



The Flame

October 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.

Horseback Ride

Once again, we rode the trails of Shady Lane Ranch. We were blessed with blue skies and a comfortable temperature. Add to this, despite the rain the night before, the trails were not too muddy nor the branches still dripping with moisture. While the size of our group was much smaller than originally anticipated, those who were able to come had a great time. This year we welcomed several youth who were riding for the first time. During the ride they learned that saddles are not soft cushions and the horses do not always want to go where you want them. The horse know the trails and like to walk them as they are accustomed. Special thanks to Lori Stevens and Sharon Jones for their help in organizing, serving, and keeping the fire going for lunch.



Fr. Tom's Tidbits



As I look back over the last fourteen years, I feel so blessed. While we have weathered a few storms over the years, including a pandemic whose aftermath is still creating new challenges, I believe we have been largely successful in fulfilling our ministry to be a welcoming place where people meet Christ and grow in the relationships with God and one another through our worship, service, and fellowship. During our Team Leader Meeting this past month, something we all noted, was the toll these storms, and the pandemic, has taken on our community. Thankfully, we did not lose anyone to the disease, but it has worn us down, our volunteers are feeling overloaded as our smaller population is trying to do all it can to help us return to a feeling of normal.

Something we all agreed on, is that we must find a way to reduce the level of stress our volunteers experience to help prevent our volunteers from burning out. While most in our parish family volunteer, in one or more ministries, it was noted there is room and resources for ministry expansion. One stumbling block we face, in inviting more people to participate, is that ministries do not offer a clear image of what all they do, and what is expected of those who serve. So, our various ministries are going to begin developing a description of what they do, how they do it, and the time commitment needed.

Our discussion made me think, if we did something similar, to explain where and how our parish fiscal resources are used, might this be an invitation to more in our parish family to participate in our annual appeal. This means looking at what we do and evaluating, whether or not, our use of resources truly supports why we, as a church, are here. I believe our budgeting process has kept us pretty focused over the years. There are very few, of what the Vestry might call, nice to have items in our budget. This means changes in our budget, even some of the repairs and upgrades that are needed, will directly impact the ministries we share, both in-house, and in-community.

Over the next year, I am asking our Vestry to meet with each of our ministries to begin a fresh look at how we live into our ministry here at CHS. Team leaders and volunteers will be asked to consider the level of resources required to meet the needs their ministry addresses, and how we might integrate the workings of our various ministries to reduce volunteer stress levels. Parish members will also be invited to share their thoughts both with the members of the Vestry directly, and through a series of surveys and questionnaires that will be made available. Together, we can not only strengthen our volunteer base, but our financial one as well, thereby enabling us to live more fully into our vision, of making a difference in the community around us and offering the hope of the gospel to those who need it.

Father Tom

IRA donations: Did you know you are required to receive minimum distributions (RMD) from your IRA each year beginning with the year you turn age 72 (70 ½ if you turned 70 ½ in 2019) or that you can make a qualified charitable distribution (QCD), of up to \$100,000, directly from your IRA's RMD, to Church of the Holy Spirit?

Current tax laws mandate that these distributions from your IRA are included in your taxable income. However, the Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD) reduces the amount of your IRA distribution included in taxable

income and reduces your RMD. If you are using the standard deduction, using a QCD will reduce your taxable income by the amount distributed directly to the parish, thus reducing your income taxes even though you do not itemize your deductions. A win-win. *(This is an extract taken from an information flier provided by our Diocesan Treasurer)*

YEAR END GIVING

YOUR GIFT MAKES

A DIFFERENCE

Annual Appeal

As we enter the month of October, it is once again time to begin our look ahead to next year. Our ministries have begun finalizing next year's activity calendars, and our Vestry is reviewing this year's successes, next year's challenges, our fiscal commitments, and our ability to meet them. At this time, it looks as if we will end this year with another deficit budget. While not to the level as anticipated, the Vestry recognizes that continuing to spend more than we receive, in hopes of encouraging growth, cannot continue for much longer. We need to find a way to begin saving again, a process that enabled us to go as far as we have.

