



The Flame

May 2022

Our Mission is to be a welcoming place where people meet Christ and grow in their relationship with God through our worship, service, and fellowship.



Holy Week

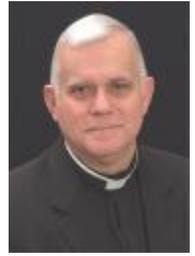
What a week. It was so nice having the full array of pre-pandemic services available once again. Counting our online participants, this Holy Week had one of the highest attendance rates we have seen over the last 13 years. The added service walking the Stations of the Cross was really appreciated and will be added to our Holy Week schedule again next year. Special thanks to all those who worked behind the scenes, and out in front, to make our worship the blessed experience we all enjoyed.



Additional thanks to those who brought soups, breads, and desserts to our Maundy Thursday soup supper. The tasty buffet was amazing.



Fr. Tom's Tidbits



As the month begins, several in our parish family are on pilgrimage to the Holy Land. While the places they will visit hold special meaning in the life and ministry of our Lord, the truth is, we don't know for sure if the places they visit are exactly the places we think. This is because at the time, even though Jesus was a bit of a rock star in his day, nobody went around placing a sign saying Jesus was here. Many of the pilgrimage sites are historical in nature, meaning they have been the place where pilgrims have traveled for hundreds and hundreds of years, but how they were chosen leaves an uncertainty that hovers over them like a cloud. What we do know, from Scripture, is the general area in which Jesus taught and traveled, the towns, and the roadways. A few places we are able to narrow down, but as to the exact place, it is really hard to say with any certainty that where one stands, is where Jesus did. It is through faith, that one accepts the truth that one is close enough.

Uncertainty is not something people easily embrace. Hearing that what we believe to be true, or what we believe to be right, may not be, can be a problem for most of us. When the foundations of our realities are shaken, the tremors reverberate throughout our very being. The pandemic has shaken our world. Some of the walls that protected our ways have come tumbling down and need to be rebuilt. The question is, how do we do so? Before we begin, we must determine why they fell in the first place. Was their inability to stand the shaking the result of poor fabrication, insufficient maintenance, a weak foundation, or maybe a combination of the three? Whatever the reason, as we rebuild, we must take into account all the possibilities to ensure that what we build is then built on a firm foundation and made to withstand whatever it was that caused the walls to come tumbling down. This means we must take time to study and prepare for what lies ahead. We cannot rush our efforts, in an attempt to recapture what we had before.

I am asking that we, as a parish family, take some time to really figure out what we need to do as we rebuild. It may be that we start by rebuilding where the foundation is strongest, setting aside those additions we have added over the years. In this way, we refocus our attention on that which is most important to the continuing life of our community, being faithful witnesses to the love of God revealed in and through Jesus. If what we do does not help us be faithful witnesses, or detracts from the witness we wish to offer, then what we do needs to be examined more closely.

Recently, the Bishop authorized a return to the common cup during communion. Some are anxious to see its return, while others are not. While the answer seems easy, just offer both small cups and common cup, the how and why need to be addressed. Over the next month, our Vestry will begin looking at this practice with inputs from our Altar Guild and our Lay Eucharistic Ministry. Our intention is to make a decision on what is best for us, as a parish family, during our May Vestry meeting. If you have thoughts you would like us to take into consideration, please let a Vestry member know, or join us at next month's meeting on Thursday, May 19th beginning at 6:30 pm.

Like our pilgrims traveling the Holy Land, as we exit the pandemic, we too are on a pilgrimage of faith. We may not get things exactly right, but through prayerful and intentional practices, as we journey together, we hope to get it close enough to what God asks of us as a parish family.

Father Tom



Office Closed

The office will be closed Monday, May 30, in honor of Memorial Day.

Parish Life

Youth Sunday

Last month, several of our parish youth joined us in a special way. Filling in for the usual ministry teams, they were Greeters, Ushers, Lay Readers, and yes, even shared in delivering the Sunday message. What a joy it was to see them do so well and to see them join Fr. Tom at the altar during the Eucharist. Special thanks to Ben Storm, who stepped forward to help



deliver a very timely message. After our Lenten challenge to create a silence in our lives to listen during prayer, Ben helped us see the change in our lives when we do, and he did so in a very interesting story of God's interruptions into his sharing of the Lord's prayer. Thanks to all of our youth who were able to participate; and thank you to our parish family for the love, support, and encouragement offered to our youth.

