



The Flame

February 2022

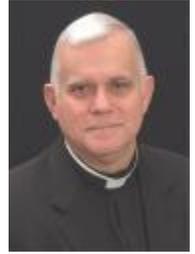
Our Mission is to be a welcoming place where people meet Christ and grow in their relationship with God through our worship, service, and fellowship.

Annual Parish Meeting

Now we know meetings are not always the most enjoyable events in our lives, but it felt really nice to once again gather together as a community to share in both good food and great fellowship. Special thanks to our Vestry and Hospitality Team who provided the food and desserts, and to all who were able to stay after church (and who joined us online) to strengthen our relationships and do a little church business. Watch next month's issue of the Flame for an update on the elections that were held and this year's budget.



Fr. Tom's Tidbits



As we enter the second month of a new year, covid still appears to be a virus of concern. While thanks to the vaccine, the seriousness of contracting the current strain of the virus is substantially less than its predecessors, there is still a need for caution. I encourage each of us to visit with our family doctor, and if able, get vaccinated. Whether vaccinated or unvaccinated, when not feeling well, either due to covid or the flu, it is recommended that we stay home and take advantage of our online worship.

As always, washing one's hands with soap and warm water is a proven way to minimize the chances of spreading germs through physical contact, and it is also a good practice to make use of the hand sanitizing stations located throughout the church; not only after coming in contact with others, but also before handling food, or after exiting the restroom. Another practice highly encouraged is the covering of one's mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing. For obvious reasons, wearing a mask, to help filter what we breath in and out, is always an option and often welcomed in larger group settings. While I do not foresee any mandating of the above, observing good common-sense practices should help us to minimize the effects of covid, and the flu, in our community.

Despite the concerns of covid, I am very optimistic, that in the coming year, we will regain some of the energy we lost during the pandemic, resulting in an increase in our ability to serve, not only those who call CHS their church home, but the wider community as well. As we are able, it is very possible that we will see the sudden decline in participation and engagement of our parish family, imposed by the pandemic, reverse course and start growing exponentially. There are signs this shift is already beginning, in that those who regularly attend worship (either in-person or online) is no longer declining but, have stabilized with fluctuations slowly trending upwards. Another sign the shift is underway, was the strong response to this year's fundraising efforts. As pointed out during our Annual Parish Meeting, many who had withheld pledges over the last two years, due to the uncertainty of the pandemic, have returned to help strongly support our shared mission and ministry, and many others significantly increased the level of their fiscal support as well. We are blessed and it is my prayer, that in sharing our blessings, we will help many others to find the blessings in their lives too.

Father Tom



If you have not yet heard, up to four free covid rapid tests per household are now being provided by the US Government. To receive your free test kits, visit <https://www.covidtests.gov>,

enter your household information, and the kits will be shipped to you between 7 and 10 days.



Office Closed

The office will be closed February 21 in observance of Presidents Day.

Parish Life

Inquirer's/Confirmation Class

Beginning Sunday (6 Feb) Fr. Tom is offering his Inquirer's class. This class is for anyone new to CHS and the Episcopal Church; as well as youth 12 years old and older, who wish to learn more about what being a member of our parish entails or is interested in confirmation. During the 90-minute classes, held over 8 weeks, the group will gain an understanding of our rich heritage, explore how we strive to live into our baptismal vows both as individuals and as a faith community, and become familiar with the services and prayers contained in the Book of Common Prayer.



If you are interested, please stop by the Spirit Hub and sign up, or just stop in the conference room and join in the discussion. For more information, please contact Fr. Tom.

Valentine's Extravaganza



Tickets are now on sale for this year's Valentine's Extravaganza. This adults only event will held in the parish hall on Fri (11 Feb) and includes, dinner, bingo with prizes, and wine tasting (non-alcoholic beverages will also be available for tasting). The cost is \$10/person. Tickets must be purchased or reserved in advance no later than Wednesday, 9 Feb. The cuisine for this year's event is international themed. To purchase your tickets, please see Sharon Jones during coffee hour.

