

The Net Tender - December 2013/January 2014

St. Andrew & St. John Episcopal Church

315 Main Street • P.O. Box 767 • Southwest Harbor, ME 04679

Phone: Church Office 207-244-3229; Tim Fleck 207-812-8362

E-mail: saints315@myfairpoint.net / tim@mdi-episcopal.org

Website: www.saintsmdi.org

Office Hours: Monday · Tuesday · Thursday, 8:30 a.m.—2:30 p.m.

Priest-in-Charge

Timothy Fleck

Music Director

Stephen Sampson

Parish Administrator

Michele Daley

Editors

Jayne Ashworth

Anne Wetzel



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Newsletter of St. Andrew & St. John Episcopal Church

December 2013/January 2014

WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR?

I remember as a child many years being given an Advent Calendar as a gift. They were usually the kind where you opened a little perforated panel over each day to reveal a single piece of foil-wrapped candy. A little anticlimactic: even as a child I remember thinking that this was just busy-work to keep us kids distracted until the real story began on December 25.



As children, it was obvious what we were waiting for: the Big Day, Christmas, gifts, Santa, the whole nine yards. As children, we spent a lot of our time waiting: waiting for holidays and birthdays, waiting until we get there, waiting until dinner time, waiting until the adults around us finally got around to what was really important. As children, waiting was exquisite agony, and we were never really convinced that it would not kill us to wait one more hour for “we’ll see” to turn into “yes.”

As grown-ups we pride ourselves (some of us, anyway) on self-restraint, on the ability to delay gratification, on being responsible adults in control of our childish appetites and desires (frankly, the childish among us often think that self-restraint is highly overrated). Waiting in a road-construction zone or a line at the Post Office may try our patience, but we usually handle it without a tantrum. As far as waiting for Christmas, adults I hear from are more likely to be anxious because the holiday seems to be barreling down on us before we are ready for it.



Perhaps that’s because, unlike children, we’re not entirely clear what we’re waiting for. If we’re anticipating a high-stress, high-performance-anxiety circus, it’s no wonder we’re ambivalent or worse. If we’re feeling pressured to spend more money than we have for things we don’t need, it’s not surprising that we’re not eagerly hopping from foot to foot.

So what are we waiting for?

Are we waiting for the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem? Well, yes, sort of, but it’s a little awkward for us to be keyed up waiting for an event that happened over two-thousand years ago. What we’re really waiting for is for the calendar to come around to the commemoration of Jesus’ birth, and for our lectionary to slowly dole out the story of his conception and annunciation. We are essentially waiting for the punch line of a story that we have heard a thousand times before, and as much as children may enjoy hearing Goodnight Moon read exactly the same way every night, as adults we stop listening.

Are we waiting for Christ to come again? Well, yes, in theory. Every week in worship we affirm that “He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end,” but how many Episcopalians really believe that? The readings in Advent, especially in the first couple weeks, are all about the coming Day of the Lord, but do we hear them? Or do we do a sort of mental simultaneous translation so that we can hear these warnings as pre-historical, allegorical, mythological, anthropological, anything but relevant to our sophisticated, educated, grown-up lives?

continued on page 7

INSIDE:

Advent Opportunity	2
Anniversaries/Birthdays	6
Book Study	2
Christmas Fair and Lunch	4
Jeremiah’s Legacy	3
Mahjong Classes	7
Mutual Study of Ministry	4
Notes from the Organ Bench	6
Rector’s Notes	1/7
Resolution D035	3
Sr. Warden	2
Thank You Notes	6/7
Vestry Bullets	6
Westside Food Pantry	7
Worship Schedule/Scripture	5

After hearing lots of good, thoughtful input, I have decided to stay with two Sunday services. In order to allow more time for Forums between services, **the early service will be at 7:30 (instead of 8:00) and forums will begin at 8:30 effective January 5, 2014.** I anticipate that this will be the schedule until St. Andrew’s opens in the spring.

