

## JESUS COMES TO PICK US UP

by Fr. Paul Allick



Jesus comes a long way to meet us where we are. I will never fully fathom the love that God has shown us in sending Jesus to become one of us. In this Advent Season we await Jesus' arrival. He is the very Word of God, the Logos, all of the creativity, love and wisdom of God, come to us in human form.

He goes through so much to reach us. The Almighty Lord and Creator of the Universe will limit himself to the form of a human infant. He will live and die as one of us. Christ's Incarnation is just as much a sacrifice as is his Holy Cross. In fact, his whole existence among us was a sacrifice of his ego and will. That is the gift we remember during Advent, Christmastide and Epiphany.

The Lord who wonderfully created us has more wonderfully restored the dignity of human nature (1). He descended from heaven, for each one of us. By the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate of the Virgin Mary so that he could show us the way to everlasting life. Now we can learn from his Holy Gospel how to be the people God created us to be.

Jesus Christ, the Word, descended from heaven so that he could pick us up. His human life culminates with his ascension to the right hand of the Father. Now that we through our Baptism are made one with him, he brings us up as well. He who is fully divine and fully human brings our humanity into the realms of the divine.

St. Augustine of Hippo writes in a sermon on the Ascension (2), "Out of compassion he descended from heaven, and although he ascended alone, we also ascend because we are in him by grace... Why do we on earth not strive to find rest with him in heaven even now, through the faith, hope and love that unites us to him?"

As we enter upon this secular season of shopping, consuming, decorating, and stressing, let us remember these mysteries. Don't rush the Holy Days. Enjoy them. Don't worry about them being perfectly executed. Marvel in their meaning. Reach out to family, friends and foes with Christian faith, hope and love.

Remember how far Christ has come to meet us where we are. Remember what he taught us through his Holy Gospel. Remember the sacrifices he made for us. Remember how he has picked us up and brought us into the heavenly banquet.

- (1) Collect "Of the Incarnation," Book of Common Prayer 1979, p.252
- (2) From "The Prayer Book Office," p. 738, Church Hymnal Publishing 1994

## WARDEN'S CORNER

by Mary Weekes, Parish Warden



*"It is a time to celebrate with a hearty meal, and to send presents to those in need, for the joy of the Lord is your strength."* Nehemiah 8:10. The Season of Joy is approaching. Many of you are probably thinking, just as I am, "Where did the year go? It's almost Christmas again."

The Christmas season brings out a wide variety of

emotions in all of us. Some people are all finished with their shopping, having started the day after last Christmas. Others prefer all the excitement of the bell ringing, Santa Claus, the last minute rushing, and all the festive decorations. For many of us the holidays are a happy occasion of getting together with friends and family and celebrating. For others, the holidays are not so jolly. They don't really experience the season of joy.

With the hard economic times, many families are in need. The huge expectations placed on us by ourselves and by others can often lead to disappointment and the season can become a time of extreme stress. This period of celebration and festivity is also a time when we remember our losses more keenly. All these things can dampen our joy and lead to periods of darkness.

Regardless of what category you fall into, let's all remember the real reason for the season – the birth of Jesus. He came into the world bringing joy, hope and shining his own light. As we go about our shopping amid the hustle and bustle of the season, let's also remember those in need and who find it difficult to look beyond the dark clouds and see the light that invites all of us to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Let the real joy of the Lord be our strength and source of happiness during the coming season. Christmas greetings to all of you!

## EDUCATION CORNER

*by Heather Whitesell,  
Education Coordinator*

### Education Update:

Children and parents are happy with the return of children's chapel. With the season of Advent upon us, we will be discussing the joy and anticipation of Jesus' birth, as well as His coming again.

Sunday school met for the first time with the new schedule and was well attended. The children learned about the creation, then designed their own creation mural. Stop by the Sunday school area to view their work!

### Youth News:

The youth also met on the new schedule after church and it was a great success. Teens are learning about the ancestors who have played an important role in our Christian faith. To begin our topic we read from Exodus and learned about Moses. We learned of his humble beginning, extravagant childhood, and calling by God. At youth night, discussion continued with teens writing a rap of the seven plagues. We also talked about ways that God might be calling them to be a leader and how to embrace the opportunity!

The confirmation class met at St. Alban's with Father Paul leading the discussion. Youth learned about the Seven Sacraments and their importance to us as Episcopalians. They were charged with remembering them as we will participate in Episco-Jeopardy between parishes next month. May the best parish (St. George's) win!!