We know that this year has been hard for everyone. Rising costs have really been a problem. Add to this, many in our parish live on fixed incomes, we know that asking for an increase in giving next year will present a real challenge. But the fact is, we cannot continue to provide the level of services we do without doing so. Over the years, we have said if everyone could give just \$10-\$11 each month more, we would be okay. Last year was the first time we asked for a little more; and thankfully, we received a little more. However, besides our rising costs, the effects of this year's inflation have limited the ability of many in our parish family to give as they had hoped. In an effort to help balance our finances, our ministries have cut back on their spending, where they can.

To meet next year's commitments, taking into account the effects of inflation, we are asking for an increase in giving of at least 5%. This equates to an average increase of \$15 per month in current member giving. We are hopeful this level of giving will help us meet both the needs of our ministries and our parish obligations. If you are able to do more, or if you don't currently pledge and can find a way to help us meet our goal, we would greatly appreciate whatever you can offer. For those whose finances are limited, any increase you can offer, added to what others can give, will be a real blessing.

Our annual appeal begins on Sunday (2 Oct). The Vestry invites members to pick up an envelope from one of the ushers or by visiting the Spirit Hub. Any envelopes not picked up by 9 Oct will be mailed to your home. Please return all envelopes, or fill out a estimate of giving form online at www.chsepiscopal.org by Sunday 30 Oct to help our Vestry begin to finalize next year's budget.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Financial Report as of August 31, 2022

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
Pledged	\$ 12,880.50	\$ 16,704.42	\$ 129,376.00	\$ 133,635.33
Other Inc.	\$ 1,003.00	\$ 1,457.33	\$ 11,868.52	\$ 11,658.67
Total Inc	\$ 13,883.50	\$ 18,161.75	\$ 141,244.52	\$ 145,294.00
Expenses	\$ 16,204.55	\$ 18,873.83	\$ 139,434.37	\$ 150,990.67
			\$ 1,810.15	

2022 End of year giving

Giving this year for next: Did you know that you can make a contribution this year for next, as part of or in addition to your 2023 pledge, and then receive the tax benefit when you file your 2022 taxes? If doing so would help you, please consider this option. When doing so, please let us know if the contribution fulfills or is an addition to your 2022 pledge. For more information, please contact the church office.

Youth Activities

Journeys



Our fall Journeys program began last month with our parents' night meal. With new youth and new mentors joining our group, it was a great opportunity to get acquainted and sort out the coming year's events. We have another full year of activities and fun planned, and much of it will be also be open to youth in our parish between the ages of 10-18. If you between the ages of 12-18, or are currently in the 6th – 12th grade, and not part of our Journeys, please stop by on Wednesday evenings and check us out. We begin with a shared meal at 6:30pm, break into groups at 7:00pm, and end with Compline at 8:00pm. For more information, see Fr. Tom.

Vala's

Once again, our youth joined youth from Episcopal churches, from the surrounding Omaha area, for an outing at Vala's. Despite the heavy rains the night before, by the time we gathered, the sun was shining, the temperatures warmed, the pathways of the Pumpkin Patch had drained, and we found little standing water or slippery places. We enjoyed hot dogs over the open fire and S'Mores as well before heading out at the end of the day. Special thanks to Trinity Cathedral for organizing this event.



Papio Fun Park



Our Journeys youth met at Papio Fun Park last month for an evening of Lazar Tag, Miniature Golf, Bouncing Rooms, and arcade games. It was a great night and we finished up by offering our regular Wednesday evening online service of Compline. Special thanks to our parish youth between the ages of 10-18 who are invited and came to join in the fun.

Bellevue Pumpkin Berry Farm

Our Journey's youth invite parish families to join them for an evening of fun (and maybe a few scares) on Sunday (23 Oct @ 6:00pm). There is no cost for parish youth 10-18 who pre-register at the Spirit Hub. The cost for family and friends (2-and older) who wish to join us is \$15. This includes admission, haunted hayride, hot dogs over an open fire, and S'Mores. We ask everyone to please pre-register at the Spirit Hub by Sunday 16 Oct so we can plan food. Family and friends can reduce their cost by \$1 by bringing a can good to donate to the Berry Farm's food drive. Wristbands for admission will be available for youth who pre-register on Wed (19 Oct) or during coffee hour on Sun (23 Oct).



