



The Flame

November 2023

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.

Pet Blessing

Last month, on the church lawn, we celebrated the joy and love God has shown us through our furry friends. While our turnout was not what we had expected (the temperatures were unseasonably high that day) we did welcome some of our neighbors and their human partners to our service under the tree. We were so blessed that all our guests got along, we had no disruptions, and none knocked over the water bowl or used Fr. Tom for relief. After the service, treats were enjoyed by all before heading home.



Fr. Tom's Tidbits



As many of you know, I have been considering retirement in 2025. While up until now, with 2025 seeming so far off, it has been more discussion than anything. Last month it became more of a reality. Canon Easton, along with Bishop Barker, visited with the Vestry during last month's meeting to discuss the options before them once I make the decision to retire, and what the process would entail. Over the next few months, the Vestry and I will look ahead to 2025, and together, set a planned retirement date. Once that date is set, a formal announcement will be made at our Annual Parish Meeting, and the process of seeking the next rector of CHS will officially begin. Ken Gomeringer, our current Senior Warden, will provide an overview of what the process will look like in the January issue of the Flame, with more detail shared during our Annual Meeting. In the meantime, you may hear of some work being done by the Vestry as they prepare for their work ahead. Please keep our Vestry in your prayers; and as they solicit your help and advice, please do not hesitate to give as you are able. In the meantime, we still have a lot of work to do as we strive to be a place where people meet Christ and grow in their relationship with God.

Right around the corner is one of the busiest times in the life of the church as we prepare for the holidays ahead. Thanksgiving Eve (and our amazing pie-fest) is the parish event that really gets the season's craziness going. Right behind it, we have our Holiday Fare and Bake Sale, our collections for Bellevue Together's "Hands of Hope" ministry which offers Christmas gifts to underprivileged youth in Bellevue, there's a mobile pantry, the return of our Blue Christmas service, our Christmas Pageant, and of course our Christmas worship. In the midst of all that is happening, our ministries will be putting together the 2024 parish and outreach calendars and the Vestry will be finalizing our 2024 budget. As if that was not enough, on the heels of Christmas, we have our New Year's Eve youth lock-in and the work of preparing for the Annual Meeting.

What can we do to help ease the seasonal chaos? Volunteer. This is a time when our ministries need a little extra help. With the demands of additional services, each of our ministries will find themselves stretched in their support of that which is necessary to provide a meaningful and blessed experience for our members, and the many guests who will visit during this time of year. If there is a particular ministry you would like to help out, please visit with any member of that ministry, or call the office and we will get you in touch with the Ministry Team Leader. As we work together, giving of ourselves in whatever ways we can, we will make a difference in the lives of those around us, and in our lives as well.

Father Tom



Don't forget to set your
clocks back an hour
November 4th before
you go to bed.

Youth Activities

Bellevue Berry Farm



The return of fall and its chilly temperatures was noticed as families gathered around the campfire during last month's evening at the Bellevue Berry Farm. We had a wonderful turn-out, and although a bit chilly, there was no wind, so everyone had a great time. After roasting hot dogs, and nighttime set upon us, we headed over for our haunted hayride. Once again, we filled both trailers. As we entered the forest, we were quickly set upon by the ghouls and goblins that live in the woods. From the screams and laughter, it is safe to say they did their job. We did exit the woods with the same number as entered, and for this we are thankful. It was back to the campfire for S'Mores. Some of our group then braved the haunted house as other enjoyed some of the attractions and fun activities before we packed up and headed home. Special thanks to Sharon Jones and Lori Stevens who helped organize and coordinate our dinner and

dessert; and of course thanks to all who joined in the fun. Did you miss out this year? There's always next.



Eagle Project

The current Eagle Project is well underway. Phase 1 is complete with new trees and shrubs planted in the circle drive. Work to clear the overgrowth is continuing in the fenced in area next to the building. We are hoping to see this project completed by the end of November. There will be at least one pancake breakfast and maybe a spaghetti dinner to help fund this project. Watch *The Weekly Spark* for dates and times.



