edition with commentary by Dennis Billy, C.Sc.R., though many translations and versions are available.

The Blessing of ChalkHomes at Epiphanytide

On Wednesday, January 3, we commemorated the Feast of the Epiphany at our regular Wednesday night Mass and the following Sunday we had our 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 + 18

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
18 and eighteen 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 were 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. Please be sure to pick it up at the church.

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



Shrove Tuesday

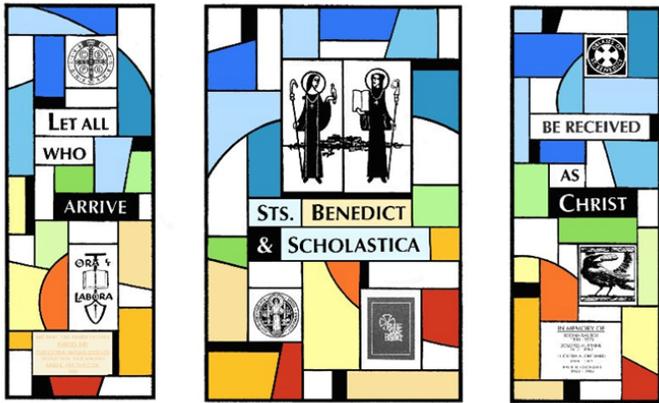
We will once again have a Shrove Tuesday pancake supper beginning at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 13. Please plan to celebrate the last day before Lent begins!

Ash Wednesday

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

Lenten Wednesday Night Eucharists

We will be commemorating the 40 Days of Lent with special liturgies on Wednesday nights, beginning on February 21. Mass is at 6:00 p.m. each Wednesday. More information will be in the February newsletter.



Michael Orchard and Nick Walberg from Michael Orchard Studio install the Sts. Benedict and Scholastica window.

Dedication of the Sts. Benedict and Scholastica Window

On the 3rd Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday), December 17, St. Stephen's blessed and dedicated the sixth (of eight) new stained glass window in the nave, designed by Gin Templeton. Depicting Sts. Benedict and Scholastica, the founders of the Benedictine order, the window commemorates St. Stephen's ministries of radical welcoming and contemplative worship. Several members of the congregation are Benedictine Oblates or associated with Benedictine groups.

The quote from the window, "Let all who arrive be received as Christ", is from the Rule of St. Benedict. The window was dedicated to the memory of Gin Templeton's grandmother, Regina Rausch, and Gin's mother, Dolores Frank, who died on December 17, 1962, 55 years before, to the day. Also memorialized in the window were the parents of the window's builder, Michael Orchard.

The seventh stained glass window in the nave, dedicated to Bl Paul Jones and the Peaceable Kingdom, will be dedicated and blessed in 2018. The window will be dedicated to the memory of Elizabeth and Dr. John Spur.

Giving Tree Success!

Thanks to the generosity of St. Stephen's members, dozens of children woke up to find beautiful gifts on Christmas morning. Through FirstLink, the project donated more than 4,500 gifts to area children and special-needs adults who otherwise would not receive them.

A special treat for many children were the beautiful doll quilts made and donated by the Quilters Guild of North Dakota. FirstLink offers many thanks to St. Stephen's.



Christmas at St. Stephen's



James Mackay and Michelle Gelinske provided beautiful music for all the Christmas liturgies.



We had some hearty helpers to help green the church on December 17.



A wonderful Christmas tableau (thank you to William Weightman)



Great Plains Food Bank - December 30

A St. Stephen's team of nineteen repackaged 3,390 pounds of potatoes into 5 pounds bags that will contribute to 2,825 meals. This was the biggest group from St. Stephen's to participate in this outreach effort to address hunger in our state (and Clay County Minnesota). The team included a wide range of youth and adults, as the picture shows. This service ministry provides a great way for people in our congregation to get to know each other better while contributing to efforts to address the problem of hunger in our region. In 2018, we will continue this ministry on at least four Saturdays: March 31, June 30, September 29, and December 29.



The nineteen volunteers included a family of four and a friend of Siri Froiland's, who joined us even though they don't attend St. Stephen's. Missing from the picture: Steve Bolduc, Annabelle DuFault, and Beth DuFault.



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 January-February

| 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 | Sando | Holbrook | Weightman |
| Lector | Bolduc | Clark | DuFault | Hill |
| Usher | Bolduc | Marubbio | McMullen | Nylander |
| | Hill | Marubbio | McMullen | Wilson |
| Euch. Visitor | Anderson | Baird | Clark | Weightman |
| Coffee | Andersons | Baird | Marubbio | Annual Meeting |
| | | Holbrook | Wilson | Potluck |
| Cleaning | Holbrook | Marubbio | Marubbio | Rice |
| Children's Chapel | Leader: Clark Assist: McMullen | Leader: Gelinske Assist: Gelinske | Leader: Morrissey Assist: Holbrook | Leader: Rice Assist: Tackling |
| 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 | Clark | Phillips | Morrissey | Sando |
| | Templeton | Rice | | |
| Cleaning | Rice | Anderson | Anderson | Bolduc |
| Children's Chapel | Leader: Bolduc Assist: Weightman | Leader: Clark Assist: Wilking | Leader: Gelinske Assist: Gelinske | Leader: Morrissey Assist: Holbrook |

*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.