



The Flame

April 2024

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.

Adult DR Mission Trips

This month, several members of our parish will be heading out to the Dominican Republic as part of the DioNeb team to work and worship with the members of Mission Santa Anna. This community is in a deeply impoverished part of Santa Domingo, the nation's capital. While they are still struggling to get the city to run electricity to their church buildings, they are a hopeful community, and our work is intended to help them create a medical facility in one of their out buildings to support their surrounding neighbors. Please keep our team in your prayers that they may have safe travel. If you would like to know how to be part of our November adult team, please contact Fr Tom.



Fr. Tom's Tidbits



Holy Week has come and gone. As always, Lent and Holy Week take a lot out of those who work hard to make the time we spend in worship feel blessed. I must thank all our ushers, greeters, lay ministers, acolytes, vocal and bell choir members, and most of all the altar guild for all they did serving those in our community and the guests who joined us. I would be remiss if I did not also thank all those throughout our Lenten soup and study who brought food to share or who help with the preparation and clean-up.

With an early Easter, the last four months have felt like a sprint the whole time. We moved from one season into the next with no time to sit back and reflect on what we just went through or to prepare for what was coming. Like many of you, I feel the need to just take a deep breath and rest, to take sabbath to better prepare myself for what is ahead. If only life would allow such a sabbath to last as long as we would like. But we know it doesn't. Life moves forward at its own pace, and sooner or later, those things we put off in order to rest, must still be done. Still, God says for us to rest. If God could find time to rest, so should we.

So how do we find rest in the midst of our busy schedules. We don't. We don't find rest; we must make it. Yes, this means putting some things off, but in the rest we take, we may also find that some of what we thought so important really isn't. Sounds easy, but we know how difficult this can be. I look at my own schedule and see one thing after another needing to be done and wonder how, how will I make time to rest, to care for myself, so that I can care for you. That has been a struggle for me since my ordination, and I know I am not alone in my efforts to find real rest, rest that revitalizes us and gives us the energy we need to get through the quagmire of things before us.

Part of my struggle has been my definition of rest. I used to think rest meant doing nothing; putting my feet up, watching an old western on tv, literally doing nothing that stresses my mind or my body. While this feels good for a day or two, it doesn't feel all that restful. I have found that it is doing something different, something that doesn't have to be done, something that doesn't have a time schedule attached, that allows me to know rest. Whether it is spending quality time with family, searching for clues to the family tree, scuba diving, or even going on mission trips, I come away feeling revitalized, both in mind and body.

But something I was reminded of this past Lent, was our souls need the same type of rest. Where is such rest found? In prayer. My prayer life can be as busy as my physical life. It seems at times like there is more prayer needed than I can offer. It was during our Lenten meditations, the time we set aside to listen to scripture, raise up our prayers, and to sit quietly in silence, that I found the rest I had not known for some time. This Easter season, I encourage each of us to create time for sabbath so that we may more fully enjoy the life we are blessed with.

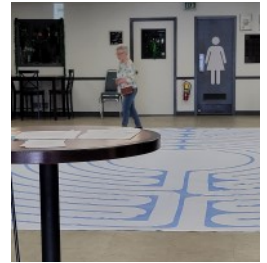
Fr. Tom

GOD 
is
LOVE

Parish Life

DOK Day of Prayer

On Saturday, March 16, our Daughters of the King chapter held their annual Lenten Labyrinth and Quiet Day. The 27 foot square labyrinth was set up in the parish hall with soundscapes playing in the background for those who chose to walk the labyrinth. Many members spent the day in prayer, or walked the stations of the cross in both the sanctuary and the chapel. Other members could be found in the conference room, library or couch room. Some were reading the book that DOK has chosen for their Lenten study. Some were reading the book of Revelation which is being used as CHS's Sunday night Lenten study.



Lent Program



This year's Lent program looked at the Book of the Revelation to John. Over the six weeks we explored the imagery and the context of John's visions and heard how, in the midst of what seemed a scary story, there is an underlying hope found in the truth revealed, that God has not given up on us and is still intent on us knowing the joy found in the grace and mercy shared with us out of love. Special thanks to all who donated soups, breads, and desserts throughout our study and to those who helped us clean-up quickly following dinner.

Parish Clean-up

Last month, we took time to spruce up the place as we got ready to celebrate Easter. While not everything we wanted to do got done, we did accomplish a fair amount and readied our building and grounds to receive the many guests we welcomed during Holy Week. As always, we thank all our volunteers and especially Dean Olander and Chris Darrell for coordinating our efforts. If you would like to know how you can help throughout the year, please contact either Dean or Chris.