Sunday School Newsletter

Calendar:

November 5th - All Saints Party! Food, fun, and costumes!

November 19th - Advent Workshop

November 26th- December 10th: Rehearse Nativity Play, All are welcome!

December 17th-Perform Nativity Play at 9:30am service.

December 24th-Kids play bells at 5pm service.

December 24th & 31st- No Sunday School

December 31st - Parents night out and youth (10+) overnight party

ALL SAINTS PARTY

November 5, 2023 10:45am

We can all be saints of God! November 5th, kids from 3yrs to 5th grade are invited to join us for fun, food, and saints! We will learn about 4 saints; St. Gianna, St. Clare of Assisi, St. Frances of Assisi, and St. Luke the Evangelist. Let's have fun dressing up as saints and having some good treats. We will start right after the 9:30am service.



THE ADVENT WORKSHOP IS COMING!

November 19, 2023 10:30am

The Sunday School invites the congregation to join them preparing for Christ's birth. There will be lots of crafts on the tables during coffee hour after the 9:30am service. Jean and Cindy will be available to get you started or answer questions. We encourage adults to work alongside our Sunday School kids to craft and be reminded about the reason for Advent.



NAVITY PLAY COMING SOON!

December 17, 2023

9:30am Service

Starting November 26th Sunday School (10:30am) will be learning the Christmas story and start rehearsal and prep for our annual Nativity Play. All children can participate even if they cannot make it rehearsals; but please let Cindy know so she can plan. We are looking for some adults and

older youth to help with the nativity. We will have props, scenery, and a couple of speaking parts that might work better with an older reader. Please let Cindy know if you are interested in helping. If many people volunteer most people will not have to be there every week



Parish Life

Oktoberfest

Another year's festivities have come and gone. We had a great turnout and as always, the food and beverages were outstanding. Special thanks to Marcia Adams for coordinating the dinner, Sharon Jones, the prizes; Lynda & Alan Wyant for decorating the parish hall, Andrew & Katarina Klimpel, along with Dave McCarrison, who created our challenging trivia, to our team of expert pourers, and to all who joined in and made the night so much fun.



Annual Council

We give thanks for the safe travel of not only our delegates to the Diocesan Annual Council, but for that of all who attended. As always, as Episcopalians from across the state gather, there is this renewed sense of community. It is easy to become so focused on what happens in our own parishes, we forget that others have their own challenges to deal with and their own things to celebrate as well. We were blessed to learn of the many ministries happening across the diocese through their table displays, some wonderful presentations, and the small group discussions that took place. We also enjoyed time for prayer and worship, as individuals, in our small groups, and as one body. Hearing the voices of so many praying and praising our Lord as one, was an experience difficult to describe. If you might be interested in attending the next Annual Council as a delegate from CHS, please visit with Fr. Tom. Next year's Council will be held 24th to 26th of October in Hastings.



Parish Clean-up

On Saturday (4 Nov) we will hold our annual fall clean-up. There are a lot of small tasks we need to do to prepare our space for the coming winter, and for our guests who will join us over the holidays. There are tasks for all skill levels, both inside and outside. Please join us between 9am and 1pm for as long as you are able to help us check items off the list. For more details about the fall clean-up, please contact Dean Olander or Chris Darrell.



Office Closed



The office will be closed on Friday (10 Nov) in observance of Veteran's Day, and again Thursday and Friday (23-24 Nov) in observance of Thanksgiving.



Thanksgiving Eve



On Wednesday (22 Nov) at 6:30pm, we will hold our annual Thanksgiving Eve Service and Pie Fest. We ask each family that can, to bring their favorite pie top share. Following the service, we will decorate our space for Advent (hanging the sanctuary greenery) and then come down to the parish hall to feast on some very tasty treats. Please mark your calendars and if you are able join us for the festivities.