Tim

CHRISTMAS BRUNCH

On Christmas Day at 11:30 a.m., our parish will host an Island-wide Community Christmas Brunch at St. John’s. Come alone or bring family and friends. If you wish to help, please call Chloe at 244-4436. If you plan to attend, please leave a message with Michele or on the church answering machine at 244-3229.

If you no longer wish to receive the Net Tender or prefer to receive it by e-mail, please call the church office.

Deadline for articles for February Net Tender is January 26

HOW WOULD YOU COMPLETE THIS SENTENCE?

It wouldn't be Christmas without:

- snow on the ground.
- smelling balsam fir in the house.
- making a gingerbread house with the children/grand-children.
- going to a performance of Handel's "Messiah."
- spending a long day at the Mall.
- singing "Silent Night" at the end of the Christmas Eve service (lights lowered, please!)
- having stockings to fill.



Whatever rings your nostalgia bell, there is no doubt that this season overflows with memories, both good and not so good, and expectations, both fulfilled and unmet. One of my favorite memories is of the last day that Sandy's office (Met Life in New York City) would be open before Christmas. It was the custom for employees with young children to bring them in for a holiday party. I would get either Effie or Alex up early so that they would be ready for the long walk with Dad down the still dark driveway in time to catch the minibus to the station for the hour long train ride in to Grand Central.

Does anyone else remember the huge Kodak exhibit that used to dominate the Lexington Avenue wall?

Then they would usually walk down to 23rd Street although Sandy admits that they did take the subway on rare occasions for the office festivities, returning in mid-afternoon.

What this meant for me, of course, was one last chance to find and wrap all the hidden surprises and generally prepare for the days ahead! It was a win-win; we all loved the day but for different reasons.

Much of what we remember and much of what we deal with during these weeks seems overwhelmingly secular. We resent and resist the overly intrusive commercials that assault us from every direction. But I find that, often to my surprise, there are moments of "real" Christmas that pierce through all the tinsel. A familiar carol while I'm in Hannaford's will bring to mind my grandmother, humming that tune as she gets breakfast ready; a store clerk who has just dealt with an especially annoying customer will smile relief when I assure her that I'm in no rush and we will end by exchanging a very genuine "Merry Christmas." To me these are little indications that the Good News IS all around us at this season despite the distractions.

I suspect I am not alone in struggling to find more of the sacred in the midst of the secular. It's easy enough to find the baby Jesus and to "come and adore Him" as we will on Christmas Eve. The familiar story in Luke 'And it came to pass in those days...' takes us to the manger, with the angels and the wise men and memories of countless Christmas pageants, both dreaded and enjoyed!

The opening of John's Gospel: "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.." will also resound on Christmas. There is no pageant material here. Instead we have an incredibly concise beautifully phrased summation of the incarnation: God made man. That is what we are preparing for in Advent and what we will celebrate on December 25. We can observe and contemplate the manger scene but the core of our faith lies in John's cryptic words. Great minds have been pondering and interpreting these words for many centuries - I will be grateful for one brief flicker of insight that will help me incorporate the enormity of them into my life!

Merry Christmas to all!

Bunny Watts

ADVENT OPPORTUNITY

Do you yearn for a few quiet moments during this holiday season?

Do you like the "silent" church service?

Would you welcome the opportunity to hear a mini-sermon from Tim?

One or more "yes" answers makes you a perfect candidate for the weekly 12:30 Thursday service where as few as three and sometimes as many as ten gather to celebrate the Eucharist. All are welcome!

BOOK STUDY

The Education for Ministry group is inviting anyone who is interested to join them on Tuesdays, January 14 and 21 from 4:30-7:00 p.m. to discuss two supplemental texts: *Zealot: The Life and Times of Jesus of Nazareth* by Reza Aslan; and *And God Spoke: The Authority of the Bible for the Church Today* by Christopher Bryan. Books can be obtained from the bookstore, library or, if there is enough interest, copies could be ordered. Let Sarah Flynn sarahbf@myfairpoint.net or Jayne Ashworth jayne.ashworth@gmail.com know if you would like to buy a copy.