Ash Wednesday

We will offer three services on Ash Wednesday (2 Mar) during which members may receive communion and the imposition of ashes. A soup supper, hosted by our Journey's team, will be served beginning at 6:15 pm. Ash Wednesday services times are 9:30am, Noon, and 7:00 pm. All services will be offered in the sanctuary.

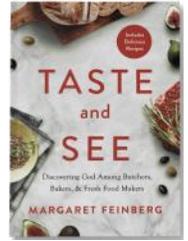


Materials have been ordered for another round of Lent Madness. For those who have not learned of the craziness and fun this Lenten practice offers, please read on. A list of saints has been comprised and booklets will be available to learn about them. Then, using a bracket sheet, much like the basketball playoff brackets, you pick which saint will do better in head-to-head voting. The goal is to predict which saint will win the coveted Golden Halo.

Each day during Lent, you will then receive an email from the moderator, and the chance to vote between different sets of saints, with the winner advancing to the next bracket. If you wish to join in the fun, please see Fr. Tom. Bracket sheets and booklets should be available by the middle of February. If you would like to have a chance of winning a \$25 gift card turn a copy of your bracket sheet into Fr. Tom by Ash Wednesday. The person with the most correct winning choices, or who successfully picks the winner of the Golden Halo, will win a gift card to a local business.

Looking ahead to Lent

Beginning Sunday (6 Mar), we will resume our Sunday evening Lenten Soup Suppers and Study. This year's study will be a little different, as teacher and aspiring foodie Margaret Feinberg, through her DVD and study guide, leads us on a pilgrimage to discovering the secret to savoring each day as we "Taste and See" the goodness of the Lord, learning how to nurture deeper connections around any table, unlocking the secrets to the satisfying and fruitful life we have been created for. Our program will begin a little earlier this year. Our soup supper will begin at 5:00pm and our study will begin at 5:30pm. We will close each week with Compline at 6:30pm. Sign-up sheets for bringing soup, breads, and desserts can be found at the Spirit Hub beginning Sunday (20 Feb). If anyone is interested in working with Fr. Tom to help lead a session or two, or would like to assist in the program's activities, please let him know so that materials may be gathered to assist in preparation.



Parish Out Reach

Mobile Pantry

We were blessed with yet another successful event. While we did not have the number of people pass through our pantry last month as we had expected, it was a really good turnout. Add to this moderate weather and plenty of volunteers, it was a morning filled with many blessings. All remaining product was picked up by the Bellevue Food Pantry and will be distributed to local residents in need. Nothing is wasted and people are helped. Thank God for our ability to serve and thank you to all the scouts, and parish volunteers, who braved the chilly temperatures to make this event possible.



Blood Mobile

Mark your calendars. The Red Cross will be here at CHS on Saturday, 5 March. Blood donations may be scheduled between 8:00am and 2:00pm. To schedule a time for your donation, please visit <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/find-drive>, type in our zip code (68005) and search through the list for Church of the Holy Spirit. Working together we can once again fill all our allotted appointment times. For more information, please contact Carol McLaughlin.



Shrove Tuesday

Our annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner will be held on Tuesday, 1 Mar. Hosted by our Vestry, all proceeds will go to support Magdalene House Omaha. Dinner will be served between 5:00 and 7:00pm. If you still have last year's palms, please bring them with you. They will be burned and the ashes used on Ash Wednesday (2 Mar).



Youth

Suicide Prevention

We had a great turnout on the night Jennifer Mof-fett visited our Journeys program to share with our youth and parents information on Suicide Prevention. The message from this year’s session was “see something, say something”. Jennifer covered a few warning signs to keep an eye out for, and ways to begin a conversation with someone who may have thoughts of harming themselves. She also shared insights on who, both youth and adults, could turn to if they themselves had such thoughts, or someone approached them because of the warning signs. Special thanks to Jennifer for stopping by.