## ADULT EDUCATION FOR ADVENT 2011



In the Season of Advent, as we contemplate the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, we will explore the meaning of the Holy Trinity.

**December 4: The Holy Trinity: God the Father**  
*Presented by Fr. Paul Allick*

**December 11: The Holy Trinity: God the Son**  
*Presented by Fr. Paul Allick*

**December 18: The Holy Trinity: God the Holy Spirit**  
*Presented by Fr. Paul Allick*

## “GREENING OF THE CHURCH” DECEMBER 18 – PLEASE JOIN US

*by Bruce Becker*



The annual “Greening of the Church” will be held on Sunday, December 18, following the 10:15 a.m. service. Everyone is welcome to join us in making St. George's beautiful as we prepare for Christmas.

There's plenty to do—a tree to put up, roping and lights, boughs and swags, and lots of poinsettias. Many hands make light work and a fun time.

## “FEASTING ON GRATITUDE” STWARDSHIP – 2011

*by Harry Kelley*

The stewardship theme of the Episcopal Church, "Feasting on Gratitude," was a wonderful theme this year. I hope that you took a moment or two to jot down a few items you are grateful for in your daily life. In going over my list, I note that I was grateful for the ability to draw a breath in the morning, for the beauty of leaves and the strength to rake up the little rascals, for my Audubon "Birdie Clock" that chimes a different bird song on the hour. (My wife Kris did not have this last item on her list.)

A profound "thank you" to everyone who prayerfully filled out a pledge card. Also, a reminder that we are still waiting to hear from a number of folks. Please know that the amount you are able to give matters less than your outward show of support. You are vital to our ministry.

We have so much to be grateful for in our parish community; the spirit that comes alive during worship and carries us through the week, all of the manifestations of that spirit: youth and children ministry; vestry and staff, a rector to challenge and inspire us, a devoted altar guild, our lay Eucharistic ministry, committees to do the endless job of managing our business, and music that is vibrant and joyous.

Pledging is necessary, but it is only a part of our stewardship. If we keep the spirit of gratitude alive all year long, stewardship will continue to follow. For those with gratitude in their hearts, the best is yet to come.

### BLOOD DRIVE RESULTS

*by Paul Schroeder*



Thanks to those who gave blood at our semi-annual blood drive in October. Sixteen units of blood were drawn which will result in 48 lives being saved. This is because each unit of blood drawn can be broken down into **plasma**, **platelets** and **red blood cells**.

Next year's drives will be on Wednesday, May 9, and Wednesday, October 17. Mark your calendars.

### OUTREACH

*by Jane Jacobson*

I want to extend a big thank you to the group of St. George's parishioners who volunteered at STEP on November 13; we were strong in number (11) and fleet of foot. Some of us stocked the food shelf while others sorted food donations and repackaged potatoes into individual bags. A couple hearty souls vacuumed the office space and emptied trash and I guarantee all of these tasks were done with happy hearts.

St. George's next visit to STEP will be in the spring. Please consider joining us.

### DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS



- 1 Charles Kimber  
Al Kotula
- 6 Lou Michelich
- 10 Paul Allick
- 12 Glennis Williams  
Drew Monroe  
Laura Harmon
- 13 Karen Hurlbert
- 14 Laura Anderson
- 16 Pamela Moore
- 17 Mari Mejia
- 22 Mark Monroe  
Steve Harvala
- 24 Loren Dwyer
- 26 Bob Miller
- 29 Blossom Tsang
- 31 Amelia Smith  
Ed O'Donnell

### ST. MARY'S CIRCLE CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON



St. Mary's Circle will have their annual Christmas luncheon on Monday, December 19, 2011, at 12:00 noon. Betty Bauer will be the hostess at her home at 115 Lawn Terrace in Golden Valley. Everyone should bring 6 cookies for the dessert.

### FACTS ABOUT THE PHOTO WALL

You likely have noticed the photo wall on the back of the narthex. This wall, depicting many aspects of our parish and who we are as part of the Episcopal Church in Minnesota, was a nine-month project of our Newcomer's Committee, and was completed in time for Rally Sunday.

The Newcomer's Committee wanted parishioners and visitors alike to see what we are all about. Laura Harmon and Margaret Heil led this project for the Newcomer's Committee along with Carole Leonard from Buildings and Grounds, and Eileen Harvala, parish photographer.

Many photos were taken of different aspects of our parish life together. By deliberate design, the Eucharist is at the center of who we are, and the focal point of the wall. And then there are the people—the smiling, welcoming and joy-filled faces—our parishioners at work in the community, and in prayer and study.