What Are We Waiting For? (continued)

One answer that comes up in a certain brand of anodyne preaching is that "we are waiting for the light of Christ to shine in our hearts." Okay, um, but why are we waiting? Can't Christ's light shine in our hearts every day of the year? Shouldn't it? Doesn't this sound a little like busy-work to keep us distracted?

If we really listen to what Jesus is saying, and to what Paul is saying, and to what John the Baptist and the Prophets are saying in our readings during Advent, distraction should be the last thing on our minds. The scriptures aren't talking about killing time until the show starts. They are talking about staying awake, being alert, keeping eyes peeled for the Kingdom of God breaking in all around us. Advent isn't about waiting for the story to start, it's about waking up and noticing the story that's already begun and seeing that we have a role to play in it. Advent does not call us to fuzzy self-distraction, but to the urgency and focus of a child whose only thought is the overwhelming, world-turning joy that they know is coming.

So what are we waiting for?

Tim+

WESTSIDE FOOD PANTRY UPDATE

The winner of the Judy Taylor painting was Robyn Maltz of Newton, MA. Jayne and David Ashworth's daughter, Kristy Berksza, of Norwood, MA (it is near Newton, and Kristy works in Newton), delivered the painting to Robyn. According to Kristy, Robyn was thrilled! Thank you, Kristy and her parents. Once again thanks to all the raffle ticket sellers and buyers, and of course to our artist, Judy Taylor. Together we raised over \$3500 for the food pantry.

Recorder player, Eileen Brennan and our pianist, Stephen Sampson shared their musical gifts on Friday, December 6th. They performed ten beautiful pieces, very beautifully--We were lucky to be there! The appreciative audience donated almost \$400 to the food pantry.

Upcoming Fundraiser!

Mark your calendars, Sunday evening, January 4th. Community favorites, fiddle player, Emma Walsh, and mandolin player, Pepin Mittlehauser, in performance at St John. ALL proceeds go to the food pantry.

In the Works:

Later in the winter, our three organists from MDI's Episcopal churches, Julia Morris-Myers, Peter Vaux and Stephen Sampson will perform in a food pantry fundraising recital, each playing pieces on our Hook and Hastings organ. Date and time to be announced. ALL proceeds go to the food pantry

What gifts we have been given.....

Thank you for helping us share our abundance.
Susan Buell

MAHJONG CONTINUES



Mahjong classes on Friday afternoons are proving to be a great deal of fun. Barbara Campbell has graduated two groups of three week classes so far and more are signed up to start on December 13. We continue to play at the church after graduation and look forward to having a large group to play through the winter. Please call Karen Craig at 244-5267 to sign up.
Karen Craig

Martha's Thank You

Thank you so much to everyone who helped make the St. John's Community Thanksgiving a huge success! We provided 60 meals for guests from all over the island as well as Trenton, Hancock, Ellsworth and Lamoine. So many of you volunteered to set up, cook, serve and clean up that everything ran smoothly. We especially are thankful for the help and attendance from members of St Saviour's. With the generous monetary donations that we received, we will be able to provide more free meals throughout the winter months.

With deep appreciation,

The Martha's



Birthdays

DECEMBER

3—Ginny Agar
4—Vicky Vendrell
12—Scott Hatcher
23—Floyd Parkman

JANUARY

8—Carl Storace
13—Rod Lucas
20—Peggy Walls
28—Bill Baker
30—Judith Obbard
31—Sally Clark

Wedding Anniversaries

DECEMBER

21—Peter and Judith Obbard

JANUARY

22—Paul and Margot Haertel

NOVEMBER VESTRY BULLETS

- Jeremiah's Legacy is the name given to the program for planned giving.
- The Annual Meeting will take place on January 19, 2014.
- On January 12, both Vestries will meet to write a list of questions to be given to small groups in order to perform a Mutual Study of Ministry.
- Since the Vestry acts as the Board of Directors for the Food Pantry, The Food Pantry is being organized as a Vestry Committee with Susan Buell acting as Vestry liaison.
- The Vestry passed a motion not to hire an assistant priest at this time.
- The Vestry accepted the concept draft of the 2014 budget as presented by the Finance Committee with a \$11,306 deficit.