Vocal and Bell Choirs

As the holidays approach, both the vocal and handbell choirs are looking for volunteers to help us sing and ring out in joy. Vocal choir practices beginning at 9:00am on Sunday mornings and our Bell Choir practices, following the 9:30am service, beginning at 11:00am. For more information, please contact Ali Clark (our Vocal Choir Director) or Katerina Klimpel (our Bell Choir Director).



Computer Ministry

Last month, Alan Wyant shared information about the ministry of our computer/IT team. Alan is in real need of another volunteer to join the team and share in the periodic updates needed to keep our computers up and running. We all know how dependent we have become on computers in this digital age, the church is no different. Please note, this team is not responsible for running the computer during worship. Their focus is on making sure our computers are up to date and working. If you are interested in learning more about this ministry team, and how you might assist, please contact Alan Wyant.



Holy Land Pilgrimage



Registration was to begin at the end of last month for next year's pilgrimage to the Holy Land (7-18 May). Due to the regional civil unrest, all Holy Land pilgrimages have been placed on hold until the safety of pilgrims can be assured. While we pray for peace in time for us to make our planned trip, we will most likely be rescheduling our trip until late fall of 2024 or the spring of 2025. To know more, please contact Fr Tom.

Presence Candles and Communion Bread



It is once again time to begin putting together our presence candle and communion bread rotations.

Presence candles, which sit alongside the tabernacle, in both the sanctuary and chapel, remind us of God's nearness in the reserved sacrament our tabernacles contain. Each year, we invite members to donate \$20, in thanksgiving, or in memory, a candle for one month of their choice. A sign-up sheet is located at the Spirit Hub for members to let us know the month desired. Also at the Spirit Hub, are blue cards to be filled out and forwarded to the office to let us know if you wish to give in thanksgiving or in memory.

Communion Bread is baked by members of our parish. A recipe can be found on the bulletin board outside the office. Like the presence candle, members are invited to provide the loaves needed for a month. If you are hesitant, rest assured, the recipe provided is simple and easy to follow. A sign-up sheet is located at the Spirit Hub where volunteers can let us know what month they would like to provide.



Helping Hands Who Love to Cook Ministry



Over the years, we have provided occasional meals to parish families dealing with illnesses, deaths, or other problems. We are looking to expand the list of volunteers able and willing to provide meals. If you would be willing to provide an occasional meal, please visit with, or contact Jan Sinram or the parish office. Also, if you know of a parish family in need, please do not hesitate to contact Jan, or the office, so that we can coordinate the support needed.

Outreach

Moving Veterans Forward

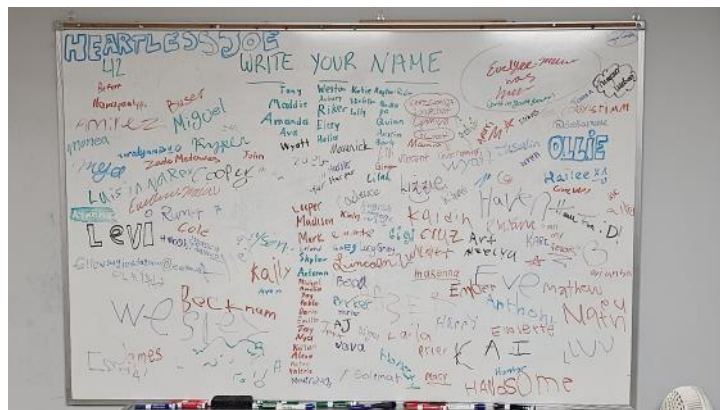
During the month of October, CHS conducted its annual fundraiser in support of Moving Veterans Forward (MVF). This local ministry has served area veterans by helping them find homes and to provide them with items needed to make a fresh start. Thanks to the generosity of our members, we raised a total of \$470, that was then forwarded to MVF to coincide with Veteran's Day . Thank you to Nancy Baxter for coordinating CHS efforts.



