



As We Come to the End of the Calendar Year

The Vestry held its December meeting on Sunday the 17th, and learned then that it looks as if the church will be ending the year with a deficit. The final figures for 2006 are still being determined and analyzed.

Therefore I ask you, if you can, to please think of us in your year-end giving, completing your pledges if you haven't yet done so and giving St. Stephen's an additional contribution if you are so moved.

Meanwhile, the Vestry has set up a task force to deal with the aftermath of the departure of the Washington Free Clinic. Details about this and other decisions the Vestry took will be reported in a future issue.

Please have a joyful, peaceful and safe Christmas holiday.

-Fern Hunt, Senior Warden

The End of An Era:

Free Clinic to Depart

The Washington Free Clinic has announced that it will leave St. Stephen's Church at the end of January, 2007. It is likely to merge with another organization; if the merger doesn't work out, it will close.

The Clinic's financial picture has been bleak for a decade, and their departure is primarily due to lack of funds to continue operations.

Jane Bishop, our Junior Warden, is convening a special task force to recommend to the vestry the best use of that space. In the mean time we are putting out word that we will have up to 2,500 square feet of office space available in the first half of 2007.

Look for more info in a future issue.

BREAD

Dec. 24, 2006

The Fourth
Sunday in
Advent

Number 1564

Christmas Service Schedule

Christmas Eve:

•5pm: Bilingual Service with La Misa Alegria Congregation

Especially for the young at heart, who will reenact the Christmas story. The service is followed by a Christmas party (please bring food or drink to share)

•10pm: Festive Eucharist, followed by a Christmas party (please bring food or drink to share)

Christmas Day:

•9:30am

We will **decorate the church for Christmas** immediately following the 10:30 service on December 24. See the article on page 4.

EPIPHANY
EUCCHARIST

SATURDAY,
JANUARY 6

9:30AM

Meet The Rest of Our New Members

On November 19, Newcomer Sunday, a number of people joined St. Stephen's. All were profiled in advance in BREAD, except for these three:



Jessica Hansen was baptized at St. Stephen's at the age of 5, and was shortly thereafter whisked off to colder climes for the remainder of her upbringing. She is overjoyed to be back; she feels like she's come home. In the intervening years, she has lived in such places as Alaska, California, Georgia, and (just long enough to meet and marry her husband) Minnesota. She recently earned her MFA in Acting at Brandeis University and now acts full time, doing theatre, film, commercials, industrials, and other work. She hopes to soon be able to incorporate her passions into St. Stephen's services and Arts Collaborative programs.



Aaron Hansen is originally from Minneapolis. When not in church, he is most likely starting trouble.



Dr. James E. Laws, Jr. is a native of Covington, Virginia. He relocated to Washington, DC from Richmond, VA three years ago and is employed by the U.S. Department of Education. He is also an adjunct faculty member at the School of Education at George Mason University. In addition to his work in education, Dr. Laws maintains an active career in music. He has been the featured soloist with the Richmond Symphony, the Allegheny Highlands Symphony, and other orchestra's in North Carolina. He presented a recital of Christmas music in the East Room of the White House in December 1999.

Hymnals Needed

We're growing! And yet again we're starting to run short on hymnals. A donation of \$16.15 buys a hymnal. Our goal: 40 new hymnals by January. Feel free to contribute! Mark your contribution "hymnals" and put it in the offering plate or mail it to the church.

BREAD

is the newsletter of
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and the Incarnation
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Liturgy Design Team

Mary Alcuin Kelly will soon convene our Lent/Holy Week/Easter liturgy design team. The planning will involve the Arts Collaborative. If you're interested in being on the team, please contact her.

January Forum

Continuing with the theme of faith stories, Our Sunday morning Forum program starts Epiphany with three wonderful offerings:

•January 7: “Church shopping at home and abroad: some personal observations from long ago and last month”...Harry Leich

•January 14: “Packing my bags for my spiritual journey”...Pat Gray

•January 21: “Faith in Transition”...Susan Kyle

These interactive discussions start at 9:15am in the parish hall on Sunday mornings. Whether you attend church at 8 or 10:30 on Sunday mornings, it won't take much time out of your day.

Look for a brochure soon with more of the offerings for Epiphany, Lent, and Eastertide.