These pictures will remain in place for the next 9 to 12 months. In the meantime, Eileen will continue to take more photos of our life together in service, celebration, and worship.

Special thanks to Eileen for the photos and design of the wall, to Margaret and Laura for their shepherding of this project through the various committee and vestry approvals, to Carole for her gift of professional placement of the photos, and to members of the Buildings and Grounds committee who researched and approved the sanding and varnishing of the narthex wall in preparation for the photo display, and the installation of the protective film coating on the windows to prevent the pictures from fading in the sunlight. This project truly was due to the work of many hands.

Please contact Eileen if you have photo opportunity ideas, or feel free to take photos yourself, if she is unavailable. And if you would like additional information about the Newcomer's Committee and would like to become involved, please contact Father Paul Allick.

### STEP HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE

Food baskets for the holidays have been given

out for Thanksgiving and will be given out for the Christmas holidays.

A basket costs \$30.00 and contains fresh as well as non-perishable food. Clients also receive a gift card for meat from Cub.

You can donate to this project by writing checks in any amount to STEP and designating "Food" on the memo line. Many thanks for your contributions.

### STEP: HOLIDAY TOY PROGRAM



This year STEP is poised to distribute new toys to over 1,100 children in St. Louis Park. These toys come from the generous donations of the greater community and your donation is needed. Toys should be brought to St. George's no later than December 11 so they can be inventoried and sorted for the distribution which is on Friday, December 16.

The project is taking place at Peace Presbyterian Church on Cedar Lake Road in St. Louis Park. You can help by donating toys or money, or by volunteering to help sort and distribute the toys. **Please see the STEP Toyshop Wish List below for gift suggestions.**

Volunteers are needed during the week of December 12 to December 16. You can call 952-925-4899, ext. 14, to sign up. Another easy way to donate is to purchase Target gift cards in the amount of \$10.00. These are given out to parents of children ages 11 to 18 instead of gifts. **If you are writing a check, please make it out to St. George's and put "STEP toys" on the memo line.**

Thanks so much for participating in this project which will bring joy to many children and let parents know once again that their community cares and supports them.

To help us sort the toys, please attach the retail value to the item.



### STEP TOYSHOP WISH LIST

**Infants and Toddlers (\$15 - \$40)**

- Riding toys                      Baby bouncer seats
- Learning toys                    Disney toys
- Little Tikes toys                Large Tonka trucks
- Multicultural dolls

**Age 4 – 7 (\$15 - \$40)**

- Sleeping bags                    Dolls
- Dora the Explorer                Craft or activity sets
- Toy Story items                   Scooters
- Trucks and cars                  Dress-up clothes
- Play sets (kitchen sets, Matchbox sets)

**Age 8 – 10 (\$15 - \$40)**

- Electronics                        Bed in bag sets
- CD players                         Craft kits
- Lava lamps                         Remote-control cars

**Age 11 – 18**

\$10.00 Target gift cards (given instead of gifts)

**PLEASE NOTE – STEP DOES NOT NEED** stocking stuffers, holiday seasonal items, curling irons, hair dryers, makeup, toys depicting violence, balls, sleds or games.

**THE MEMORIAL GARDEN: A BIT OF HISTORY**

Season after season we enjoy the garden which is on the north side of the church and is visible from the sanctuary. This garden was a gift to the church from Frank and Gladys Kiewel, who were long-time members of St. George’s.



Of interest is the statue of the small boy kneeling in prayer. If you look closely, you will see that his eyes are focused over the roof onto the cross which is on the Minnetonka Boulevard side of the church. Take a look some day. There is no church record as to the why of this but perhaps someone in the church knows the story.

**FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

Tom Harmon has completed a little over two years

**Calendar of Events - December 2011**

on the Finance Committee. We thank him for his great contributions.

We are looking for a new member for this committee. Please speak to any of the committee members if you would like more information or think you might be interested. Committee members are Kathie Brown, Chair; Ron Holbach, Treasurer; John Carlson, Iris Alexander, Mary Weekes, and Fr. Paul.

**NOTICE!**  
**IRA ROLLOVER BENEFITS EXPIRING**  
*by Patty Dittrich*

You only have until December 31 to take advantage of this special tax benefit.

On December 31, 2011, the special tax-code provision that allows donors to make a tax-free gift from their IRA account to not-for-profit organizations will expire.