Attention College Students

Just a reminder, we need a current address for all youth in college so that we can mail them a copy of the monthly Flame and so that the Daughters of the King can send them their finals care package. If the office has not yet received a current address, please email the office and help us update our records.



Outreach

Laundry Baskets for Vets

Sunday (2 Oct) begins our annual in-gathering in support of the Moving Vets Forward program that offers homeless vets getting settled by providing a laundry basket filled with items they will need. Instead of collecting items this year, we are asking families to donate so that we can purchase in bulk the items we will provide. The cost for each basket donated is \$25. Our goal this year is 25-30 baskets. Please note in the memo line of your check "Vets" Our in-gathering will end on Sunday (9 Oct).



Mobile Pantry

A special shout-out to our scouts and parish volunteers who helped us distribute food during our September Mobile Food Pantry Event. We served 125 households on what turned out to be a lovely day, not too hot, and definitely not too cold or too wet. We will be making some changes in the Mobile Pantry program over the next few months and hope to add some special items to what we provide next year. Please help us spread the word of future events by sharing our Facebook, Bellevue 411, and Next-Door announcements. Don't forget, word of mouth is really effective as well. If you know someone experiencing food insecurity, let them know about our event. There is no special requirement, other than need, to receive items from our drive through pantry.



Bellevue Together

We recently received a note from the Bellevue Together Ministry thanking us for our donation of baby wipes, school supplies, and underwear. Our donations, added to those of other area churches and businesses, served over 300 Bellevue Public School students, each leaving the event with new clothes, shoes, and backpacks filled with new supplies for the upcoming school year.



Parish Life

Meet our new Organist

As most of you may have noticed, we have a new organist. Dr. Julie Neish earned her Doctor of Musical Arts degree from Arizona State University and earned her Master of Music degree from George Mason University. She is a versatile conductor, music director, and pianist, and has enjoyed performing in Spain, Italy, Greece, Singapore, Mexico, and throughout the United States. Formerly she was the Director of Choral Activities and an Assistant Professor of Music at Augusta University and Thiel College and served as the Professor of Music and the Music Department Coordinator at Northland Pioneer College. Julie is nearing her graduation from law school in the Creighton University School of Law as she continues her new adventure in the legal field. Julie loves cooking and baking for her cute hubby Diego, hiking, kayaking, traveling, laughing, and spending time with friends and family. Her full musical biography can be found at www.julieneish.com.



Ticket sales for this year's event will end on Sunday (9 Oct). The cost for this adult's only event (to be held on Friday – 14 Oct beginning at 7:00pm) is \$12.50 per person and includes five rounds sampling German foods, beer, and soft drinks. As part of the evening's festivities, we will also enjoy three games of bingo and two games of trivia, with prizes for our winners.



Pet Blessing



With the feast of St. Francis right around the corner, it is once again time for our annual service of the blessing of the animals. On Sunday (2 Oct) beginning at 2:00pm, Fr. Tom will offer a short prayer service on the church lawn giving thanks for the love we know in and through our pets and for our pets to receive a blessings that shows the love we have for them. Following the service, there will be treats for our guests and their human partners. If weather is a factor, we will move the service into the parish hall. For their safety, please invite your pets to come wearing a leash or arrive in their traveling carrier.



On Sunday (30 Oct, between 4-6 pm) we will hold our annual community Trunk or Treat, in the parking lot, between 2 and 4 pm. This a great chance for us to open our car trunks (and our hearts), decorating them in the holiday spirit, and serving the youth of our parish and the surrounding community. Please sign-up at the Spirit Hub to let us know if you will be joining us. We will once again offer games and prizes for the youth, a campfire to roast S/Mores, and an opportunity to enjoy a rather unusual (although common) holiday.



