

A Voice in the Wilderness

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST



January 2012

Epiphany

In this season of light the lessons read in worship reveal how Jesus' identity is made manifest, and in so doing, reveal to us our true identity. The glory of the Lord made manifest can also transform us to manifest who God desires us to be and become.

As the Magi brought gifts to Jesus for the living out of his identity, (gold for a king, frankincense for a priest, and myrrh for the embalming of a body) we too are given gifts for the living out of our lives as children and servants of God. We are each given diverse gifts, gifts of the Spirit, and gifts for the common good. Note that the word "common" is from the same root as community, and communion. It implies a sharing among equals for the common good of the entire community, just as we gather each Sunday for a communion meal which we deem holy because it unites us as Christ followers.

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When we live as people upon whom the light has shined, we see differently. We become aware. Like Isaiah, we become aware that the whole earth is full of God's glory. Like Jesus we become aware that the poor, the hungry, the mourning, those oppressed for faithfulness to God and God's commonwealth, are blessed in God's sight. As children of the light, we become aware that we have been given gifts for the living out our identity for the common good.

The light has come, and is now given to us to shine. Christ has revealed his glory, and it is now given to us to be transfigured by the light of his love.

Blessings,

Father Michael

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Senior Warden Report

Seasons Greetings! It has been a busy December for the Vestry. We held a meeting on the 16th to review the preliminary budget prepared by our treasurers. The Vestry will adopt the final budget for 2012 at their January meeting on the 20th. Also discussed was the progress on pledges which are still lagging a little from what is expected by this time of year. Part of the reason is your Senior Warden was late getting out some pledge cards! If you haven't sent yours in yet, please do so. The final budget will be based on the pledges we have received. Gary Piper has taken on the task of upgrading our website and is working with an organization affiliated with the Diocese. This has been a slow process, but Gary sees light at the end of the tunnel.

We set the date for the Annual Meeting: January 29 after services. Please plan to attend. Among the agenda items will be reports from the various St. John's ministries (Outreach, Worship, Children and Youth, Treasurer's, etc...), elections of Vestry members, reports (maybe) from the Rector, Deacon, Senior Warden, and Junior Warden and any misc. items as needed.

On December 23, members of St. John's served at the Granby Community dinner at the community center. These dinners are sponsored by Lord of The Valley Lutheran Church and St. John's takes its turn a couple times per winter. Thanks to all who participated by baking pies and serving meals. Thanks especially to Joan for being our liaison with the dinner organizer.

--BRAD--

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YOUR SEARCH COMMITTEE

The 'Survey', which is the first major step in the search process, is almost complete. Your committee has spent significant time constructing survey questions. Next comes the survey itself - which will be distributed via e-mail or snail mail some time in mid to late January, 2012.

The purpose of the survey questionnaire is to guide the committee in putting together the Profiles which will describe: Our Church; our community, and the characteristics that we collectively seek in our next Rector.

The Profiles will be our main sources of information to provide to potential candidates throughout ECUSA. Who are we? Who do we want to be in the future? Who do we want to lead us along the path?

Please remember that the new Rector, once installed, is the Chief Executive Officer of our Church.

If we are going to get this right, **WE NEED YOUR HELP!!!**

So, once you receive the Survey, **PLEASE** promptly complete and return it to us.

Thank- You.

For your committee, Ken Von der Heiden, Chair

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CHILDREN'S

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Dear Boys and Girls,

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Do you know what Epiphany is? You may have heard the song, "The Twelve Days

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of Christmas" and wondered what it meant. Epiphany marks the twelfth day of

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the Christmas season and on the Feast of the Epiphany, January 6, we celebrate the visit of the three Magi, or Wise Men who came to visit the baby Jesus in the manger in Bethlehem.

Not much is known about the visitors other than what Matthew records in the first book of the New Testament. Although there is no mention of the number of wise men, it has been assumed that there were three of them based on the three gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The symbolic nature of the gifts is that they were fit for royalty and they were being given to a child who was known to be the savior of the world. Religious tradition has even given them names: Balthazar, Caspar (or Gaspar), and Melchior.

We know they were from the East and looked up to the skies to study the stars in the heavens. They followed a star to Bethlehem, but contrary to the popular Nativity stories, they probably arrived a year or two after Jesus' birth.

We do know for a fact that wise men came and worshiped Jesus. It was an important enough event for Matthew to add it to his telling of the birth of Jesus. This was God announcing his son's arrival on the earth and the gift of God's awesome love for us!

The season of Epiphany runs from January 6th all the way to Ash Wednesday. During this season I invite you to think about what kind of gift you would like to give to the baby Jesus!

Blessings,

Deacon Diane

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I asked God

I asked God to take away my habit.
God said, No.
It is not for me to take away, but for you to give it up.

I asked God to make my handicapped child whole.
God said, No.
His spirit is whole, his body only temporary

I asked God to grant me patience.
God said, No.
Patience is a byproduct of tribulations; it isn't granted, it is learned.

I asked God to give me happiness.
God said, No.
I give you blessings; Happiness is up to you.

I asked God to spare me pain.
God said, No.
Suffering draws you apart from worldly cares and brings you closer to me.

I asked God to make my spirit grow.
God said, No.
You must grow on your own! But I will prune you to make you more fruitful.

I asked God for all things that I might enjoy life.
God said, No.
I give you life that you might enjoy all things.

I asked God to help me LOVE others, as much as he loves me.
God said...Ahhhh, finally you have the idea.

This day is yours. Don't throw it away. May God bless you.

***The above was taken from materials in a container with labyrinth materials. Author unknown.

-submitted by Kaye Piper

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January 2012

| SUN. | MON. | TUES. | WED. | THURS. | FRI. | SAT. |
|--|------|-------|------|--------|--|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 9 AM HOLY EUCHARIST | | | | | 3 PM CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER * 5:30 PM EPIPHANY WORSHIP | 8 AM MEN'S BIBLE BREAKFAST * 5 PM HOLY EUCHARIST AT CRANMER CHAPEL |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 8:45AM HOLY EUCHARIST | | | | | 3 PM CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER | 8 AM MEN'S BIBLE BREAKFAST * 5 PM HOLY EUCHARIST AT CRANMER CHAPEL |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 8:45AM HOLY EUCHARIST & SUNDAY SCHOOL | | | | | 3 PM CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER | 8 AM MEN'S BIBLE BREAKFAST * 5 PM HOLY EUCHARIST AT CRANMER CHAPEL |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 8:45AM HOLY EUCHARIST | | | | | 3 PM CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER | 8 AM MEN'S BIBLE BREAKFAST * 5 PM HOLY EUCHARIST AT CRANMER CHAPEL |
| 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | |
| 8:45AM HOLY EUCHARIST * ANNUAL MEETING FOLLOWING SERVICE | | | | | | |