

The Messenger

A newsletter of

St. John's Episcopal Church

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The Rev Mark Preece, Interim Rector

January 2012

Building for the future with thanksgiving and praise

Message from our Interim Rector

Epiphany, 2012

Dear Friends—

The Bible doesn't name the three kings who visited the manger where Jesus lay. In fact, it doesn't tell us there were three of them, and it doesn't tell us they were kings. Those stories came later. What the Bible does tell us (in Matthew 2:1-12) is that some "magi" noticed a new star, somehow identified it as the star of a newborn king of the Jews, and followed where it led.

It seems an odd thing, that God should call these foreigners by a star. Angels brought shepherds to the manger in the Gospel of Luke, and that's less surprising – angels are God's messengers throughout the Bible. They were the natural choice.

But God led the magi to Jesus by a star. They were not Jews; some translations of the Bible call them "astrologers." Stars were the language they understood, not angels. God found the right language in which to call them.

What draws people to an encounter with God? What brought you? How did the light of Christ first really shine into your life? Who did God use to speak to you in a language you could hear and understand? Epiphany is a time to reflect on questions like these.

God is looking for the right language. And this is where we come in. God is using us – as individuals and as a community – to speak a language no one else is speaking to reach

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people who otherwise would not hear and understand.

Many of you became members of St. John's because you heard God speak to you in the language which is St. John's; you came here and it just seemed "right". And, now that you are here, you are a part of that language yourself. You are the way God is speaking here, irreplaceable parts of the work God is doing right now through St. John's.

There are lots of ways to do church, but whatever you do together in the future – whatever new things you try, whatever old things you hold on to – they will only "work" if they are expressions of what makes this community special, if they grow out of what God is *already* doing here. Our job is to discern the way God is working, to recognize the language of God that is uniquely St. John's, and to learn to speak that language more fluently.

There used to be a poster that said "The only gospel some people will read is the one written in your life." God is trying to use us to be somebody's star.

The Spirit is at work in us, opening our eyes. And the Spirit is also working through us, reaching out to bring new life to others. That's how Epiphany works.

Peace,

The Rev Mark Preece

Vestry of St. John's

Steven Eubanks, Senior Warden
Ray Mayer, Junior Warden
Linda Nagy

Nancy Wright
Susan O'Malley
Ellen Baker

Treasurer, William Arnold

Receipts Treasurer, Jane Eubanks

Clerk, Pat Mayer

Delegates to 2011 Diocesan Convention – Gay Gaston, Ellen Baker, Mickie Richardson
Alternate Delegates – Susan O'Malley, Neil Richardson, Marcia Stone

Please visit our website <http://stjohnsrandolphvt.org>

Our e-mail info@stjohnsrandolphvt.org

A thought as we approach a New Year

A Franciscan benediction:

May God bless us with discomfort at easy answers, at half truths and superficial relationships so that we may live deeply within our hearts. May God bless us with anger at injustice, oppression and exploitation. May God bless us with tears to share for those who suffer in pain, rejection, starvation and war, so that we may reach out our hands to comfort them and to turn their pain into joy. And may God bless us with enough foolishness to believe that we can make a difference in this world so that we can do what others claim cannot be done. And may the blessing of the God of Abraham and Sarah, and Jesus born in Bethlehem of our sister Mary, and of the Holy Spirit, who broods over the world as a mother over her children, be upon us and remain with us always. Amen

St. John's Annual Meeting – January 22nd!!

Please remember that our Annual Meeting will be held on January 22nd, following our church service. The meeting will be held around a potluck meal. If the weather causes a postponement, the Annual Meeting, with the potluck meal, will be held on the following Sunday, January 29th.

Pastoral Care Committee

The Pastoral Care Committee met by phone during the month of December as our meeting time coincided with the filling of Christmas food baskets at the Food Shelf.

There were no pressing needs at this time and members who had assignments from the previous month fulfilled what they had promised to do.

The next Pastoral Care Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 18th at 10:00 am in the Canterbury Room.

Respectfully submitted – Mickie Richardson

Altar Guild

This note is for all the wonderful people who take care of the altar. Over the years, we've come to fold the corporal incorrectly. The photocopied article Louise Clark placed in the booklet in the sacristy is very clear. We should fold/iron them in what appears to be "right side in;" so that the hems show on the finished squares. Fr. Mark explained this folding method is designed to capture all the crumbs when the corporal is refolded after Communion. Of course, all the crumbs are flung into the yard....for the birds.

In talking to several others who take care of the altar, I've come to realize MOST of us have been incorrectly folding/ironing the corporals....for years! So now we know.

Thanks to all who care for the altar's linens.

Anna Sease

MDC (Ministry Discernment Committee)

The members of St. John's who have been asked by the Vestry and have agreed to serve on the MDC are; Bill Arnold, Ellen Baker, Carol Doss, Susan O'Malley, Joe Pelletier, and Maury Smith. Carol Doss offered to serve as chairperson. The committee has been given their charge by the Vestry and will be commissioned in church during the 10 o'clock service on January 8, 2012.

The committee has met four times during the months of October, November and December. The Vestry attended our first meeting and Companions from the Diocese have attended three of our meetings to explain our charge and the process we would be following. Therefore most of the work we have accomplished thus far has been organizational and informational in nature.

The committee welcomes input from the congregation and will be reporting to the congregation on a regular basis

Carol Doss, Chairperson

Community Notes

>Randolph Community Suppers<

The Community Supper for January will be held on Tuesday, January 24th at St. John's Episcopal Church. This month's supper is sponsored by the Gifford Medical Center Auxiliary. Doors open at 5 pm

Anniversaries – January 2012

Birthdays:

Jan 10	Patricia Preece	Jan 18	Pat Mayer
Jan 14	Anna Sease		

Baptisms:

Jan 25	Cameron and Maeve Kennedy
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Sunday ministries

	<u>Eucharistic Minister</u>	<u>Readers</u>	<u>Ushers</u>
Jan 1 10 am	morning prayer	Christine Gilbert	Susan O'Malley
Jan 8 10 am	Bob Sparadeo	Linda Runnion	Betsy/Bill Arnold
Jan 15 10 am	Linda Runnion	Pat Lawrence	Anna/Lee Sease
Jan 22 10 am	Christine Gilbert	Anna/Lee Sease	Ellen/Phil Plumb
Jan 29 10 am	Pat Mayer	Gay Gaston	Susan O'Malley

	<u>Oblations</u>	<u>Intercessions</u>	<u>Coffee Hour</u>
Jan 1 10 am	morning prayer	Neil Richardson	Mickie Richardson
Jan 8 10 am	Pat/Ray Mayer	Gay Gaston	Ellen Baker
Jan 15 10 am	Betsy/Bill Arnold	Carol Doss	Linda Runnion
Jan 22 10 am	Anna/Lee Sease	Jackie Wilder	Annual Meeting (potluck)
Jan 29 10 am	Christine/Jim Gilbert	Joyce Burrell	TBA (see note)

Annual Meeting is scheduled to be held on January 22nd. If it has to be postponed due to weather, it will be held on January 29th. Whichever week it is NOT held, Mickie Richardson will do the coffee hour.