

The Net Tender - December 2014 & January 2015

St. Andrew & St. John Episcopal Church

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The Net Tender

Newsletter of St. Andrew & St. John Episcopal Church

December 2014 & January 2015

WHO DO THEY SAY THAT WE ARE?

It's no secret that denominational identity is at an all-time low. While some of us may come into a new town and look for the nearest Episcopal parish, the truth is that the majority of folks of any Christian background are more likely to look for a church that is nearby, has the programs that they like, or that feels comfortable. Denominational labels are pretty irrelevant for many. Some congregations, even ones who are part of historic denominations, have begun to accept this change, calling themselves something like "Springfield Community Church," or "Crossroads Worship Center," perhaps with tiny letters underneath saying "a United Methodist Congregation." Some of us may find it important to say, "I'm an Episcopalian," many others are satisfied just to say, "I'm a Christian."



And that is great, if we are willing to say that we are Christian. For many, even that identity has become difficult to own. Perhaps it has to do with a particularly Evangelical use of the term, or perhaps it feels like a claim that we're not sure we can back up. Are you a Christian? Well, yes, I suppose so. I go to church. But I'm not like one of those super-Christians or anything.

What makes a person a Christian? Is it believing the right things? Is it being able to assert the Apostle's Creed? To pray the Sinner's Prayer? To say "Jesus is Lord?" Is being a Christian about worship: about going to church, being baptized and taking communion? Or is being a Christian about living rightly: keeping the Commandments and loving our neighbor as ourselves? It seems like it should be easy to tell if someone is a Christian, but it isn't necessarily.



Occasionally, there is a conversation among some Christians about whether a whole group of others is in fact Christian. When Mitt Romney ran for president, there were serious discussions about whether Mormons are really Christians. At other times there have been questions about Unitarians, or Quakers, or Jehovah's Witnesses. Who gets to decide what groups are Christian and what groups aren't? How differently can our brothers and sisters live and believe, and still be acknowledged as brothers and sisters?

Last month in the New York Times, Muslim writer Reza Aslan took some other Muslims to task for saying that the Islamic State and other extremist groups are "not really Muslim." Aslan says instead that "What both the believers and the critics often miss is that religion is often far more a matter of identity than it is a matter of beliefs and practices. The phrase 'I am a Muslim,' 'I am a Christian,' 'I am a Jew' and the like is, often, not so much a description of what a person believes or what rituals he or she follows, as a simple statement of identity, of how the speaker views her or his place in the world." In other words, one is a Christian if one identifies oneself as Christian.

But that, of course, leads us to the uncomfortable realization that we are part of the same body with some folks with whom we'd rather not be in the same room. If we're going to say that we are Christian, we have to take seriously the folks from Westboro Baptist Church who picket funerals, and polygamists from breakaway Mormon

ANNUAL MEETING, PART ONE Sunday, January 11, 2015:

At an official Parish Meeting on August 25, we passed two resolutions amending our Bylaws to move our Annual Parish Meeting from January to June, to allow seasonal members voting rights at that meeting, and to allow seasonal Vestry members voting rights on the Vestry. Since any change to the Bylaws requires passage by a majority of those present at two successive Parish Meetings, we will take these resolutions up again at our regularly scheduled Parish Meeting on January 11, 2015, immediately following the 9:00 service. After hearing reports on ministries and on the budget, we will vote on these two resolutions. If the change of date passes, the plan is immediately to place the meeting into recess until June of 2015, when we will reconvene for Part Two of the Annual Meeting, when we will conduct elections and all other business. That means that those folks whose terms as vestry, wardens, clerk and treasurer will "stretch" until June (terms do not end until the close of the Annual Meeting). Make sense?



INSIDE:

Anniversaries/Birthdays	6
Christmas Dinner	3
Congregational Pastoral Care	7
Community Meals	6
Feast of St. John	7
Forums/Wed. Explorers	7/3
Longest Night Service	4
Organist	3
Rector's Notes	1/2
Sonogee Service	2
Sr. Warden	2
St. John Creche	4
Thanksgiving & Giving	2
Vestry Bullets	6
Westside Food Pantry	7
Winter Service	5
Worship Schedule/Scripture	4/5

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 25

TRAVELS WITH “TON Y BOTEL”

Bunny Watts

If you were in church on the first Sunday of Advent you would have ended the service singing Hymn 721 in Wonder, Love and Praise: “Signs of endings all around us.” Perhaps you noticed something vaguely familiar about it, perhaps something not quite right. This hymn, to the tune with the weird name Ton Y Botel is a favorite of mine, long sung to the words “Once to every man and nation.” AHA you might be thinking!