Parish Clean-up

Special thanks to Dean Olander and Chris Darrell for organizing our spring indoor cleanup the Saturday before Palm Sunday. While their team of helpers was not as large as it has been in the past, they got the important things done quickly. An outdoor cleanup day is scheduled for Saturday (4 Jun) between 9am and Noon. If you have an hour or more that you can offer to lend a helping hand, your help would be greatly appreciated. For more information about June's cleanup, contact Dean Olander, Chris Darrell, or call the church office.



Holy Land Pilgrimage

On Monday (2 May) a team from CHS will embark on their Holy Land Pilgrimage. Please keep all who are going in your prayers. Photos will be posted to the Church of the Holy Spirit Group page highlighting some of the sacred sites they visit along their journey. Our group page is separate from our parish Facebook Page and the group is closed. If you are not a member of our group, and you have a Facebook account, you must request admission. Please visit our group page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/42844939402> and ask to join.



Recognition Sunday



On Sunday (15 May) we will hold our annual Recognition Sunday celebration. At our 9:30am service, we will acknowledge our Sunday school and youth mentors, and the accomplishments of our parish youth, both inside and outside the church. This year we will also offer prayers for those who have been instrumental in helping us to provide meaningful and life changing worship and who help us take the blessings of the church into the world. After recognizing those graduating from High School and College, we will then announce the recipient of our 2022 CHS college scholarship.

Wednesday Compline

With our Journeys ministry coming to a summer close, our youth will not be offering Compline over the summer. However, Fr. Tom will continue this service until Journeys resumes early fall. Provided adequate internet is available, Fr. Tom, and our team of Holy Land pilgrims will offer Compline on both Wednesdays while they are in Israel. Due to the time difference, Compline will be broadcast as a premier event allowing participants to comment as if the video were run live. To join us for Compline, Wednesdays at 8:00pm, please visit our Parish Facebook page (Church of the Holy Spirit Bellevue) at <https://www.facebook.com/Church-of-the-Holy-Spirit-Bellevue-52752018655>.



Friend of the Environment Award



During Earth Day celebrations, our own Ruth Richter received this prestigious award for her work with Green Bellevue. Vice President of Green Bellevue for 9 years, Ruth was not only instrumental in bringing focus to what we as a community can do, she also helped us as a parish to better care for the environment. Not stated in her nomination letter, was her work in drafting a resolution for Diocesan Council that was then forwarded and incorporated into the National Church's care for the environment ministry. She also promoted ministry practices and building upgrades here at CHS designed to help us be more faithful stewards of the environment. To read her nomination letter, stop by the Chapel hallway bulletin board and don't forget to congratulate her on a job well done.

Youth Activities

Papio Fun Park



Last month, our youth group enjoyed another fun night at Papio Fun Park. They enjoyed games, bouncing rooms, and Lazar Tag. Unfortunately, the weather kept us from playing miniature golf; but the indoor activities provided them with enough fun and excitement for the night. Special thanks to the parents who attended and who offered our Wednesday evening meditation while the youth enjoyed their night out. Our next youth activity will be an escape room later this month.



Palm Cross Folding



Special thanks to Jean Cook for her instruction and patience helping our youth and parish members fold palm crosses for Palm Sunday. It was a fun time, and we witnessed the creation of some very interesting crosses. This annual youth event enjoyed by most and welcomed by all. Our youth's efforts are a real blessing for our parish family. Don't forget, save your palms and return them to the church next year on Shrove Tuesday, when they will be burned to provide ashes for Ash Wednesday.



J2A Crossing



As last month drew to a close, our Journeys Youth Group held their end of program year service celebrating the milestones in the lives of our youth. Last month we said good bye to Alex Guy who is graduating High School and moving on to college. While we are sad to see him leave our youth group, we are excited about the life he heads off to enjoy. We also celebrated Isaiah Hagen and Anthony Adams' transition from the J2A group to the YAC (Young Adult Christians) group, as well as Ciaya Smith and Tanner Westman's move from Rite 13 to J2A. While we typically give thanks for our adult

mentors during this service, Fr. Tom asked they postpone this part until Recognition Sunday so that the small end of year gift he gives can come from the Holy Land. Our fall program will begin near the end of August. Just a reminder, Journeys is open to all youth 12-18 years old (or in 6th-12th grade). If you have youth who might be interested in our program, please visit with Fr. Tom.