Threaders in January

The Threaders of Saint Brigid - for January only - are changing their meetings from 1st and 3rd Monday evenings to the 2nd and 4th Mondays. (This is to avoid the Monday holidays of New Year's Day and MLK Day.) The Threaders extend a warm and fuzzy invitation to new “knit-wits” to join them at 7pm each evening.

The January 8 gathering is at Jane Lincoln's apartment; the January 22 gathering is at Jane Bishop's house.



WIN

Power. The word stirs up uncomfortable feelings in most of us. Power brings to mind images of egotistical politicians and corrupt corporate CEO's, and for that reason the term has been virtually erased from public conversation. And yet power is an intrinsic part of our daily lives, without which we can't make a single decision or get anything done.

In the same way, Christians especially like to talk about community in idealistic terms. We imagine ourselves as participants in a new form of community, one governed by principles of love, acceptance, and service. But if we take an honest look around us at our neighborhood and city, we see a community largely motivated by the forces of fear, patronage, and self-interest. Only after a sober recognition of this reality can we possibly hope to be a transformational force within our community.

Come join Washington Interfaith Network organizer Amy Vruno and the St. Stephen's WIN team on Sunday January 21st for a candid coffee hour discussion on these two weighty and essential words, power and community. This paradigm shifting forum is a great opportunity to learn more about the principles behind how WIN works and explore new possibilities for how St. Stephen's can act in the neighborhood.

WORSHIP at St. Stephen's

Sundays

8:00a—

Holy Eucharist, Rite I

10:30a—

Holy Eucharist, Rite II with Children's Spiritual Formation

5:00pm—

Misa en Español

Celebrants and Preachers

12/24: The Rev. Joe Clark (8am and 10:30am); The Revs.

Sarabeth Goodwin & Linda Kaufman (5pm); The Revs. Ronald Conner, Sarabeth Goodwin, & Frank Dunn (10pm)

12/25: The Rev. Kathy Grieb (9:30am)

12/31: The Rev. Joe Clark

Greening the Church for Christmas

The early darkness of the short winter days ebbs ever so slightly. The Winter solstice will have come and gone, and we can start to think of more daylight, even if our internal clocks don't register it yet. The promise of advent gives way to the anticipation of Christmas. It must be decoration Sunday!

Christmas Eve day, just after the 10:30 service, we will have the greening of the church. We will go from Advent's darkness to Christmas' warm light as we prepare for our community celebration of the birth of Christ.

We need volunteers—lots of you—to help us hang the greens and put the poinsettias in place. There are wreaths to be hung. There are bows. The windowsills await their decoration of fresh evergreens and blue votive lights. And we need volunteers to celebrate and honor the debut of our new pew-ender candleholders.

Did you ever want to try your hand at arranging flowers? Here's your chance! We need willing volunteers to make 40 (yes! 40!) small arrangements to encircle the candles in our new pew-ender candleholders made by parishioners Joe Clark and Patrick Ellis. To honor their craft, red and white flowers and fresh greens will be arranged to encircle the candles. And with many hands, we can make light of the work. Try your flower-arranging skills for the Glory of God. (Instructions will be provided for this

easy, satisfying 20-minute project.) It will be a great opportunity to for some wonderful fellowship.

And what's fellowship without food! Coffee hour will be provided by the Third Day Society of the Altar Guild. That is the official name of the flower guild, in honor of the fact that God created the plants on the third day of creation. We also honor our beginnings, our roots, if you will. We grew out of the Altar Guild, and so many of those who have diligently helped with flower arranging originally signed on only for the Altar Guild, and then so willingly answered the call and allowed themselves to be pressed into service in arranging the flowers.

With all this food and fellowship, let's not forget our offering. Envelopes are provided in the rear of the church for your donation to the Christmas Flower fund.

Donations can be made To the Glory of God, in loving memory of _____ or in thanksgiving for ____.

In order for your donation to be acknowledged in the Christmas leaflet, we need your donations and your intentions by December 21.

See you at Church on December 24th. (You can almost hear the angels sing.)

-Martha Lockwood



Events in Our Building

Recent and upcoming events of note in our building:

The organization Positive Force sponsored a concert in our auditorium on Friday, December 15, with “The Evens.” Bill MacKaye’s son Ian is one of the two members of this group; the concert was a benefit for the Free Clinic. Positive Force—punk rockers who do good works in this community—is considering making St. Stephen’s its home base.