The tune has its origin in Wales where it was widely sung as a folk tune prior to publication in 1890. During this time the legend sprang up that it was washed ashore on the coast of LLeyn, hence the name “tune in a bottle!”

Whatever the origin, the tune has had various manifestations (continual appearances since 1890) in Episcopal hymnody. The version I am most familiar with, as mentioned above, is based on a poem written by James Russell Lowell in 1845 deploring our involvement in the war with Mexico. The poem was rewritten in 1890 portraying man’s struggles to find the right path between good and evil and set to Ton Y Botel. It appeared in hymn collections in 1905 and 1916 as well as the 1940 hymnal. Some of the images of man’s never ending conflict to make the right choice may be too vivid for our modern tastes: for example the opening of verse 3, “By the light of burning martyrs, Jesus’ bleeding feet I track.”

The tune is used twice in the 1982 hymnal (#s 381 and 527) neither time including the wonderfully melodic lower parts. These are restored in the WLP version. Also restored is some of the bite and vivid imagery of the original: “Signs of endings all around us, darkness, death and winter days. shroud our lives in fear and sadness, numbing mouths that long to praise.” Happily the author Dean W. Nelson @1988 ends on a positive note: “Let your promised realm of justice blossom now throughout the earth.”

SO! Be watchful: the next time you’re near the beach you may find “Ton Y Arcadie!”

SONAGEE SERVICE

Michael Shook

St. Andrew & St. John is scheduled to lead the service at Sonagee at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday December 28. Please contact Michael Shook if you would like to be a part of this ministry.

WHO DO THEY SAY....(continued)

fundamentalist groups, and snake-handling Holiness preachers in Appalachia. We do not need to agree with them or condone their actions, but it is not up to us to say that they are not Christian, any more than it is up to other folks to say that we are not Christian because we ordain women and gay people.

Paul tells us in his first letter to the Corinthians, “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.... The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I have no need of you,’ nor again the head to the feet, ‘I have no need of you.’” We claim to be members of the Body of Christ, and are therefore co-members with all those who make the same claim. Co-members. Brothers and sisters. In need of one another. Called not to agree, but to love.

Jesus tells us in John’s Gospel, “By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” How simple that is to say; how difficult to live.

Feedback? I hope you will call or e-mail me to continue the conversation.

Yours in Christ’s Peace, *Tim*

TIME OF THANKSGIVING AND GIVING



Margot Haertel

At this time of year, we give thanks for what we have and share our “wealth” with those that need our help. Some organizations are world-wide in their scope, like Episcopal Relief and Development, UNICEF and Heifer International. Other agencies are focused on a particular part of the world. An example is Sustainable Harvest, a non-profit that assists farmers in South America to make a living, especially in areas where coffee is grown. This Advent the Diocese of Maine and Bishop Lane have created the Advent Campaign for Bucksport Mill Employees who are unemployed as of December 1 with the closing of the Verso Mill. For information about making donations you can pick up a flier at St. John or you can send a check make payable to the “Diocese of Maine” and note that the donation is for the **Advent Campaign**. You can also note donation options to Washington Hancock Community Agency, Bucksport Mill Crisis Fund, or the Good Shepherd Food Bank. For more information you can contact Margot Haertel, 244-0362.

WEDNESDAY EXPLORERS

Wednesday Explorers is a weekly open discussion forum, facilitated by Vesta Kowalski, which meets in the St. John’s Common Room from 1:30 to 3:00 on Wednesday afternoons. There’s a different topic each week; the topics are suggested and chosen by the group. Anyone is free to come once, occasionally, or regularly, and friends from outside the church community are welcome, too. Schedule of topics for mid-December through January follows (note that we will not meet on Christmas Eve or New Year’s Eve).

December 10 – *How did we come to faith?* We often find ourselves lamenting that the coming generations are not receiving the religious background that we did, and therefore don’t have the foundation for faith that we do. Is that true? Does our faith stem from Sunday School, personal experience, continuing education? Have we taken many different paths to faith?

December 17 – *How do we cast out fear?* It is increasingly clear that as a nation as well as individuals, we make many of our decisions based on fear. What is it that we fear? How might we live a life without fear? Does our faith help?

January 7 – *What about the Bible?* We think about the Bible and use it and relate to it in very different ways. Let’s talk about them.