This special tax break allows you to make a direct distribution from your IRA account to a qualified charity – tax free. By taking advantage of this opportunity before the end of the year, you can fulfill your obligation to take an IRA distribution, avoid taxes you would otherwise have to pay AND make a donation to the non-profit of your choice – hopefully St. George’s.

Here are two of the primary provisions:

- You must be 70 ½ years of age or older
- You may give up to \$100,000 (married couples can give \$200,000)

You can also “prepay” your pledge for 2012, and it will be held in an account and each month distributed to the operating budget.

**NEW PHONE # FOR BRAD & MARGARET HEIL**

Brad and Margaret Heils’ new phone number is 952-236-9583.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				<b>1</b> 6:30 pm – AA(LL)	<b>2</b> Fr. Allick's day off Office closed	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b> 8:00 am – HE, Rite 1 8:30 a.m. – Choir 9:15 am – Adult Education 10:15 am – HE, Rite II	<b>5</b> 7:00 p.m. – Education Committee	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> 11:00 a.m. Gospel Based Discipleship (CEB)	<b>8</b> 6:30 pm – AA(LL)	<b>9</b> Fr. Allick's day off 7:00 p.m. Supper Club	<b>10</b>
<b>11</b> 8:00 am – HE, Rite 1 8:30 a.m. – Choir 9:15 am – Adult Education 10:15 am – HE, Rite II 11:30 am – Sunday School 11:30 a.m. Alzheimer's Memory Group 11:30 a.m. –Potluck 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday – 2 <sup>nd</sup> offering	<b>12</b> 7:00 p.m. – Finance Committee	<b>13</b> 2:30 p.m. – Staff Meeting	<b>14</b> 11:00 a.m. Gospel Based Discipleship (CEB) 7-8:30 pm – Confirmation Class at St. Edward's	<b>15</b> 6:30 pm – AA (LL) <b>Newsletter deadline</b>	<b>16</b> Fr. Allick's day off 6:30 p.m. – Youth Group	<b>17</b> Darchei Noam uses Parish Hall
<b>18</b> 8:00 am – HE, Rite 1 8:30 am – Choir 9:15 am – Adult Education 10:15 am – HE, Rite II 11:30 a.m. – Greening of the church	<b>19</b> Noon – St. Mary's Circle at Betty Bauer's home 7:00 pm - Vestry	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 11:00 a.m. Gospel Based Discipleship (CEB)	<b>22</b> 6:30 pm – AA (LL)	<b>23</b> Fr. Allick's day off	<b>24</b> <b>Christmas Eve</b> 4:00 pm – Holy Eucharist, Rite II 10:00 pm – Holy Eucharist, Rite II
<b>25</b> <b>Christmas Day</b> 10:15 am – HE, Rite I	<b>26*</b> Office closed	<b>27*</b>	<b>28*</b> 11:00 a.m. Gospel Based Discipleship (CEB)	<b>29*</b>	<b>30*</b> Fr. Allick's day off	<b>31</b>

Key: HE – Holy Eucharist  
CEB – Christian Education Building  
LL – Library Lounge

\* Patty on vacation, office closed

### ANNUAL MEETING – SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2012

Please mark your calendars. The Annual Meeting of St. George's Church is scheduled for Sunday, February 12, 2012. There will be one service of Holy Eucharist at 9:00 a.m., followed by a brunch and the annual meeting.