On Wednesday (18 May) our Journeys Youth will enter into one of two dreaded Escape Rooms at in Oldtown Bellevue (2237 Franklin). We hope they are successful in their attempts to get out in time. We ask that parish youth (12-18) please sign up at the Spirit Hub to let us know how many are coming. Due to the limited capacity of the venue, this event is open only to parish youth. There is no cost for parish youth.

Parish Out Reach

Mobile Pantry

Thank you to all our volunteers, and especially Margie Crawford who organizes our mobile pantry events. While we are not the largest area pantry, we are the oldest continuous mobile pantry site in Bellevue. We have become known for the service we provide those with food



insecurities, and with every event, we find ourselves blessed by the outpouring of thanks we receive. If you have never volunteered for a pantry, please prayerfully consider doing so at our next event in June. Watch the bulletin and the Weekly Spark for updates.



UTO In-gathering

At the end of April, we began distribution of Untied Thank Offering boxes. UTO distributes 100% of funds collected in support Episcopal Church mission around the world. We invite everyone to pick up a box from the Narthex (or Spirit Hub) and drop spare change in it through the season of Easter. We will hold our in-gathering of boxes on Trinity Sunday (12 Jun) and bless the offerings presented.



St. Monica's Lincoln



Founded by St. David's Episcopal Church, St. Monica's provides a safe place for women to come and get well, to make positive changes, gain new skills and discover strengths. Starting out as a two bedroom house rented by the church, it has grown over the years to a multi-site program. By canon, the first Sunday in May has long been designated as St. Monica's Sunday in DioNeb. This year the diocese is asking all parishes to give as one in support of this vital ministry. Checks may be made out directly to St. Monica's and either dropped into the collection plate or mailed in from home using the envelopes found at the Spirit Hub. All offertory donations not specifically designated to CHS, will be tallied, and forwarded to St. Monica's.

Red Cross Blood Mobile

The Red Cross Blood Mobile is coming to CHS this month on Saturday (14 May). The Red Cross was very sorry to cancel our last event due to personnel staffing problems, but are optimistic that this one will take place. To reserve a time, to make your donation, please visit <https://www.redcrossblood.org>, enter 68005 in the Find a Drive block and then scroll down the list on the left of your screen to May 14th. Click on CHS and pick a time that works with your schedule. For more information, contact Carol McLaughlin.



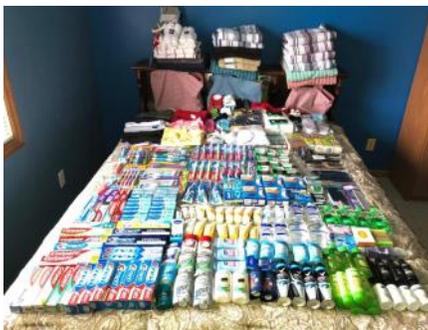
Magdalene House Omaha

Church of the Holy Spirit has supported Magdalene Omaha (formerly the Friends of Tamar), a Ministry of Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, since 2016. This local outreach, which now has expanded to an entire Magdalene Campus, helps survivors who have experienced sex trafficking, prostitution, and addiction. Thank you to all who donated to the ingathering in March for Magdalene Omaha. Through your generosity, Tamar's Pantry on the campus will receive the following: Pairs of socks – 90, Towels – 19, , Washcloths – 39, T-shirts – 13. Other items - Toothpaste (52 tubes, including many full size), toothbrushes (68), floss (13 boxes), shampoo (10), conditioner (10), deodorant (26), lotion (18), hand sanitizer (13), soap (6), bandages (6 boxes), ibuprofen (7), tissue packs (27), combs and brushes (36), and a 36-pack of hair ties, three handmade tote bags, and assorted other items.