January 14 – *What does a “confessing” church confess?* The Episcopal Church is a “non-confessing” church that doesn’t require its members to subscribe to any particular statement of faith. We’ll look at how some other denominations express their beliefs in “confessions” of faith.

January 21 – *What does “spirituality” mean anyway?* It’s a word that’s been used a lot over the last several decades, particularly in the phrase “spiritual but not religious.” Using an article by Stephen Charleston to start our discussion (copies available from Michele or Vesta for anyone who wants to read it in advance), we’ll talk explore the idea of spirituality and its possible relationship to another word that can be understood in many ways, “faith.”

January 28 – *(How) should the church be involved in politics?* We hear a lot about the separation of church and state, but does that mean that the church as an institution has no role to play in the life of the nation?

CONGREGATIONAL PASTORAL CARE

Joan Bromage

Our faithful volunteers continue to help out fellow parishioners and other friends wherever needed – with food, friendly visits, rides, errands, etc. Please let us know of anyone who needs assistance – yourself included!

Team members from St. John’s and St. Saviour’s will meet with the Rev. Jenny Reece at St. Saviour’s on Monday, January 5th at 5:30 p.m., to share in fellowship and news of what we’ve been doing, and to offer ideas for other ways to support our friends.

A few of us from each church will help host the January 6th and 20th COFFEE’S ON at the Seacoast Mission’s Colket Center. These mornings provide a great way to gather seniors from all over the island for visiting, refreshments and good cheer on a chilly winter morning, the first and third Thursdays of each month. Patsy Fogarty has worked very hard to get this program started, and Fred Benson was among the musicians at the event on December 2nd! Please let us know if you’d like to come! And...if you’d like a ride! You may contact Fr. Tim, Jenny, Vesta or me....Joan Bromage, 244-3227 or joan@bromage.us

THE FEAST OF ST. JOHN

Sunday, December 28, 9:00 AM

Our church in Southwest Harbor is named for St. John the Divine, otherwise known as John the Theologian, John the Revelator, or John of Patmos, who is probably not the same gentleman as St. John, Son of Zebedee, the Beloved Disciple, who may or may not be the same as St. John the Evangelist. We will try to untangle that knot, and will celebrate all of the Saints John on their (transferred) feast, Sunday, December 28.

WESTSIDE FOOD PANTRY RECITAL SERIES

Susan Buell

Sunday, January 11, 2:00pm; Ikemiya

Masonobu, internationally renowned concert pianist
Friday, March 27, 7:00pm; harpist, Phoebe Durand and soprano Celeste Mittlehauser

Suggested donation is \$10. All proceeds go to our food pantry. Receptions will follow.

Birthdays

DECEMBER
 3— Ginny Agar
 4—Vicky Vendrell
 12—Scott Hatcher

JANUARY
 13—Rod Lucas
 20—Peggy Walls
 28—Bill Baker
 31—Sally Clark

Wedding Anniversaries

JANUARY
 Paul and Margot Haertel

VESTRY BULLETS

- ◆ Thanksgiving Day Service at 11 a.m.
- ◆ Thank you lunch for construction workers.
- ◆ Stewardship letter being sent.
- ◆ Movie nights for St. Saviour and St. John in-the-works for mid-winter evening entertainment
- ◆ Work on contract with Fr. Tim underway.
- ◆ Congregational meeting, January 11.
- ◆ Summer concert procedures being developed.
- ◆ Employee performance reviews for Michele and Stephen have been done.
- ◆ Next Vestry meeting is December 14 from 11:30 - 1:30 p.m. Will consider continuing Sunday meetings through April.
- ◆ Emergency contact list being developed for pastoral care and church operations.
- ◆ Responsibilities of weekly Vestry member in charge reviewed.
- ◆ Effort for timely updating of church phone message will be made.

NOTES FROM THE ORGAN BENCH

Stephen Sampson

The note from the bench this month is: With Christmas approaching, there are many opportunities to hear wonderful music; hence, here we encourage you, dear reader, to listen to as many performances as you can, in person, on the radio, or on a recording. Amidst the more frequently heard compositions heard at this time of year, one is likely to encounter an unfamiliar piece, or a familiar piece performed in an unusual way that brings new emotion to the music. I was fortunate to hear two Christmas concerts last weekend that included beautiful and unusual arrangements of familiar music that were among the most striking and moving listening experiences of my life. One was a performance by the Radcliff Choral Society and The Harvard Glee Club. The program included many wonderful, beautifully sung pieces, but the one that particularly caught my ear was an arrangement of ‘Lo How a Rose E’er Blooming’ (Michael Praetorius; 1571 - 1621) by Jan Sandström, a Swedish composer born in 1954. The background harmonies were sung by the chorus in long-held notes, with the different parts close in pitch and moving together or in opposite directions, creating a shimmering and poignant backdrop to the long, drawn-out melody sung by a small group of soloists. The effect was stunning, and it seemed as though the audience was holding its collective breath throughout the piece.