St. Andrew's Arts & Crafts Faire



On Saturday (15 Oct) from 9:00am – 4:00pm, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church (925 S 84th St. Omaha) will hold their annual arts and crafts fair. This event is open to the wider community, and we are invited to stop by and see what their many vendors have to offer.

Annual Council

Parish delegates will join delegates from across the diocese for the 155th Annual Diocesan Council. This year's Council will meet in Kearney 27-29 Oct. During Council, delegates will elect diocesan delegates to General Convention as well as to volunteers to fill positions on DioNeb committees. Our delegates will also get updates about what is happening in the wider diocese and have an opportunity to explore the work of various DioNeb Ministries. Please keep our delegates and those of other parishes in your prayers that weekend as they travel to their gathering.



Ministry Team Leader Meeting



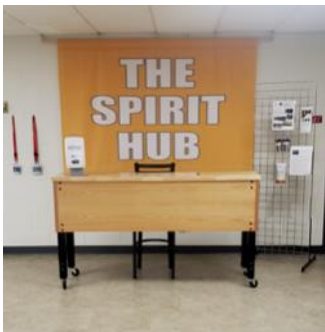
Last month, our ministry team leaders gathered for a sit-down with Fr. Tom to help bring to light some of the challenges they are facing as we try and regroup following the pandemic. With current volunteers feeling overloaded, ideas were shared on how we might better work together to ease the stress some of our members are facing. We also noted a need for ministries to develop a continuity guide to help people understand what our ministries do, how they do it, and what the expectations are for volunteers. This is a project our ministry teams will strive to complete by the end of this year.

Mid-Week Bible Study

Every Wednesday morning, following our 9:30 service in the Chapel, Fr. Tom offers an insightful look into the readings for the upcoming Sunday. All are welcome to join in the discussion. Our study runs from 10:15-11:15am. Later this program year, we will shift our focus from the readings, for a short break, to study CS Lewis' book *The Great Divorce*. Watch future issues of the Flame for more about our book study.



The Spirit Hub



Have you ever wondered what the orange banner hanging on the wall in the parish hall with the table in front of it is all about. The Spirit Hub is where we can go to find out more about what is happening at CHS or to sign-up to participate in, or volunteer for, any one of our many parish functions, events, or ministries. It is also where our guests can stop by to pick up a gift bag. We will see some minor changes in the coming months and are always welcome to ways in which we can communicate better. If you have any thoughts about how we might organize or improve the use of The Spirit Hub, please let any one of our Vestry members know.



EARTH CARE CORNER

By Virginia Babcock

For The Greater Good

Could you, could I, be awarded The Good Steward by the I.C.C.F. (International Conservation Caucus Foundation is an international organization that brings together and coordinates groups such as N.G.O.s [non-government organization], governments conservation organizations with people with scientific expertise) Harrison Ford and King Charles III (then Prince of Wales) have received this award for their outstanding support of habitat and wildlife conservation. Well known politicians, actors, and royals have been recognized in the past for their environmental activism. Missing seem to be religious leaders. With exception of Pope John, major religious groups seldom, if ever, speak out in support of the work being done by the numerous conservation and environmental organizations in the U.S. and the world.

One wonders if that is an omission to be addressed and what impact might religious bodies have if they were to advocate for Creation Care.

Meaningful Quotes:

Harrison Ford: "Ensuring that we leave an earth that offers fresh water, clear air, natural resources, and abundant beauty is a transcendent idea that unites every country around the world. We must establish global conservation ethics that every person can embrace"

King Charles III (then Prince of Wales): "I believe the primary challenge of our times is to find ways in which the natural systems and resources on which we depend can sustain our needs indefinitely into the future, while maintaining the incredible diversity of life on earth"

Protecting and preserving God's gifts to us?

Did you know you can contribute to the church just by shopping?

Baker's Rewards

TO ENROLL IN THE COMMUNITY REWARDS PROGRAM

Members must visit Baker's website at www.bakersplus.com

- Sign in OR create an account (if you need help, see Sharon)
- Go to "My Account" under your sign in name
- On the Menu list on the left, click on Community Rewards
- Click on Enroll
- Under "Find an Organization", either type in **IB693** or **Church of the Holy Spirit (Episcopal)**
Click on Enroll.



