



# Saint John's Spirit

St. John's Episcopal Church • Crawfordsville, Indiana  
The Rev. Todd Kleffman, Rector (765) 362-2331

December 2009

www.stjohnscville.org

Editor: Cindy Turner  
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## Rector's Article

### **Advent-Christmas-Epiphany: How to go from "holly-daze" to "Holy Days".**

A member of our church family recently remarked that the holidays should now be called the "holly-daze". She continued, "Our activity and entertainment-oriented, consumer-based culture has blasted us all with such a bewildering brew of concerts, meals, bowl games, services, requests for donations, and the like as to make us almost grateful that "Christmas comes but once a year". Fear not! Alternatives do exist. We can take back the "Holy-Days" (the origin of the word holidays) and return them to times of celebration, rest, and renewal, if we are willing to understand and seek healing from the dis-ease that gives the "holly-daze" such immense momentum.

1. Why so busy? The busier we are, the less time we have to sit with ourselves and just be. We turn from human beings into "human doings". We can value ourselves for what we accomplish. It's far easier to pile up a list of accomplishments and say, "I am good because of what I have done." God wants us to value ourselves simply because we exist and are created in the divine image. Only time spent in relationship with God and other human "beings" can create the good feelings that come from just being.
2. Why so commercial? Again, the reason goes back to a sense of value. At first it is easier to buy and give "things", look at the pile of stuff around the tree and say, "We are blessed because we are able to give or have these things." It is much harder to believe that we are blessed because we have relationships with ourselves, God, family and friends, without physical "things" to prove it.

*Alternatives:* We can focus on relationships, memories, who we are, and how we are God's gifts to the world in spite of how much we can buy or how many things we can do. Instead, we can begin to slow down and take the time to discover and cultivate the gifts that flow naturally from the people we are and from the relationships with which we are blessed. On December 2<sup>nd</sup> from 7-8:30 p.m., Wednesday Night Live will offer us time to consider some fun alternatives to commercially purchased gifts and entertainments including: Gift Card I.O.U.'s, special memory books and albums, random acts of kindness, "time together" coupons, and more. Preaching in Advent will focus on each candle of the Advent Wreath and the meaning of each candle for our time. The single most important thing any of us can do during the Holy Days is the act of focusing. We must focus, focus on how we can best honor the God who sent a Holy Child to share our lives and redeem (which means, oddly enough, "to buy back") all creation from slavery to sin and death.

### **Dates to Remember, Thinking Ahead:**

Jan. 10 - Children's Epiphany Pageant (10:30 Service)

Jan. 17 - Annual Meeting - One service at 9 a.m. followed by brunch with meeting.

Jan. 24 - Bishop Cate's Visit - One service at 9 a.m. followed by finger-food reception and Presentation by Bishop Cate on "Where the Church is Headed in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century".

Feb. 5-6,7 - Vestry Retreat with Committee Chairs present from Noon -3 p.m. on Sat. the 6<sup>th</sup>, Commissioning of Vestry and Committee Chairs on Sunday the 7<sup>th</sup> at both Services, depending on which service those persons normally attend.



*And the Grinch, with his Grinch-feet ice cold in the snow, stood puzzling and puzzling, how could it be so? It came without ribbons. It came without tags. It came without packages, boxes or bags. And he puzzled and puzzled 'till his puzzler was sore. Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before. What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store. What if Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more. ~Dr. Seuss*

## Christian Education

### Children

This Advent the children will share our "Fruits of the Spirit". We will be working with the Starfish Project, Fish pantry, Reindeer, and the devotion project for Lent. Our Epiphany play will be January 10, at 10:30. We hope you all share your love, joy, peace, kindness, faithfulness, patience, goodness, gentleness, and self-control this Advent.  
Kathy and Hannah

### Adult Forum

This is the upcoming schedule for Adult Ed.

- 12/6 The Divine Voice, *Steve Webb & Adam Brasich*
- 12/13 Modern Art, *Elizabeth Morton*
- 12/20 Snacks, etc.; Introduction to Spring Semester, *Adult Ed Committee*
- 12/27 Break
- 1/3 Break
- 1/10 Christianity in a Post Holocaust World, *Gary Phillips*

## Christmas Flower Donations

To defray the cost of St. John's Christmas poinsettias, the Altar Guild is accepting donations for the flowers that will adorn St. John's sanctuary. When writing a check for these flowers, please indicate in the note section that the funds are for "Christmas Flowers." Along with your donation, if you would like to have a dedication or remembrance printed in the Christmas Eve Bulletin, please complete a form that can be found in your bulletin at church and submit it with your donation. Your form will need to be submitted to the church office no later than the Sunday before Christmas, December 20.

## Hoosier Messiah Project

Reminder: Meditations and artwork for the Messiah Meditations booklet are due on December 1. Please submit to Gina in the church office, either by e-mail or hard copy. There are still some scriptures in need of art or meditations. If you need help getting started, you can call Father Todd or Barbara Penney (361-1763). The sign up sheets are in Whitlock Hall.

## Outreach

We are finishing up 2009 with our participation in the Reindeer Program. In addition to the collection of gifts, St. John's is trying something new. We will be offering a free gift wrap service on the day the parents pick up their children's Reindeer gifts on Thursday Dec. 17th. If you have any left over wrapping paper that you would like to donate, please leave it in the empty collection box in the hallway. Also, if you love to wrap gifts, please sign up to help on the schedule hanging in Whitlock Hall. Hours are from 7:30 AM-7:30 PM. at the Wabash Fieldhouse. We don't know if we will have a flood of wrapping to do, or only a couple, as this is a new project.

Also, please remember our ongoing support of the FISH food pantry. Any donation is greatly appreciated.