The second performance was a Christmas concert by the Kuumba Singers, a group established in 1970 at Harvard University with the mission ‘to proudly proclaim and celebrate the creativity and spirituality of Black people.’ This was also an exceptionally moving and poignant performance, with the music often accompanied by dancing, clapping, and shouts of joy, as the energetic group and the associated band of musicians sometimes had the entire audience on their feet, clapping and singing. To my ears, one of the most poignant pieces was ‘O come, O come Emanuel’, sung as a slow gospel tune with an eloquent soloist and a small group singing beautiful and unusual harmonies in the background. The pleading sounds of the soloist, soaring one moment and whispering the next, and improvising creatively around the melody, brought new emotion to the carol, as though it were an entirely different piece even though the lyrics remained the same. To conclude, best wishes for a music-filled holiday season, and keep your ears wide open to the sounds around you.



All ready for the Thanksgiving Day diners

Thank you to everyone who helped and supported lunch for our road construction workers, as well as our now Traditional Community Thanksgiving Day Dinner!

WINTER SERVICE SCHEDULE



As our numbers shrink, we need to huddle together for the darkest, coldest part of the winter. From The First Sunday after Christmas (December 28) through Easter Sunday (April 5), we will have a single service of Holy Eucharist at 9:00 AM on Sundays. The 8:00 and 10:00 services will re-commence the Second Sunday of Easter



THE LIGHTER SIDE...

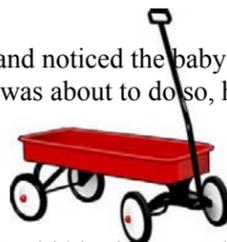
It was the day after Epiphany Sunday and the priest was packing away the figures from the crèche and noticed the baby Jesus was missing. Immediately he turned towards the vicarage in order to call the police but as he was about to do so, he saw a young child with a red wagon, and in the wagon was the figure of the little infant, Jesus.

The priest walked up to the child and said, “Where did you get the little infant?”

The child replied honestly, “I took him from the church, Father.”

“And why did you take him?”

With a sheepish smile, he said, “Well, about a week before Christmas I prayed to little Lord Jesus. I told him if he would bring me a red wagon for Christmas, I would give him a ride around the block in it.”



JANUARY SUNDAY FORUMS

Floy Ervin

There will be no Forum December 28 or January 4. Starting in January the forums will be held after the 9:00 service.

January 11 Paul Weiss, Director of the Whole Health Center, will continue his stimulating exploration of the spiritual frontier.

January 18 Tim will lead the Forum in a discussion of topics pertaining to questions, suggestions, and insights of interest to the congregation.

January 25 and February 1 Spencer Ervin and Ted Fletcher will continue their discussion of the church and the Constitution and the Supreme Court. There is no Forum scheduled for February 8th or February 15th. If you have a suggestion for a topic please contact Floy Ervin 244-4195, fervin@roadrunner.com.

ADVENT DISCUSSION SERIES

The O Antiphons

This year, on the four Sundays of Advent Tim, Jenny, and Vesta are leading discussions of the seven ancient titles for the coming Messiah which have been sung as antiphons to the Song of Mary at Evening Prayer in Advent since at least the sixth century. We perhaps know them best as they are paraphrased in Hymn 56, “O come, O Come Emmanuel.” What did it mean for the early Church to call Christ by the name “Wisdom?” What does it mean for us? How about “Root of Jesse” or “Key of David?” Explorations of these questions will be during Forum time (9:00-9:45) at St. John, and after the 10:00 service (11:30-12:15) in the Parish Hall at St. Saviour, and will be led by the priest celebrant at each church.

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CAROLING

Sunday, December 21, 4:00

Bar Harbor Town Green

Come and join in the singing!

Sponsored by MDI Churches



LONGEST NIGHT HOLIDAY SERVICE for Those Who Hurt

Advent and Christmas are joyous times for many, but for others they are a time heavy with grief, anger, and sadness. While our culture tells us relentlessly that we should be celebrating a perfect Christmas, our very human feelings of loss or loneliness may make joy difficult.