Trunk or Treat

The weather forecast was gloomy, the threat of cold and snow, plans were made to move everything we could inside. God had another plan. Yes, the weather was cold as forecast, but no snow and only light winds allowing the event to go as planned. Special thanks to all who braved the weather, decorated their cars and handed out candy. Another great shout out to our team of volunteers who ran the games inside for our guests. Lots of candy and a lot of prizes were handed out and we were blessed to see all the smiling faces. We asked our guests to sign the white board in the conference room, and many did. We ended up with this wonderful collage of names, each one representing a young guest who appreciated our service to the community. We also welcomed an additional 50+ names of families who wish to hear more about events we offer that are family friendly. What a success and blessing. Mark your calendars! We will do this again on Sunday 27 Oct 2024.





Dominican Pilgrimage

This month, a team of DioNeb parishioners, including our own Marcia Adams and Fr. Tom, head down to the Dominican Republic to continue working and worshipping with the community at the Santa Ana Mission in Santa Domingo. The team's focus will be on clearing the grounds, beginning the refurbishment of the classroom out-building, and helping with some minor repairs to the mission itself. Please keep the team in your prayers as they travel and work as DioNeb partners in ministry.



Mobil Pantry



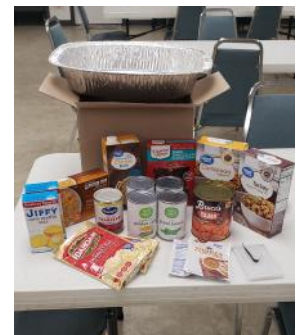
Our next mobile pantry is scheduled for Saturday, November 11th. Distribution will take place between 10-11:30am. If you, or someone you know, is in need of grocery assistance, this is a great opportunity for one to find it. Help us spread the word by sharing our event on Facebook when it is published.

The more we spread the word, the more families we are able to help. If you have not yet attended one of our pantries and would like to volunteer, please arrive at the church by 9:30am, entering the parking lot through the Thomas Dr entrance.



Thanksgiving Baskets

There is still two more weeks to make a donation to help provide 30 Thanksgiving baskets for the Bellevue Food Pantry. Our goal is to once again provide a complete Thanksgiving Dinner for four (a \$40 value) that will be distributed to families in need through our partnership with the Bellevue Food Pantry. In lieu of frozen turkeys or hams, we will provide each household with a \$25 Bakers gift card to purchase the protein of their choice. Can you sponsor one or more families? If so, please drop your check in the offertory (make sure to note "baskets" in the memo line) by Sunday (12 Nov). Volunteers are invited to help pack family boxes on Wednesday afternoon (15 Nov), beginning at 1:30pm, to then deliver them to the Pantry that afternoon.



Holiday Craft & Bake Sale



It is that time of year again. Our holiday and craft fair will be held on Saturday (2 Dec) from 9am until 3pm. As always, we invite the members of the parish to bake items for our Bake Sale booth. Set up and baked items drop off will be Friday (1 Dec). If you have items to donate for the Christmas Flea Market, they can be placed in the church library beginning Sun (26 Nov). Please stop by the Spirit Hub and sign-up to let us know if you can volunteer to help with setup on Friday, or for a Saturday shift in the bake sale booth or Christmas Flea Market. For more information about the Market, or to reserve a booth for your own crafty items, contact Karen Gray.



Vestry Meeting Minutes

October 12, 2023

Vestry Members present: Fr. Tom Jones, Lori Erickson, Kristi Smith, Cindy Pekarek, Barb Smith, Leslie Nutting, Ken Gomeringer

Also present: Bishop Scott Barker, Canon Liz Easton, Carol McLaughlin, Recorder

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

Fr. Tom began by handing out the paperwork to be signed for Terri Storm's candidacy for the Deaconate. He then announced that the agenda would be set aside until after a presentation and discussion led by Canon Liz Easton regarding the search for a new pastor following Fr. Tom's retirement.