Faith and Resistance holds its annual Holy Innocents retreat at St. Stephen’s December 27-30.

Looking Ahead: 2007 Fundraising Effort

Our parish is dreaming big dreams for our building.

Our ideas for the sanctuary—including lighting, seating, and flooring—are wrapped up in a far-reaching Sanctuary Improvement Plan that has been in development for over a year.

We’ve got big ideas for the church yard—the Memorial Garden on the west side, and the yard on the east side, which now has ashes interred in it as well.

And we’ve got big dreams for the parish house, although they are not as clearly defined as our ideas for the sanctuary and yard.

And we are at a point where we must move from dreaming to implementing. For instance, we are just about out of seating options for the sanctuary. If our congregation grows another ten percent, we’ll likely reach the point where will not grow further because our pews will appear to be full. Cathedral chairs—or whatever new seating plan we adopt—must be-

A Great Community Sing

Close to 150 people squeezed into the front of the nave on Tuesday, December 12 for Ysaye Barnwell’s Community Sing, which officially opened our December/January art show.

Barnwell led the assembled masses in numerous songs, culminating in a tremendous seven-part rendition of “Now Let Us Sing.”

The participants included parishioners, Urban Village residents, other neighbors, members of All Souls Unitarian’s choir, and friends and acquaintances.

come reality, soon.

The primary issue before us now is financial. We’ve talked for years about trying to raise a large amount of money, but we’ve not done much aside from our normal fundraising efforts (such as pledge drives and appeal letters) and some grant writing. As with our dreams for our space, our discussions about fundraising must move into reality if we hope to achieve our dreams.

At its December 17 meeting, St. Stephen’s vestry approved a proposal from the Parish Coordinator that he put together a team of parishioners to plan a major fundraising campaign and present that plan to the parish at its 2007 Annual Meeting. We’re now putting that team together. If you’d be interested in serving for a short but intense period of time, please contact Brian Best (202-232-0900).

And stay tuned for more information on this major initiative.

LECTIONS

4th Sunday in Advent
(December 24)
Micah 5:2-5a
Luke 1:46b-55
Hebrews 10:
5-10
Luke 1:39-45

1st Sunday after Christmas
(December 31)
1 Samuel 2:
18-20, 26
Psalm 148
Colossians 3:
12-17
Luke 2:41-52

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THE SAINTS

Monday, December 25
THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
Birthday: Liane Rozzell, Michelle Sinkgraven

Tuesday, December 26
SAINT STEPHEN, DEACON AND MARTYR
Heavenly Birthday: Anne Bennett, 2004

Wednesday, December 27
SAINT JOHN, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST
Birthday: Martha Carty, Miriam Hood, Gretchen McMullen
Ordination Anniversary: Ronald Conner

Thursday, December 28
THE HOLY INNOCENTS
Birthday: Eleanor Holland

Saturday, December 30
Birthday: Jeremy Edwards, John Phillips

Sunday, December 31
Birthday: Suena Massaquoi

Monday, January 1
THE HOLY NAME OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

Tuesday, January 2
Heavenly Birthday: Rebecca Jackson, 1993

Thursday, January 4
Birthday: Ann Hargrove

Friday, January 5
Birthday: Catie Davis

Saturday, January 6
THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
Birthday: Vladi Wien-Kandil

ON THE COVER...
Charles Hutson

THE PRAYERS

Here's who we've been praying for recently:

- Michelle Dyro, and her baby-in-the-making;
- Elizabeth Palmberg, and all who desire to be restored to health; those who are home-bound; and all who care for aging relatives, the sick and the homebound;
- Duane Bonds, Helen Bonds (mother of Duane), Dana Jordan (daughter of friend of Sally Ethelston; Dana is dying from bone cancer), Wilda & Charles Lincoln (Jane's father, who appears to be at the time of death, and his wife), and all those who have been commended to our prayers.

BREAD

is published every other Sunday by the people of St. Stephen and the Incarnation Episcopal Church
Brian Best, editor (202/232-0900)

POSTMASTER:

Send changes of address to: *Bread*,
1525 Newton Street NW, Washington, DC 20010.

(USPS Permit 063660)

Periodical Postage PAID at Washington, D.C.