If Christmas is a hard time for you, please consider joining the community at St. Saviour's Church for a service of quiet prayer and remembrance, for sharing grief with one another and with the God who knows what it is to be human.

"The Longest Night:" Tuesday, December 16, 6:00 PM, St. Saviour's Church, in the chapel. All are welcome, and no one will be asked to share more than is comfortable.



Christmas Worship Schedule

Wednesday, December 24

4:00 PM, Family Eucharist at St. Saviour
The Rev. Jennifer Reece presiding.

4:00 PM, Festive Eucharist at St. John, Southwest Harbor
The Rev. Timothy Fleck presiding.

10:00 PM, Festive Choral Eucharist at St. Saviour
The Rev. Timothy Fleck presiding.

Thursday, December 25

7:30 AM, Christmas Morning Eucharist, St. Mary's Chapel at St. Saviour
The Rev. Timothy Fleck presiding.

10:00 AM, Christmas Morning Eucharist, St. John, Southwest Harbor
The Rev. Timothy Fleck presiding.

Sunday, December 28

9:00 AM, The Feast of St. John, St. John, Southwest Harbor
The Rev. Timothy Fleck presiding.

10:00 AM, Christmas Lessons and Carols with Holy Eucharist, St. Saviour
The Rev. Alice Downs presiding.

Sunday, January 4

9:00 AM, The Second Sunday of Christmas, St. John, Southwest Harbor
The Rev. Vesta Kowalski presiding.

Tuesday, January 6

4:00 PM, The Feast of the Epiphany, St. John, Southwest Harbor
The Rev. Timothy Fleck presiding.

THE ST. JOHN CRECHE

Margot Haertel

Several people have been asking about the history of our crèche and the wonderful figures that appear during the Advent season. The history of the stable is a mystery. The figures representing the holy family, the shepherds with their sheep, the Wise Men with a servant and a camel and John the Baptist were lovingly restored by Susannah and Charles Jones. Susannah also created an "annunciation" scene for Mary. Mary Vekasi and I learned the "ropes" from Fr. George Price, and over the twenty Christmases I have been doing it, it has continually evolved into what you will see this Advent. Susan Buell and Chloe Hatcher have worked to create a backdrop for the scene with greens, bark, and stones. It is a changing scene. We hope when you kneel for communion you will enjoy the Christmas story.



WORSHIP SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER & JANUARY

Advent 3, December 14

8:00 and 10:00 a.m. — Holy Eucharist at St. John the Divine
Psalm 126; Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28
The Rev. Timothy Fleck

Advent 4, December 21

8:00 and 10:00 a.m. — Holy Eucharist at St. John the Divine
Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26; 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38
The Rev. Vesta Kowalski

Christmas Eve, December 24

8:00 and 10:00 a.m. — Holy Eucharist at St. John the Divine
Psalm 96; Isaiah 9:2-7; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14
The Rev. Timothy Fleck

Christmas Day, December 25

4:00 p.m. — Holy Eucharist at St. John the Divine
Psalm 98; Isaiah 52:7-10; Hebrews 1:1-12; John 1:1-14
The Rev. Timothy Fleck

Feast of St. John the Divine, December 28

10:00 a.m. — Holy Eucharist at St. John the Divine
Psalm 92; Exodus 33:18-23; 1 John 1:1-9; John 21:19b-24
The Rev. Timothy Fleck

Christmas 2, January 4

9:00 a.m. — Holy Eucharist at St. John the Divine
Psalm 84; Jeremiah 31:7-14; Ephesians 1:3-6, 15-19a; Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23
The Rev. Vesta Kowalski

Feast of the Epiphany, January 6

4:00 p.m. — Holy Eucharist at St. John the Divine
Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14; Isaiah 60:1-6; Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12
The Rev. Timothy Fleck

The Baptism of Christ, January 11

9:00 a.m. — Holy Eucharist at St. John the Divine
Psalm 29; Genesis 1:1-5; Acts 19:1-7; Mark 1:4-11
The Rev. Timothy Fleck

Epiphany 2, January 18

9:00 a.m. — Holy Eucharist at St. John the Divine
Psalm 139:1-5, 12-17; 1 Samuel 3:1-10; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51
The Rev. Vesta Kowalski

Epiphany 3, January 25

9:00 a.m. — Holy Eucharist at St. John the Divine
Psalm 62:6-14; Jonah 3:1-5, 10; 1 Corinthians 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20
The Rev. Timothy Fleck

Thursdays, December 11, 18; January 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

12:00 p.m. — Holy Eucharist
The Rev. Timothy Fleck
No noon service on December 25