Chloe Hatcher

Thank you note

I know there are so many "worker bees" behind the scenes keeping the ministry of our community going. Please share our love and appreciation to all who should be thanked!

With love and gratitude,

Anne Welles

NOTES FROM THE ORGAN BENCH

A musical goal for the coming year is to host an increased number of recitals at St. John's, to help establish our church as a community center of music, and to support the Westside Food Pantry through benefit recitals. We are well on our way already, as we have held one recital this December, and plans for events in early 2014 are bearing fruit.

In striving to expand our musical life and community participation, we would do well to emulate the 'Monday Holiday Music' series organized by Susannah Jones for many years beginning in the mid-late 1980s. I learned about these recitals through a conversation with Susannah at Thanksgiving time this year, and through a printed record of the recitals that Susan Buell shared with me. As one might guess from the name of the recital series, these concerts were presented on holiday Mondays, such as Labor Day, President's Day. They were generally held in the late afternoon, and the performances exemplified diversity with respect to the ages of the musicians and the styles of music played. The series included performances by Marilyn Dolliver's keyboard students; The Teahouse Trio, featuring Susannah Jones on cello, Marilyn Dolliver on piano, and Ruth Grierson on violin; the Labor Day String Chamber Orchestra; the St. John's Singers; the Maine Madrigal Singers; Amos Lawrence, violinist; songs by students of Carol Cramer; the MDI High School Flute Ensemble; guests of the Arcady Music Festival; musicians from the Longy School in Cambridge, Massachusetts; the Mount Desert Hand Bell Choir; the West Side Recorder Consort; and, in a community collaboration, a performance of "Amahl and the Night Visitors". It is clear that the musical life of St. John's was musically vibrant and community-oriented, reflecting the enthusiasm, imagination, and eclectic tastes of Susannah and the others who helped to organize the recitals. So as we say farewell to 2013, let's raise a baton in a toast for a musically exciting year in 2014 and beyond.

Stephen Sampson

JEREMIAH'S LEGACY

The Key to Our Future as a Parish

"For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope". Jeremiah 29:11.

At a time when Jeremiah and the Israelites were in exile and faced an uncertain future, God led Jeremiah to invest in real estate to prepare for the time when His people would move into the kingdom promised to them. Jeremiah's steadfast faith in God and in a future for His people was rewarded when God eventually delivered the Hebrews from exile.

The members of St. Andrew and St. John have an opportunity to invest in the future of our church to sustain a future of serving God and our neighbors. The time has come for us as a parish to take on Jeremiah's legacy, demonstrating faith in our future by making an investment, through our wills, in the endowment of our church.

We are already witnessing the power of bequests to supplement the revenue side of our budget: The legacy left by Charles Sawyer, for instance, has increased our endowment by more than \$400,000, resulting in an increased annual income of \$18,000, in perpetuity.

Very few of us will be able to leave our parish as generous a bequest as Charles Sawyer. But, if we all do what we can, together we will make a huge difference in the life of our parish over the next ten to twenty years.

We will call our shared effort to grow our endowment through bequests or other gifts "Jeremiah's Legacy", and its symbol will be a key, since the program is the key to our future and a symbol of our faith. (Remember the Palestinians, mentioned by Father Tim in a recent sermon, who wear the door keys of their dispossessed homes around their necks as a symbol of their faith in the future?)

Please prayerfully consider asking your attorney to add a bequest to St. Andrew and St. John to your estate plan. If you would like further guidance on types of gifts to discuss with your attorney, you may call Spencer Ervin. Once the bequest is made, please notify the parish. We will honor your privacy but celebrate your faith in our future.

Your Vestry thanks you.