## Ministers of the Eucharistic Assembly December 2011

	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Sunday</b>
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	<b>December 4</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent	<b>December 11</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent	<b>December 18</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent	<b>December 24</b> Christmas Eve 4:00 & 10:00 p.m.	<b>December 25</b> Christmas Day 10:15 a.m.	<b>January 1</b> Holy Name 8:00 & 10:15 a.m.
Readings	Isaiah 40:1-11 Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13 2 Peter 3:8-15a Mark 1:1-8	Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 Psalm 126 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 John 1:6-8, 19-28	2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26 Romans 16:25-27 Luke 1:26-38	Isaiah 9:2-7 Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-20	Isaiah 52:7-10 Psalm 98 Hebrews 1:1-4 John 1:1-14	Numbers 6:22-27 Psalm 8 Galatians 4:4-7 Luke 2:15-21
Chalice	Karen Hurlbert  Cyprian Troyer Kathie Brown	Maraline Keeling  Leslie O'Donnell John Hagerman	Karen Hurlbert  Alan Poulsen John Hagerman	4 p.m. Leslie O'Donnell  10:00 p.m. Kathie Brown Cyprian Troyer	TBD	Karen Hurlbert  John Hagerman Laura Harmon
Lectors	Karen Hurlbert  Cyprian Troyer Kathie Brown	Mary Kuhfeld Maraline Keeling  Marion Miller Nathan Harmon	Carole Leonard Karen Hurlbert  Gloria Monroe-Johnson Mark Hartmangruber	4 p.m. Mary Kuhfeld Carole Leonard  10:00 p.m. Kathie Brown Cyprian Troyer	Mark Hartmangruber	Karen Hurlbert  John Hagerman Abby Smith
Greeters	Tom Harmon Laura Harmon	Lou Michelich Rosie Michelich	Ron Zaltz Barb Behrens	4 p.m. Lou Michelich		TBD
Ushers 8 a.m.	Ron Holbach Ron Erickson	Bruce Becker Bob Miller	Ron Holbach Ron Erickson			Bruce Becker Bob Miller
10:15 a.m.	Kitty Reese Bill Stromberg	Tom Zaun Gladys Williamson	Jane Jacobson Bob Jones	10:00 p.m. Tom Zaun	Bill Stromberg	Bill Stromberg Kitty Reese
Acolyte:	Korpo Yeakehson	Nathan Harmon	Jade Carlson	4 p.m. Abby Smith  10:00 p.m. Jade Carlson Nathan Harmon Korpo Yeakehson		Abby Smith
Lay Eucharistic Visitors	Laura Harmon Mary Poulsen	Steve Harvala Alan Poulsen	Heather Whitesell Carol Peterson		No LEV visits	TBD
Coffee Hour: 8:00 a.m.	Ron Holbach Karen Hurlbert	Holbach family	Betty Bauer			Karen Hurlbert Ron Holbach
10:15 a.m.	Alan Poulsen Mary Poulsen	Bob Jones Bonnie Jones	John Taylor Nancy Taylor	No coffee hour	No coffee hour	Milt Hill Gladys Williamson

## **BRAVO AND THANK YOU**

*by Carole Leonard*



Bravo and thank you to Choirmaster Randy Egan and the St. George's choir for their gift of beautiful music for the "Christ the King" Festival Evensong held on Sunday, November 20, 2011. Sixty-seven people were in attendance to enjoy the beautiful renditions.

Thank you also to Jeffrey Evans for planning and overseeing the lovely reception following the service. If you missed this wonderful evening, please do plan to attend the next Evensong. You won't be disappointed.

## About St. George's

5224 Minnetonka Boulevard  
St. Louis Park, MN 55416  
952-926-1646  
[www.StGeorgesOnline.org](http://www.StGeorgesOnline.org)

### Parish staff:

Paul Allick, Rector  
[paula@stgeorgesonline.org](mailto:paula@stgeorgesonline.org)  
Patty Dittrich, Parish Administrator  
[pattyd@stgeorgesonline.org](mailto:pattyd@stgeorgesonline.org)  
Heather Whitesell, Children and Youth Coordinator  
[heatherw@stgeorgesonline.org](mailto:heatherw@stgeorgesonline.org)  
Randy Egan, Organist/Choirmaster  
[eganmusic@earthlink.net](mailto:eganmusic@earthlink.net)

### Priests in Residence:

Mildred Cox  
Anne Scheible

### Wardens and Vestry:

Rector's Warden: Jane Jacobson  
Parish Warden: Mary Weekes  
Parish Treasurer: Ron Holbach  
Vestry: Ryan Anderson, Jeffrey Evans, Gwen Gysland,  
Jan Hagerman, Laura Harmon, Mark Kraabel, and Tom  
Zaun. Clerk of the Vestry: Bill Stromberg

### ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

### CHRISTMAS SERVICES:

Please plan to join us for Christmas services at St. George's:

#### December 24<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Eve:

4:00 p.m. – Family service with Praise Group

10:00 p.m. – Festival Eucharist with choir and organ. **NOTE the time change.**

#### December 25<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Day:

10:15 a.m. - Holy Eucharist Rite I

### FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY SERVICE: FRIDAY, JANUARY 6, 2012 – 7:00 P.M.

Join us on Friday, January 6, at 7:00 p.m. as we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany. Watch for more information in the Sunday bulletins.



## CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

If you would like to contribute to the decorations that make St. George's so very beautiful at Christmas, please indicate your wishes below.

The money we collect also helps supply the altar flowers for the rest of the year.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

AMOUNT \$ \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of:

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In Thanksgiving for:

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Please return this sheet to either the collection plate or mail to the church office. The deadline is Sunday, December 19, 2011.