Palm Sunday

Despite the cold day, the light rain, and the threat of snow, we had a really nice turnout for the beginning of Holy Week. This year, we were blessed with the baptism of Emmett Zahnow. What a glorious day it was. Special thanks



to our Altar Guild who did such a wonderful job of preparing our worship space, and to our Building and Grounds crew who, with the help of our Cub Pack, did a really nice job sprucing up the parish grounds getting us ready for Holy Week and Easter.



Senior Warden Update

New Rector Search:

Canon Liz Easton met with the vestry Thursday March 14th via zoom. She handed out an outline of the process. The typical church takes about 18 months to find their next rector. Canon Liz said this week the vestry should work on choosing the 2 co-chairs of the search committee. Once that is done, we offer applications for the other members of the search committee. Anyone that is a member is able to apply! Applications can be turned in at the office. The vestry and the search committee will then have a retreat with Canon Liz on May 4th. Attendance is mandatory for anyone wanting to be on the search committee.

We are approaching this task with careful thought and much prayer. Please pray for all of the people of the search committee. I also ask that you pray for our new rector. God will send the right person!

Cindy Pekarek, Senior Warden



2024 Projects

Our Vestry is exploring three major projects for this year. The first is painting the outside of the church along with cleaning and staining the cedar siding on the north face of our building and the cedar fencing. It has been over 12 years since we last painted the outside and one does not have to look to closely to see that we really need to get this done. Included in the bids are some minor repairs needed due to weathered wood.

Our second project is the repair, sealing, and repainting of the parking lot. It is recommended that parking lots be re-sealed every 3-4 years. It has been over 5 years since we were able to do this and as a result, weather has caused some damage here as well. Our third project is improving the lighting in the sanctuary. This is something we have tried doing over the years with the addition of extra lighting, windows, and frosted paneling in the eaves. As our congregation ages, we have noticed some using their phone's flashlight to better help them read along with the service.

Together, these are major projects with significant cost, and our Vestry has been preparing for them for a number of years. We believe we can accomplish all three projects with little additional fund raising. As the bids are finalized, we will have a better idea of what the total costs will be and will decide not only on cost, but quality as well.

CHS Text Messages, Emails, and Facebook



With all the scammers out there, we wanted to take this opportunity to remind everyone that CHS (nor the Diocese) will never use a text message, email, or Facebook post to solicit funds of any kind, or for you to give to any entity other than CHS. We will never ask for gift cards, or emergency bank transfers. Fr Tom nor the Bishop will send out an email or text asking for you to contact them directly regarding an important issue. We will also never ask you to click on a link to anything other than one found on our website (www.chsepiscopal.org). There has been a rash of phishing attempts using email, text, and Facebook (through its direct messaging tool) to access personal information and to collect contact lists. If you ever have a question, please contact Fr Tom or the church office directly.

By the way, do you get our weekly Wednesday text message asking if there is anything we can do or pray about for you? If not, please contact the office and make sure we have your cell phone number. We use the same texting service to send out short announcements and reminders regarding parish events. If you are worried that your response will be seen by everyone, let us assure you, that all responses are private and only Fr Tom is able to read and respond to them. The number our texting service uses is (531) 214-1592. If you add this to your contacts, you will always know if the text is from CHS.

Youth Activities

Journeys Evening of Prayer

As we approached Holy Week, thanks to the Daughters of the King, our youth were able to explore the prayer journey of the labyrinth. Most of them walked the labyrinth twice and several sensed the peace and presence of God as they did.



Palm Crosses



Just a quick note to say thank you to our Journeys youth, their mentors, and family members who helped fold all our palm crosses the week before Palm Sunday. As always, Jean Cook was there to offer all a quick tutorial on how to fold, as well as encouragement to those who struggled at first. Her presence is always a blessing. By the end of the evening, even those who struggled became very proficient.

Foods of Jesus's Time

Once again our Sunday school students and some of their parents enjoyed some of the foods that Jesus might have eaten that are still around today. They enjoyed the grapes, raisins, flat bread and white grape juice. Some were brave enough to try lamb meat balls and dates. As one student said “you don't know what you like until you try it.”



Stations of the Cross



In the midst of Holy Week, our youth took time to walk the Stations of the Cross hanging in the Sanctuary. Each of our youth offered a reading describing the events portrayed. As always, it is a moving and blessed service. The Stations hanging in the Sanctuary we made and donated by Fr. Howard Schoech. Fr Schoech was a former associate priest here at CHS.