Bishop Barker opened with remarks leading to Canon Liz' presentation. He then introduced Canon Liz to the Vestry. After her introductory remarks, Fr. Tom left the meeting as he will not be able to be a part of the search for a new priest.

Canon Liz then went over the process we can expect in the search for the new priest. She provided a handout titled Search Process Basics. A copy of this handout will be in the mailbox of those vestry members not present at this meeting. She detailed the process and took questions from vestry members.

Following her presentation, Fr. Tom rejoined the meeting and the Bishop and Canon Liz left.

INFORMATION / UPDATES:

Fr. Tom went over the upcoming event calendar. He detailed plans for the Trunk or Treat on Oct. 29. Thanksgiving boxes will be packed following the Mobile Pantry on Nov. 18.

TREASURERS REPORT:

Budget vs. Actuals: Our pledges are down a bit this month, also our Total Operating Income is about 2-3% down from where we normally are. This is not a real concern as the finance committee feels we will finish the year in good shape. A few other expense items were discussed. Most expenses were as expected. We are still about \$10,000 in the hole but with what we believe is coming in yet, we think we will be ok.

Changes in Equity: Under expenses there was expense for Oktoberfest. Under FHFO we sent Magdalene their \$906. \$5000 was moved from Discretionary Fund to Building Fund per our motion and approval last month. \$120 under Special Offering Fund was for our new "Give Thanks" banner. \$1,400 out of landscaping fund was for the plants and everything for the scout project out front as well as the work done outside the office door. We lost \$12,000 in the Endowment Fund last month.

Discretionary Fund Requests:

Fund	Expense	Amount
Outreach Misc	Magdalene Omaha	859.00
Landscape Fund	Office door landscaping	1,035.54
Outreach Misc	Toothpaste	47.42
Oktoberfest	Supplies and prizes	270.52
Landscape Fund	Bushes/Hardscape	437.50
Special Offering Fund	Banner	120.00
Building Fund	Security system batteries	34.23
DOK Fund	Ministry handbooks	35.00
Oktoberfest	Supplies and prizes	158.38
Camp & Mission Fund	Groceries	16.97
Funeral Fund	Smith funeral	204.05
Vicar of Msn Fund	Banner & shirts for trip	278.00
Columbarium Fund	Name plate	20.00

Motion M10-12-01: Lori moved to accept the reports as presented. Cindy seconded. Approved unanimously.

Motion M10-12-02: Leslie moved to pay the bills. Kristi seconded. Approved unanimously.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Draft #3 of the 2024 Budget was given to members. This month gives us a better look at what our 2023 estimates will be. The amounts bolded in red indicate changes from last month's draft. Under Income, Plate offering and Building Use were adjusted somewhat downward based on what we have seen so far this year. Some items under Operating Expense were explained. Under Ministry Expenses, all items are highlighted in red. This indicates that all Ministries have submitted their budget requests and these are the numbers they have provided. Total Expenses are budgeted at \$245,022. Income estimated at \$236,628. This leaves a deficit of \$8394. \$7,000 of that is the increased Diocesan asking. We do have savings in all ministries plus money from Werner Park that is enough to cover the deficit if necessary.

Status of Pledge Drive as of today was handed out. Our goal is \$215,478. So far we have received pledges totaling \$92,542. Taking into consideration non-pledge items and offerings and other income, we are at about \$138,000 in the hole, however it is still early. 17 total pledges have been received so far.

Update on Bomba Sock donation set aside as Patrick was not in attendance.

Update on purchase of new stained glass window by Leslie: She has provided details of what we want to a provider and is waiting for their reply. She will follow up if response not received in a week.

Trunk or Treat: Fr. Tom said that flyers will be ready for handing out; they will be put on doors throughout the neighborhood. There are plans to promote the event on NextDoor, Facebook, and other social media. We had over 200 kids last year, we are hoping for a similar turnout again. There will also be games inside and a drawing for a gift certificate.