When you shop, make sure to swipe your Plus card or enter the registered phone number. Every time that you purchase qualifying items at Baker's the amount is contributed to Holy Spirit. CHS then is given a percentage allocation of Baker's giving based on the percentage of total purchases by all organizations. The more that our members purchase at Baker's, the larger our share of their giving. Typically, the amount has averaged about \$125 every quarter. Free money!

Also, check your receipts. It should state that "At your request, Bakers is contributing to Church of the Holy Spirit (Episcopal)"

**Vestry Meeting Minutes
September 15, 2022
Vestry Meeting Minutes
September 15, 2022**

Vestry Members present: Fr. Tom Jones, Ken Gomeringer, Judy Darrell, Leslie Nutting, Michele Hagen, Margie Crawford, Also present: Marcia Adams, Treasurer and Carol McLaughlin, Recorder

Fr. Tom opened the meeting with prayer at 6:35 pm.

Teaching / Study: The planned discussion of the book un.con.nect.ed was tabled until the October 2022 meeting.

INFORMATION / UPDATES:

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

Annual council registrations have been sent in for those attending and a check will be sent to cover these. Those attending can make their own hotel reservations.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Marcia Adams presented the financials.

Budget vs Actuals: YTD contributions are at 98%. Total operating income is at 97%. Expenditures outside the norm were explained.

Changes in Equity: Some loss due to market fluctuation as expected.

Balance Sheet: Cash assets \$236,416. Net cash assets \$232,275. Total available assets \$645,910. We currently have \$4,141 in outstanding checks.

Motion M09-15-01: Ken moved that we accept the reports as presented. Michele seconded. Approved by unanimous vote. **Motion M09-15-02:** Judy moved to pay the bills. Margie seconded. Approved by unanimous vote.

Designated Fund Expenditures: Fund request forms presented for Jr Warden signature.

FUND	PURPOSE	AMOUNT
Building Fund	HVAC Repair/Refrigerant	562.45
Building Fund	Camera Batteries	130.97
Altar Guild Fund	Communion Cup Trays	131.98
Funeral Fund	Groceries	31.48
CHS Grants	Sienna Francis House	500.00
Youth Activities Fund	Fun Plex Event	1224.51
Altar Guild Fund	Vestments	256.00

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Fr. Tom discussed the 2023 Budget – Draft #1. The 2023 amounts that are in bold print can be considered fairly accurate and probably won't change much. Individual budgeted expenses were explained. Our total expenses are estimated at \$227,102.

Margie provided an update on the Parish Audit. It is about 70% complete, and there are no red flags at this point.

Annual Appeal: This starts on October 2nd. Fr. Tom went over the timeline and process. He asked for suggestions from the vestry that could be helpful. It was suggested we once again invite Vestry members to provide written acknowledgments for those who pledge as this practice has been appreciated over the years. Phone calls and/or text message reminders to those whose pledges are still outstanding was also suggested.

Ministry Budget Input: Planning worksheets were handed out to Ministry Leaders. These should be returned by October 9.

Eagle Project: A project under consideration is landscaping in front of the building where the pine trees were removed. Cherry trees will possibly be planted as they are not sensitive to the pine needle residue in this area. Other suggestions are mini boxwood shrubs and planters.

Ministry Team Leader meeting: Last week's meeting was very good with a lot of discussion. One thing agreed on was that there is "volunteer overload". There are too few people filling too many roles and responsibilities. New people are needed. Also, the Spirit Hub has not been utilized as envisioned. The idea was for the VPOD to staff the Hub on Sundays during coffee hour, but their other duties on that day such as counting money, etc. have kept them from doing so. Suggestions made by the team leaders were discussed and one that the Vestry will explore more deeply is having our ministry teams serve as Spirit Hub host on a rotational basis. This not only spreads out the Hub's ministry, but also gives ministry teams an opportunity to advertise what they do and their needs.