Youth Sunday



On Sunday, 3 Apr, our youth take a greater part in our 9:30am service. They will be offering the readings, serving at the altar, greeting, ushering, and they are planning to share with us a few songs, with handbells. During the Eucharist, all youth will be invited to join Fr Tom at the altar for an up close look at what happens. The more youth we have the more joyful our celebration is. Parents, please plan to bring the family so they can join in. Adults regularly scheduled for Youth Sunday, will be present to help as needed.

Sunday School Calendar



- April 7-Youth Sunday arrive by 8:45am
- May 5-Recognition Sunday & Certificates
- May 12-Party! Last Day of Sunday School!
- June 23- Set Up for VBS
- June 24-27 Growing with God 6-8pm
- June 28-Put away VBS

Journey's Assistant Coordinator Needed

As we prepare for the upcoming transition in parish leadership, one area Fr Tom is deeply involved in, is our youth ministry, in particular Journeys. We are looking for someone who would be willing to work with him as his assistant, beginning as soon as possible, to ensure that the program does not falter when he retires, and to assist the new priest as they become acquainted with our program. A Journeys Assistant will work with Fr Tom in planning the next year's program and youth events, as well as participating regularly in our Wednesday evening meetings and outside youth activities. For more information on this position, please contact Fr Tom.



Journeys Crossing

Our Journeys youth group will hold their annual Crossings service on Wed (1 May) here at CHS beginning at 6:30pm. The evening will begin with the service which is then followed by a shared meal. All are invited to join them as they celebrate this past year's program accomplishments. If you would like to attend, please stop by the Spirit Hub and let us know you are coming so we can plan accordingly.



Recognition Sunday

Our Recognition Sunday will be the first Sunday in May (5 May). If you have youth graduating this year, from elementary school, junior high, high school, or college, please let the office know so that we can honor their accomplishments during announcements following our 9:30am service. During this time, we will also announce the recipient of our 2024 CHS College Scholarship.



Congratulations!



Outreach

What is Outreach?

Christian outreach, in its simplest form, involves looking beyond ourselves, reaching out to those around us, and demonstrating God's love in real ways that make a difference. It is a way of reaching people with the gospel, and inviting them to know God better through the church. Outreach is not about preaching and teaching, nor is about growing the church, but inviting others to see the difference God's love makes in one's life, and how that



difference inspires us to use whatever resources we have, in whatever ways we can, to meet the needs of others, to build and deepen relationships, and to demonstrate the teaching of Jesus in action. Do you know a need in the local community that needs to be met? Do you have an idea on how we can help someone encounter God's love in a loving and non-imposing way? If so, please let either Terri Storm or Ted Powell know. Our soon to be Deacons will be co-chairing our outreach efforts and would welcome any thoughts you might have on how we, as a parish family, can make a positive difference in the lives of those around us.

Mobile Pantry

We were blessed with another pleasant Spring day for March's Mobile Pantry.

For our April 20th pantry, in addition to the food items we offer, we will also be sharing with our guests 8oz dishwashing soap and some sponges. Each calendar quarter we try to offer not only food, but something they can use. Last quarter, we shared toothbrushes and toothpaste, along with some other sundry items. Do you have an idea of what we might offer? If so, please let Ted Powell know. Want to volunteer? Join us at 9:30 the morning of a pantry, entering through the Thomas Dr entrance. Another way you can help is to share our Facebook post with friends and family to help us spread the word.



April Outreach Project

The Vestry recently received a recommendation to research the possibility of donating Bomba socks to the Stephen Center. As we took a look at this opportunity for ministry, we learned that the Stephen Center has recently received a very large shipment from Bomba and they asked us to consider providing instead toiletries, which they say they are always running low on. As we have no outreach fundraising planned for April, it was suggested we might take up a collection and purchase a shipment of items to be delivered to the Center. Items and quantities we are hoping to provide are listed below. If we can do more, we will. To contribute to this outreach project, please place homeless in the memo line of your check.