Thanks to all the St. John's parishioners who supported Helen Hudson and the Albrecht Family in the CROP Walk this year. \$475 was raised by the five walkers, which will be used for local and worldwide hunger relief efforts.

## Parish Life

There will be a BRIEF Parish Life Committee meeting immediately after the 10:30 service on December 6. We need to finalize our plans for winter & spring activities. If anyone has a suggestion for a Parish Life event, please let Susan Albrecht know at 361-0036 or [susiequsie23@sbcglobal.net](mailto:susiequsie23@sbcglobal.net)

## Christmas Potluck and White Elephant Party!

On Sunday, December 6th at 5:00 pm at Susie and Sam Hildebrand's home, 412 West Main Street, we will have our annual Christmas Potluck and White Elephant gift exchange. If you have not experienced this yet, you must come -- for those who have, I'm sure you have been "eyeing" the perfect gift! (For those who have not attended one of these potlucks, there is a special "gift exchange" via a number system -- and if you happen to receive a gift you don't like, you can always "steal" from someone else... lots of fun and you may even end up with a must-have item!)

If you can join us, please bring a dish to share, favorite beverage and your "special" gift (make sure it is wrapped!); paper/plastic table service will be provided. There will be a sign-up sheet in Whitlock or RSVP to Sam or Susie by email [vti@accelplus.net](mailto:vti@accelplus.net). Thanks and see you there!!

## Sunday Servers

| Service                | Lector          | LEM                               | Crucifer/<br>Acolyte(s)                              | Greeters                 | Altar Guild                                    | Offering<br>Tally               |
|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| <b>12/6<br/>8am</b>    | Judy Wynne      | Diane Ault                        | Kitty Haffner  |                          |  |                                 |
| <b>12/6<br/>10:30</b>  | Jim Gary        | Larry Baumgardner & Sara Lawrence | Sam Hildebrand / Libby Pinkerton & Alex Pearson      | Adrienne & Bill Ashbaugh | Chas Cooksey & Carole Meyer                    | John Roberts & Ellen Ball       |
| <b>12/13<br/>8am</b>   | Mark Kussmaul   | Meribeth Kussmaul                 | Hannah Anderson                                      |                          |  |                                 |
| <b>12/13<br/>10:30</b> | Judy Wynne      | Adrienne Ashbaugh & Kim Roberts   | Steve Charles/Joe Green & Ben Green                  | Jim & Kathy Gary         | CJ Charles & Kim Roberts                       | John Culley & Susan Albrecht    |
| <b>12/20<br/>8am</b>   | Diane Ault      | Vern Easterling                   | Diane Ault   |                          |  |                                 |
| <b>12/20<br/>10:30</b> | Marc Hudson     | Bob Cooley & Helen Hudson         | Adam Brasich/ Jon & Lorinda Hanebuth                 | Don & Char Hester        | Betty Culley, Larry Baumgardner & Meegan Reidy | Barb Easterling & Nancy Bennett |
| <b>12/27<br/>8am</b>   | Jim Suren       | Elaine Pickering                  | Joe & Ben Green                                      |                          |  |                                 |
| <b>12/27<br/>10:30</b> | John Culley     | Adrienne Ashbaugh & Betty Culley  | Paul Moehling/ Sam Hildebrand & Chas Cooksey         | Alex & Ann Lebedeff      | Ann O'Dell, Shelia Evans & Jane Gallagher      | Cindy Smith & Vern Easterling   |
| <b>2010</b>            |                 |                                   |  |                          |  |                                 |
| <b>1/3<br/>8am</b>     | Mark Kussmaul   | Meribeth Kussmaul                 | Kitty Haffner  |                          |  |                                 |
| <b>1/3<br/>10:30</b>   | Barb Easterling | Bob Cooley & Jane Gallagher       | Bill Patterson/ Andrew Patterson & Matthew Patterson |                          | Jerilyn Yerkes & Terry Lawrence                |                                 |

# Calendar

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| December 6     | Parish Life Committee Meeting after 10:30 service<br>Christmas Potluck & White Elephant Party ; 5pm   |
| December 8     | Liturgy Committee Meeting, 5:30, Library  |
| December 24    | Christmas Eve<br>5:30pm Stable Service at Larry Baumgardner's barn<br>9:30 candlelight mass at St. John's   |
| December 25    | Christmas Day   |
| January 4      | Newsletter Submissions for January newsletter are due Monday Jan. 4   |
| January 12     | Liturgy Committee Meeting, 5:30, Library  |
| January 10     | Children's Epiphany Pageant (10:30 Service)   |
| January 17     | Annual Meeting - One service at 9 a.m. followed by brunch with meeting.   |
| January 24     | Bishop Cate's Visit - One service at 9 a.m. followed by finger-food reception and<br>Presentation by Bishop Cate on "Where the Church is Headed in the 21 <sup>st</sup><br>Century".  |
| February 5-6,7 | Vestry Retreat with Committee Chairs present from Noon -3 p.m. on Sat. the 6 <sup>th</sup> ,<br>Commissioning of Vestry and Committee Chairs on Sunday the 7 <sup>th</sup> at both<br>Services, depending on which service those persons normally attend. |
| February 17    | Ash Wednesday   |

## *Ongoing Events*

Sunday - 8 & 10:30am Worship Services

Sunday - 9:15am Christian Education

Wednesday 30-Minute Eucharist from 6pm-6:30pm

Wednesday Night Live - Wednesdays 7 - 8:30pm

Choir Rehearsal - Thursday nights 7 - 8pm

The next Newsletter submissions are due by Monday evening, 6:00 p.m. January 4.

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**St. John's Episcopal Church**

**212 South Green Street**

**P. O. Box 445**

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**Return Service Requested**

Dated Material — please deliver by—December 4