The Vestry Christmas dinner will be on December 8 at 6:00 PM.

Note: Please do not unlock the blue door on Sundays. It has to be manually re-locked and is easily overlooked.

Lisa Aguilar will be the supply clergy when Fr. Tom is in the DR on Nov. 4–5. Kristi volunteered to come and open up the building for the Saturday service.

The Bishop has advised that Ted Powell has been approved and can move forward with his ordination as Deacon.

DECISION ITEMS:

No decision items, other than the paperwork for Terri Storm, which was given out at the beginning of the meeting.

There was no further business. **Motion M10-12-03:** Leslie moved that the meeting adjourn. Kristi seconded. Unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM

FINANCIAL REPORT

Financial Report as of September 30, 2023

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
Pledged	\$ 13,287.00	\$ 17,265.92	\$ 142,825.00	\$ 155,393.25
Other Inc.	\$ 707.00	\$ 1,962.50	\$ 14,744.75	\$ 17,662.50
Total Inc	\$ 13,994.00	\$ 19,228.42	\$ 157,569.75	\$ 173,055.75
Expenses	\$ 18,579.96	\$ 19,303.83	\$ 167,847.81	\$ 173,734.50
			\$ -10,278.06	



UPCOMING PARISH EVENTS!

- Nov 3 - First Friday Sack Lunch - Noon
- Nov 4 - Parish Clean-up - 9am to 1pm
- Nov 5 - All Saints Day / Sunday School Party - After 9:30 Service
- Nov 8 - No 9:30 am Service
- Nov 12 - Finance Committee Meeting - 11am
- Nov 10 - **Office Closed** to observe Veterans Day
- Nov 15 - Pack Thanksgiving Boxes - 1:30pm
- Nov 16 - Vestry Meeting - 6:30pm
- Nov 18 - Mobile Food Pantry - 10-11:30am / Advent Workshop - after
- Nov 19 - Pancake Breakfast - After each service
- Nov 22 - Thanksgiving Eve Service and Pie Fest - 6:30
- Nov 23 & 24 - **Office Closed** for Thanksgiving
- Nov. 26 - Christ the King Party for Sunday School - After Service



LAY MINISTRIES SCHEDULE

Ministries	Nov 5	Nov 12	Nov 19	Nov 26
VPOD	Cindy P	Ken G	Kristi S	Barb S
Hospitality Team 9:30 am Greeters ,Ushers & Coffee Hour Host	Team 2	Team 3	Team 4	Team 1
Altar Guild	Team 1	Team 2	Team 3	Team 4
Spirit Hub	Sharon J/ Lori S / Karen G	Pauline P	Bill F	Lori S
Altar Bread	Ryan M	Ryan M	Ryan M	Ryan M
Recycle Team	Jan S	Marcia A	Lynda W	Karen G
LEM Saturday 5:00 pm	Amber H / Alberta Y	Brian C/ Charlotte A	Kathy B / Toby W	Kristi S
LEM Sunday 8:00 am	Doug A	Rick S	Doug A	Ted P
LEM Sunday 9:30 am	Grace W / Michele H Amber H /Jan S	Carol S/ Anika S Lori E	Amber H/ Jan S Emily W / Jen W	Michele H Brian C
Acolytes Crucifer Torch Torch	Isaiah JH Mya H MacKenzie C	Evelynn C Vincent C Mya H	Isaiah CH Olivia H MacKenzie C	Kyper M Vincent C Ailynn M



 Please submit articles for the
 December 2023 FLAME to the
 church office by November 21st.
 Thank you



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November



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 21st.

Webpage: www.chsepiscopal.org

Email: holyspirit@chsepiscopal.org

The Flame
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1305 Thomas Drive
Bellevue, NE 68005-2973
402-291-7732