The Doctrine of Christian Discovery: Understanding Its Origins and Acting on Episcopal Church Resolution D035

*A Sermon Preached by John Dieffenbacher-Krall
at the Parish of St. Andrew and St. John, SW Harbor, Maine, December 8, 2013*

John Dieffenbacher-Krall preached about the 15th Century Papal bull: the Doctrine of Christian Discovery and the long-term effects of European Colonization of the North American indigenous peoples, particularly in relationship to the Indian tribes of Maine. The Episcopal Church has been working hard to try to rectify these wrongs and is the first Christian Denomination to pass a resolution: Resolution D035 – "repudiating and renouncing the Doctrine of Discovery as fundamentally opposed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and our understanding the inherent rights that individuals and people have received from God." Mr. Dieffenbacher-Krall dedicated his sermon to Tina Baker. As we know Tina was very dedicated to the history and relationship of the Maine Indian tribes of this land and the settlers.

If you would like a copy of his sermon please call the church office.



MUTUAL STUDY OF MINISTRY
 The vestries of both parishes will be meeting with Canon Missioner Heidi Shott on Sunday afternoon, January 12, 1914 to begin a "Mutual Study of Ministry." This is an evaluation of how we are doing, and specifically an appraisal of our shared ministry over the last year and a half. Both vestries, the Diocese, and Father Tim all agreed to this process when we called Tim a year and a half ago. After the meeting of the vestries, there will be opportunities for all members to participate and log input.



Stephen Sampson (piano) and Eileen Brennan (recorder)
 December 6



Bob and Elaine Theriault
 celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary
 November 23, 2013



Christmas Fair
 Saturday, December 14
 8:00 am—2:00 pm

Wreaths
 Crafts
 Bake Sale
 Lunch

St. John Episcopal Church
 315 Main Street
 Southwest Harbor



Eddie Stanwood, Mary Mitchell, Susan Newman,
 and Karen Craig after preparing LOTS of wreaths.

WORSHIP SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER

Advent 3—December 15

9:00 — Holy Eucharist
 Psalm 146:4-9; Isaiah 35:1-10; James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11
 The Rev. Debbie Little Wyman

Advent 4—December 22

8:00 & 10:00 — Holy Eucharist
 Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18; Isaiah 7:10-16; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25
 The Rev. Tim Fleck

Christmas Eve—December 24

4:00 p.m.— Holy Eucharist at St. John's & St. Saviour's
 Psalm 96; Isaiah 9:2-7; Luke 2:1-14
 The Revs. Dean Henry and Alice Downs (St. John's)
 10:00 p.m.—Holy Eucharist at St. Saviour's
 Psalm 97; Isaiah 62:6-12; Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:8-20

Christmas Day—December 25

10:00 a.m.— Holy Eucharist at St. John's
 Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18; Isaiah 7:10-16; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25
 The Rev. Tim Fleck

Christmas Brunch after the service

The Feast of St. John—December 29

8:00 & 10:00 — Holy Eucharist
 Psalm 147:13-27; Isaiah 61:10-62:3; Galatians 3:23-25, 4:4-7; John 1:1-18
 The Rev. Dean Henry

WORSHIP SCHEDULE FOR JANUARY

Second Sunday after Christmas—January 5

7:30 & 10:00 — Holy Eucharist
 Psalm 84; Jeremiah 31:7-14; Ephesians 1:3-6, 15-19a; Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23

The Baptism of Christ—January 12

7:30 — Holy Eucharist at St. John's
 10:00 — **JOINT SERVICE** at St. John's
 Psalm 29; Isaiah 42:1-9; Acts 10:34-43; Matthew 3:13-17
 The Rev. Tim Fleck

Epiphany 2—January 19

9:00 — Holy Eucharist
 Psalm 40:1-12; Isaiah 49:1-7; 1 Corinthians 1:1-9; John 1:29-42
 The Rev. Tim Fleck

ANNUAL MEETING follows the service

Epiphany 3—January 26

7:30 & 10:00 — Holy Eucharist
 Psalm 27:1, 5-13; Isaiah 9:1-4; 1 Corinthians 1:10-18; Matthew 4:12-23

Thursdays: 12:30 p.m.—Holy Eucharist

December 5—Clement of Alexandria; December 12—Lucy;
 December 19—Thomas; December 26—Stephen;
 January 2—Vedanayagam Samuel Azariah; January 9—Julia Chester Emery;
 January 16—Richard Meux Benson and Charles Gore;
 January 23—Phillips Brooks; January 30—Charles I