Youth Bingo

What a great night we had. We began the night with a Taco feast. After dinner, we played four rounds of Bingo with both adults and youth winning some amazing prizes. The excitement and anticipation was almost overwhelming as some of our youth were yelling out for needed numbers, their need for only one more, and their dismay when the numbers called did not match those on their cards. The laughter and the joy they shared in community was exactly what our youth needed, and what the adults and parents present needed to see and hear as well. Thank you to those who helped prepare our meal, those who donated prizes, and those who constantly give of themselves to help our youth deepen their relationships with God and one another.



Youth Group Roller Skating



On Wednesday (23 Feb) our Journey’s Program, invites parish youth (10-18) to join them for an evening of fun at Skate City. This event is free for parish youth who pre-register at the Spirit Hub by Sun (20 Feb). The cost for friends and family who wish to join in the fun will be \$5.00.



EARTH CARE CORNER

By Virginia Babcock

Sacred Work

Not the best of times, at least for me, are the months of January, February, and March. Call it SAD (seasonal affective disorder) perhaps. It could be a let-down following the Christmas holidays and March weather in Nebraska just isn't the warm beautiful days of spring that most of us are eager for. The current reality of Covid infections and deaths among us has greatly exacerbated whatever feelings of depression or boredom we may have in this period of discontent.

January is the month for making resolutions for the future and a time for asking "How did I perform my responsibilities to myself and my fellow men(persons) and to the environment (God's gift to us all)." Should we use February to act upon these resolutions just made always asking for God's help in doing so?

We must accept our God given role as stewards of planet earth. We – not corporations, lobbyists, or government officials – will ultimately determine the present and future viability of our planet home.

A quote from Presiding Bishop Michael Curry: "The work of climate justice, the work of helping to save God's creation, the work of helping to save God's world is not a secular endeavor. It is the sacred work of God"

Help Needed

Have some free time and looking for something to do? Our Christian Ed team could use your help. Our team is hoping to sort through years of donations and supplies left over after so many fun events and projects. Our sorting schedule is as flexible as yours. Give the office a call and we will get things ready. Doing a little at a time will help tremendously. If sorting felt, foam and other craft supplies is something you might like to help with, please contact the office any weekday before noon. Watch the weekly bulletin for more updates on this project.



2022 Giving Envelopes

Those who requested envelopes for their monthly giving can pick them up at the Spirit Hub. If you did not request envelopes, and now would, please let the VPOD know and we will try to have them for you as quickly as possible.

Vestry Meeting Minutes January 20, 2022

Vestry Members present: Father Tom Jones, Linda Blinston, Judy Darrell, Leslie Nutting, Terri Storm, Michele Hagen. Also present, Carol McLaughlin, recorder.

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

INFORMATION / UPDATES:

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

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Ministry reports: All have now been received with the exception of Outreach. We will go ahead now with a draft report and add the missing items when received.

Annual Parish Meeting: This is scheduled for January 30th. Vestry members are asked to email Judy with the entrees they are providing.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Breakfast: Fr. Tom proposed that the Vestry take over for the Men of Spirit this year as cooks / servers. Judy presented an alternate idea, that the Daughters of the King take on this event. Because the proceeds will benefit Magdalene House, which the DOK supports, she felt this seems fitting. Judy will discuss this with Sharon and let Fr. Tom know.

Vestry Retreat: The first available date that Jennifer Wilson has available for us is March 5th. She will be helping us update our parish vision so that we can begin looking at some recommended marketing and growth strategies to get where we hope to be. This will coincide with the Blood Drive scheduled in the Parish Hall on that day. Because of this, the Vestry will meet either upstairs or at Jen's house rather than in the Parish Hall.

Annual Council: This is scheduled for the last weekend in October, in Kearney, NE. Fr. Tom asked anyone interested in serving as a delegate to the meeting to let him know by Sunday, Jan. 23.

Average Sunday Attendance Report: Fr. Tom handed out copies of the record of attendance for 2021, as well as a bar graph comparing attendance to the past 5 years. While we haven't returned to pre-pandemic levels of attendance, we are getting closer. These numbers do include online attendance.