2023 Bishop's Visit: He is not available on Pentecost Sunday. Some alternate suggestions for when to invite him were discussed. Of these, Mission Sunday and Palm Sunday were thought to be the best options. Fr. Tom will run these by the Bishop to see if either will work.

Building & Grounds has advised that we need to get quotes on a few items:

- Repair is needed to the sound system. The problem is not in the microphone, it is in the box and we need to get someone out to look at that.

- We need a quote on some lighting repair and upgrades.

- Also need a quote on painting and staining the exterior walls next spring.

- We are due for resealing the parking lot; it has been 3 years. At the same time we need to have the back corner of the parking lot built up before we have more water run-off issues.

Fr. Tom went around the table for additional discussion items. Carol brought up the next Blood Drive. The Red Cross has proposed a date of March 4, 2023. At this point that should work so we will leave it at that for now.

DECISION ITEMS:

The window replacement (upstairs rooms) quote was \$11,000 for 7 windows. After much discussion, Fr. Tom moved that we table this until next year. Judy seconded. **Motion M09-15-03:** Approved, unanimous.

Phone system Replacement: We have received a very good proposal from Kidwell for a new system. It came back at \$174 a month for all new equipment (6 phones) plus a good service contract and guarantees. However, we still have a contract with Cox until next August that we cannot get out of. Fr. Tom moved that we table this until we are closer to the end of our Cox contract. Ken seconded. **Motion M09-15-04:** Approved, unanimous.

New Computer Purchase (for online broadcast of live services): Alan is ready to purchase this with the grant money he has. It will be a fixed computer ready to log in, and will simplify set up on Sunday mornings. The Vestry concurred.

Fr. Tom asked if there were any further items to discuss.

- Food Pantries will remain outdoors for the foreseeable future.

- The cub pack and scout troops will split the Food Pantries between them.

- We will look at purchasing a large tent or multiple canopies to use as a windbreak from winter weather or rain.

- The Vestry concurred the purchase would be beneficial.

Motion M09-15-05: Michele moved to adjourn. Leslie seconded. Approved, unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 7:58 PM

Next Vestry meeting will be Thursday, October 13, 2022, at 6:30 PM



UPCOMING PARISH EVENTS!

Oct 2 - Pet Blessing - 2pm
 Oct 9 - Finance Committee Meeting - 10:45 am
 Oct 13 - Vestry Meeting - 6:30 pm
 Oct 14 - Octoberfest - 7 pm
 Oct 23 - Youth Group Berry Pumpkin Farm - 6:30 pm
 Oct 28 & 29 - Annual Council
 Oct 30 - Trunk or Treat 4 pm - 6pm

LAY MINISTRIES SCHEDULE

Ministries	Oct 2	Oct 9	Oct 16	Oct 23	Oct 30
VPOD	Lori N	Kristi S	Ken G	Michelle H	Margie C
Hospitality Team 9:30 am <i>Greeters ,Ushers & Coffee Hour Host</i>	Team 1	Team 2	Team 3	Team 4	Team 1
Altar Guild	Team 1	Team 2	Team 3	Team 4	Team 4
Recycle Team	Jan S	Marcia A	Lynda W	Karen G	Karen G
LEM Saturday 5:00 pm	Alberta Y				
LEM Sunday 8:00 am	Doug A				
LEM Sunday 9:30 am	Terri S Michele H				
Acolytes Crucifer Torch Torch	Isaiah H Kyper M Ailynn M	Anika S Vincent C Evelynn C	Olivia H Alex W Tanner M	LEM	Tanner M

Please submit articles for the
 November 2022 FLAME to the
 church office by November 18th.
 Thank you



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Facebook



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: September- May

Sunday: Sunday School @ 10:30 am
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 November 18th

Webpage: www.chsepiscopal.org

Email: holyspirit@chsepiscopal.org

The Flame
Newsletter of The Church of the Holy Spirit - Episcopal
1305 Thomas Drive
Bellevue, NE 68005-2973
402-291-7732