- 3- 100 Pack Standard Classic Medium Soft Toothbrush Bulk Individually Wrapped - \$19.99 x 3 = \$59.97
- 2- 144 Tubes of Freshmint® 2.75 oz. Anticavity Fluoride Toothpaste, Not Individually Boxes - \$87.95 x 2 = \$175.90
- 3- 4-ply Mini Pocket Facial Tissue, Travel Size Pocket Tissues, 120 Packs - \$20.99 x 3 = \$62.97
- 3- Travel Size Hotel Shampoo (1 fl oz, 100 Pack, Spring Breeze), - \$29.99 x 3 = 62.97
- 2- Freshscent 1.0 oz Bar Soap (200 Pack) Hotel Travel Size, Individually Wrapped, Bulk \$38.95 x 2 = \$77.90
- 1- Tarpop 100 Pairs Moisture Wicking Socks Casual Sports Ankle Socks for Homeless Unisex Adult - \$44.99

Youth Missions to the DR

Two teams are forming for youth opportunities to serve in the Dominican Republic this summer. The first team will travel to the DR on Saturday (29 Jun) and return on Friday (5 Jul). This trip is for youth 12-15 accompanied by a parent or guardian and will work at the Diocesan Camp and in a small community just outside the city of Jarabacoa in north central Dominican Republic. Our projects will include mostly painting, but also other projects in support of the church's ongoing efforts to improve the living conditions of their neighbors. The second team will travel to the DR on Saturday (6 Jul) and return Friday (12 Jul). This trip is for youth 16-20 and will also work out at the camp and in the nearby barrio.



Scholarship funds are available to assist those interested in going. To help offset trip costs, those interested can also sell shares of stock in their trip. For more information about either of these two trips, please visit with Fr Tom.

CHS-Baker's Fundraising



Did you know that if you tell Baker's that CHS as your non-profit of choice, we would get a check each quarter based on the amount spent at Baker's Grocery Store? It is very easy to do and **has no impact** on any of Baker's rewards program. This is a community outreach program they offer and all we need to take advantage of it is to log into their website and check CHS. When we began this partnership, we averaged about \$175/quarter. Our average now is under \$100/quarter. Please stop by the Spirit Hub and pick up a flier that explains how you can help us take advantage of this excellent community offering. If you have any questions, please contact Sharon Jones.

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. Money we get to use to expand our outreach efforts. Help us help others.

Vestry Meeting Minutes 14 March 2024

The Vestry meeting was preceded by a presentation by Canon Liz Easton. She was unable to be present in-person, so the presentation was made online with Zoom. Those present for this portion of the meeting were Ken Gomeringer, Cindy Pekarek, Rick Horjes, Patrick Howell, Barb Smith, Marcia Adams, Vince Cummings, Jr., Kristi Smith, and Carol McLaughlin. Canon Liz provided a handout that outlined the upcoming process, which will be conducted over approximately the next 18 months, for selecting a new Rector for our parish. Fr. Tom has announced his retirement to be effective in June 2025. He was not present for this meeting and will not be a part of the selection process. The presentation started at 5:40 PM and concluded at 6:40 PM.

Following the presentation, the regular monthly Vestry meeting began at 6:45 PM.

Vestry Members present: Fr. Tom Jones, Cindy Pekarek, Ken Gomeringer, Rick Horejs, Patrick Howell, Vince Cummings, Jr., Judy Darrell, Kristi Smith and Barb Smith. Also present: Marcia Adams, Treasurer and Carol McLaughlin, Recorder.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Marcia reviewed the February finance reports. She pointed out a larger than usual expense for Liability Insurance. The premium for this has increased by about 35%. **M03-14-01:** Judy moved and Barb seconded that we accept the reports as presented. Motion passed with unanimous approval. **M03-14-02:** Judy moved and Vince seconded that we pay the bills. Motion passed with unanimous approval.

Fr. Tom provided the designated funds expenditures for the month:

Fund	Purpose	Amount
Oktoberfest	Supplies / Prizes	\$430.00
Outreach Misc.	Mission Dinner Supplies	\$17.96

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Calendar Items:

On Easter Sunday following the 9:30 service we will have an Easter Egg hunt for children; if anyone can help with this, please let Cindy know.

The office will be closed the Monday after Easter.

Next Vestry meeting has been moved up to April 11 as Fr. Tom will be in the DR on our normal meeting date. Mother Lisa will be the Supply Clergy while he is gone.

Update Items:

Leslie (not present) has advised Fr. Tom that there is no update on when the new the stained-glass window will be done.

Building Priority Project Bids:

Parking lot repair: 4 bids have been received, the lowest is \$13,500 and is from Affordable Asphalt, which is who did the work on our parking lot previously.

Exterior painting: 2 bids have been received. One from a Bellevue company and one that was someone Fr. Tom found at the Home & Garden Show. The bids were very similar, both around \$10,000.

Sanctuary lighting: 3 bids have been received, ranging between \$20,000 and \$30,000. They can't be compared however as they each involve different scenarios for the lighting project, ranging from just replacing the pendants to adding choir lighting and soffit (eave) lighting as well as new LED floods. We need to get a couple of these bids updated so that we can better compare them.