2022 Budget: Fr. Tom handed out a copy of the approved budget. He advised that Corey is very close now to going online with Quick Book Reports.

Other discussion: Terri reported that Magdalene House is not quite ready yet to start using our library for an offsite work/study room. Also, they will have their graduation ceremony in March (Terri will confirm the exact date) and would like to have a good turnout to support the graduates. They are asking that members of Holy Spirit please consider going to this.

DECISION ITEMS:

Roofing has been completed and fully paid for. Fr. Tom proposed transferring the remaining funds, which had been designated to the roofing fund, to an exterior painting fund. This amounts to \$3299.96. **Motion M01-20-01:** Judy moved that this transfer be approved. Michele seconded the motion. Approved.

Treasurer's Report: Fr. Tom presented the financial reports.

Budget vs Actuals: End of year pledge income was 102.3%. Total operating income was 102.8%. He explained some of the budget expenditures. We began the year with a budget that was \$25,768 in the hole. We ended the year just \$511.98 in the hole.

Changes in Equity: Expenses explained. The endowment fund increased by \$8,823. Our net disposable assets are \$660,695.

Balance Sheet: Cash assets are \$193,686. Net cash assets \$190,725. Total available assets are \$660,695.

Motion M01-20-02: Leslie moved that we accept the reports as presented. Terri seconded. Approved. **Motion M01-20-03:** Judy moved that we pay the bills. Terri seconded. Approved.

FUND EXPENSES:

Date	Fund	Purpose	Expense
12/28/21	Building	New office coffee pot	99.00
1/1/22	Rector Discretionary	Financial Assistance	201.50

Fr. Tom handed out copies of an article titled “Five Ways to Become a Transformational Vestry”. Members are asked to read it and be prepared to discuss next month.

Motion M01-20-04: Judy moved that the meeting be adjourned. Michele seconded. Approved. Meeting adjourned at 7:20 PM.

Next regular meeting of the Vestry will be February 24. Meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Financial Report as of December 31, 2021

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
Pledged	\$ 22,911.25	\$ 15,057.08	\$ 184,849.95	\$ 180,685.00
Other Inc.	\$ 2,349.00	\$ 1,532.25	\$ 19,775.00	\$ 18,387.00
Total Inc	\$ 25,260.25	\$ 16,589.33	\$ 204,624.95	\$ 199,072.00
Expenses	\$ 16,004.44	\$ 18,666.75	\$ 205,136.93	\$ 224,001.00
Balance			\$ - 511.98	



UPCOMING PARISH EVENTS!

February 11 - Valentine's Extravaganza
 February 17 - Vestry Meeting
 February 21 - Office Closed
 February 23 - Youth Group Roller Skating
 February 26 - Mobile Food Pantry
 March 1 - Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner 5 -7
 March 2 - Ash Wednesday Services 9:30 am, 12:00, 7:00 pm
 March 4 & 5 - Vestry Retreat
 March 5 - Red Cross Blood Drive



LAY MINISTRIES SCHEDULE

Ministries	Feb 6	Feb 13	Feb 20	Feb 27
VPOD	Leslie N/ Judy D	Ken G	Leslie N/ Judy D	Cindy p
Hospitality Team 9:30 am Greeters ,Ushers & Coffee Hour Host	Team 3	Team 4	Team 1	Team 2
Altar Guild	Team 1	Team 2	Team 3	Team 4
Recycle Team	Jan S	Marcia A	Lynda W	Karen G
LEM Saturday 5:00	Alberta Y	Charlotte A	Kristi S	
LEM Sunday 8:00 am	Rick S	Doug A	Rick S	Doug A
LEM Sunday 9:30 am	Margie C Ken G	Jan S Lex G	Michele H Anika S	Jennifer W Terri S
Acolytes Crucifer Torch Torch	Isaiah H Olivia H Eric G	William R Vincent C Evelynn C	Emily W Kyper M Ailynn M	Anika S Olivia H Eric G



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



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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 February 18th.

Webpage: www.chsepiscopal.org **Email:** holyspirit@chsepiscopal.org

The Flame
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