In addition, cash donations of \$765 between the Daughters of the King's Shrove Tuesday pancake breakfast and ingathering donations in lieu of items will be used by pantry staff to buy needed items.

Deacon Teresa Houser, Founder and CEO, asked for the following message to be shared with CHS parishioners: "On behalf of the 166 survivors we served in the past year, we are deeply grateful for the continued love you have shown for Magdalene Omaha. Your collection of approximately 500 items and the hundreds of dollars generously given already are making such a difference! We always are so moved that you bring these items forth at a service for a blessing. We are honored to be your partners in this work."





Class NEWS

SPRING 2022

Important Dates

- May 15th Recognition Sunday
- May 15th Last Day of Sunday School
- May 1st VBS Online Registration Opens
- June 5th Pentecost & Bishop's Visit
- June 27-30 VBS 6-8pm
- June 30th VBS Pizza party

Announcements

Helpers Needed! We have many projects big & small that we need help with. Please support the Children's Ministry of CHS by doing at least one job. Most of these are 15min to 1 hr long. Please see Cindy Pekarek or the information board downstairs for easy ways you can help!



• **VBS 2022 The ARMOR OF GOD** is for ages 5-11yrs. Older kids/teens can help. Preschoolers can come with an adult.

A Few Last Notes

- Vacation Bible School: The Armor of God June 27-30
 - VBS cost: \$10 per child, \$30 max per family
 - Crafting Sundays are back at your request! Mrs. Cook will provide fun crafts to do after church. Dates to be announced.
 - We have had a great school year in Sunday School. We have added 2 families to our Sunday School bunch! Please spread the word about our children and teen ministries!
 - Have a Wonderful and Safe summer everyone! We will resume Sunday School in August!
- Peace and Prayers, Cindy

For more information on our Children's Ministries Contact Cindy Pekarek
402-670-0575
circlecncpn@gmail.com



FINANCIAL REPORT

Financial Report as of March 31, 2022

| | <u>Actual</u> | <u>Budgeted</u> | <u>YTD Actual</u> | <u>YTD Budget</u> |
|------------|---------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Pledged | \$ 13,702.00 | \$ 16,704.42 | \$ 49,336.00 | \$ 50,113.25 |
| Other Inc. | \$ 1,793.00 | \$ 1,457.33 | \$ 6,270.71 | \$ 4,372.00 |
| Total Inc | \$ 15,495.00 | \$ 18,161.75 | \$ 55,606.71 | \$ 54,485.25 |
| Expenses | \$ 15,426.17 | \$ 18,873.83 | \$ 49,228.94 | \$ 56,621.50 |
| Balance | | | \$ 6,377.77 | |

Vestry Meeting Minutes April 21, 2022

Vestry Members present: Father Tom Jones, Ken Gomeringer, Cindy Pekarek, Michele Hagen, Christy Smith, Lori Erickson, Judy Darrel, Margie Crawford, and Leslie Nutting.

The meeting was opened at 6:30 pm with prayer.

Study: Fr. Tom introduced book study for the vestry. The book is Un.con.nect.ed' by Teresa Anglo-Young. Books were distributed to the vestry. The vestry was asked to read chapters 1 & 3 for the May vestry meeting.

INFORMATION / UPDATES:

Fr. Tom went over the upcoming calendar events for the next month.

The CHS scholarship has been awarded. Fr. Tom shared the applicant's essay. The winner will be announced on Recognition Sunday, May 15th.

We are still waiting on the cross replacement for the roof.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Bishop Barker has approved our diocese returning to the common cup for communion. The vestry discussed whether CHS will return to common cup, keep the individual glasses, or combine the 2 options. There was input from the LEM's and Alter Guild. Vestry was asked to pray about this over the next month. The vestry asked Fr. Tom to hold an informal vote from the congregation on May 15th. A discussion and a decision is slated for the May 19th Vestry meeting.

Vacation Bible School will be June 27-30th from 6-8pm this year. The theme is the Armor of God. Cindy Pekarek is looking for volunteers to help with set-up before, leaders during, and clean-up after VBS.

The vestry discussed options for the church picnic. Vestry members are asked to explore options and bring back the information at the May meeting.

Jennifer Wilson has emailed the vestry members enrollment information on an online class she recommended at the Vestry retreat. Participation is optional.