All of these bids will be turned over to Building & Grounds to review.

CHS College Scholarships: Two applications have been received for the scholarship. Judy and Kristi volunteered to review them and give their separate recommendations as to who should receive the scholarship. If their recommendations don't agree, Fr. Tom will then make the decision between the two.

Common Cup Communion: We received 72 survey responses on who prefers individual cup vs. common cup: 22 want common cup, 45 prefer individual cups, and 5 had no preference. Beginning with the Easter Vigil, both types will be offered.

Ministry Liaison Chart: There were two openings on the chart for new vestry members (Rick and Vince, Jr.) to liaison with. Barb asked to move to the group that includes Altar Guild. This left Hospitality/Social & Special Functions/Kitchen ministries which Vince, Jr. will take. Rick will have the Youth and Acolytes ministries.

Bombas Sock update: Patrick heard back from Stephen Center on this; they recently had a big influx of Bombas Sock donations, but they do need donations of toiletries, which they wondered if we would be interested in helping with. In particular they need shampoo, deodorant and lotion; Fr Tom suggested we look at doing a fund drive for this purpose and the vestry agreed with this.

DECISION ITEMS:

Parochial Report: This needs to be signed by the Vestry to finalize. It was passed on to Patrick (Clerk) and Marcia (Treasurer) for their signatures.

Lawn Care Treatment: We got a bid for the 5 Step Fertilizer treatment from the same company we had last year and it has gone up to \$660 which is a \$25 increase. **M03-14-03:** Barb moved that we go with this bid. Rick seconded. Passed with unanimous approval.

Altar Handrails: We have looked at some options for installing hand rails on the steps of the altar. He passed around a couple of early bids for these. We need to decide (1) if we want to proceed with this and (2) figure out exactly what type is needed. **M03-14-04:** Fr. Tom moved that we purchase hand rails for each side of the altar. Rick seconded. Passed with unanimous approval.

M03-14-05: Cindy moved and Patrick seconded that the meeting adjourn. Passed with unanimous approval. Meeting adjourned at 7: 27 PM

FINANCIAL REPORT

Financial Report as of February 29, 2024

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
Pledged	\$ 14,505.00	\$ 17,512.17	\$ 33,443.00	\$ 35,024.33
Other Inc.	<u>\$ 897.02</u>	<u>\$ 2,415.83</u>	<u>\$ 16,393.35</u>	<u>\$ 4,831.67</u>
Total Inc	\$ 15,402.02	\$ 19,928.00	\$ 49,836.35	\$ 39,856.00
Expenses	\$ 21,157.47	\$ 20,032.67	<u>\$ 40,421.86</u>	\$ 40,065.33
			\$ 9,414.49	



UPCOMING PARISH EVENTS!

Apr 1: Office Closed
Apr 7: Youth Sunday
Apr 7: Inquirers Class - 11:00am
Apr 11: Vestry Meeting - 6:30pm
Apr 13 - Apr 21: Adult trip to DR
Apr 14: Finance Committee Meeting - 11:00am
Apr 17: Youth Group - Roller skating - 6pm
Apr 20: Mobile Food Pantry - 10:am - 11:30am
Apr 21: Inquirers Class - 11:00am

LAY MINISTRIES SCHEDULE

Ministries	April 7	April 14	April 21	April 28
VPOD	Vince C	Cindy P	Judy D	Kristi S
Hospitality Team 9:30 am <i>Greeters ,Ushers & Coffee Hour Host</i>	Team 4	Team 1	Team 2	Team 3
Altar Guild	Team 1	Team 2	Team 3	Team 4
Spirit Hub	Anika S	Lay Eucharist Visitors	Out Reach	Cindy P
Altar Bread	Carol M	Carol M	Carol M	Carol M
Recycle Team	Jan S	Marcia A	Jan S	Karen G
LEM Saturday 5:00 pm	Kathy B/ Toby W	Kristi S	Charlotte A	Kathy B/ Toby W
LEM Sunday 8:00 am	Doug A	TBD	Doug A	TBD
LEM Sunday 9:30 am	Lori E Anika S	Vince C Michele H	Terri S Grace W	Brian C Jan S
Acolytes Crucifer Torch Torch	Olivia H Kyper M Ailynn M	Isaiah J H Evelynn C Mya H	Kyper M Ailynn M MacKenzie C	Isaiah C H Olivia H Mya H



Please submit articles for the
May 2024 FLAME to the
church office by April 22st.
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: 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 December 20st.

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The Flame
Newsletter of The Church of the Holy Spirit - Episcopal
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