Fr. Tom would like to buy several 20" stained glass panels to hang in the windows. He shared pictures of what he has seen so far. He would like to hang them before the Bishop comes on June 5th/Pentecost Sunday.

Treasurer's Report: Michelle Hagan

- Operational Expense Review (Michelle)
- Changes in Equity Review (Michelle)
- Reviewed and authorized designated funds expenditures (Fr. Tom)

Motion M04-21-01: Leslie moved that we accept the reports as presented. Christy seconded. Approved. **Motion**

M04-21-02: Christy moved that we pay bills. Judy seconded. Approved.

Motion M04-21-03: Leslie moved that the scholarship be accepted. Michelle seconded. Approved.

Motion M04-21-04: Lori moved to distribute grant funds to ministries. Approved

Motion M04-21-05: Judy moved that the meeting be adjourned. Michele seconded. Approved.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.

UPCOMING PARISH EVENTS!

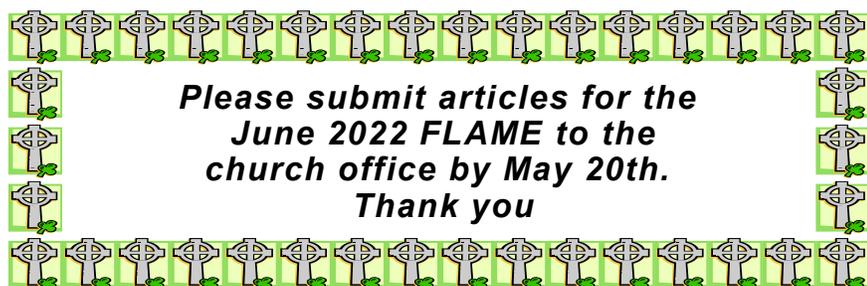


May 2-13 - Holy Land Pilgrimage
May 8 - Last day of Sunday School
May 8 - Finance Committee Meeting
May 15 - Recognition Sunday
May 18 - Journeys Escape Room
May 19 - Vestry Meeting
May 30 - Office Closed



LAY MINISTRIES SCHEDULE

| Ministries | May 1 | May 8 | May 15 | May 22 | May 29 |
|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| VPOD | Ken G | Michele H | Margie C | Cindy P | Judy D |
| Hospitality Team 9:30 am <i>Greeters ,Ushers & Coffee Hour Host</i> | Team 3 | Team 4 | Team 1 | Team 2 | Team 3 |
| Altar Guild | Team 1 | Team 2 | Team 3 | Team 4 | Team 2 |
| Recycle Team | Jan S | Marcia A | Lynda W | Karen G | Marcia A |
| LEM Saturday 5:00 | | Alberta Y | Kristi S | Alberta Y | Kristi S |
| LEM Sunday 8:00 | Rick S | Doug A | Rick S | Rick S | Doug A |
| LEM Sunday 9:30 | Vince C Terri S | Lex G Jennifer W | Jan S Anika S | Michele H Ken G | Lori E Jan S |
| Acolytes Crucifer Torch Torch | Isaiah H Olivia H Alex W | Emily W Vincent C Evelynn C | William R Kyper M Ailynn M | Anika S Olivia H Alex W | Isaiah H Vincent C Evelynn C |



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Regular Services:

Sunday: 8:00am Holy Eucharist Rite I
9:30 am Holy Eucharist Rite II *
Wednesday: 9:30 am Holy Eucharist *
Saturday: 5:00 pm Holy Eucharist
* Broadcast live on Facebook

Education:

Sunday: Sunday School @ 10:30 am
(September-May)
Wednesday: Bible Study @ 10:15 am
Journeys to Adulthood @ 6:30 pm

Office Hours:

Monday – Thursday: 9:00 am–3:00 pm
Friday: 9:00 am–Noon

Rector's Day Off:

Friday

The Flame is a monthly production of the Church of the Holy Spirit, Episcopal, in Bellevue, Nebraska. We welcome all stories, pictures, and suggestions, but must reserve the right to choose what we can print. Please send articles and pictures to CHS Admin at holyspirit@chsepiscopal.org. The next deadline for submitting news is March 18th.

Webpage: www.chsepiscopal.org

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