



The Flame

May 2025

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.

Easter

Despite a little rain, our Easter celebration was amazing. It was such a blessing to have so many family and friends join us for worship. A special thanks goes out to all who worked so hard to make our service so special, the members of our Altar Guild, our Vocal and Bell Choirs, and the many volunteers who served unselfishly to help our guests feel blessed as well. We also want to thank Amber Horejs and several of our older youth who offered our younger youth an indoor Easter egg hunt after the service.



Fr. Tom's Tidbits



With the holy chaos of Holy Week and Easter behind me, I now look ahead to the chaos before me. It's hard to believe how fast these past 15 months have gone. It seems like only yesterday I announced my plans to retire, and here we are, with retirement now only eight weeks away. Over the last few months, I have been trying my best to prepare, not only the office for handover, but myself for the change that is coming. Many of you have asked, won't I miss it. My answer is of course yes. What I will miss most though is not the job, but the people who God has blessed me through these past 16 plus years. I am confident that whoever the next rector is, they will find the people of Holy Spirit a blessing as well.

While it is only eight weeks, it will be a long and very busy eight weeks. Yes, I am off to the Dominican Republic again; and when I get back, we still need to finish up our Inquirer's class, perform several baptisms, celebrate Recognition Sunday and Lisa Weilandt's wedding, get ready for the Bishop's visit on Pentecost, finalize and head out on our annual youth pilgrimage, and somewhere in all this, I need to find time to finish preparing the office and files for the new priest. Thankfully, my last act as your rector will be traveling to the Dominican Republic with youth and family, from our parish and across the diocese, to work and pray at the diocesan camp outside Jarabacoa; a place very near to my heart, as this is where I was blessed to lead several youth teams in the past.

Over the years, mission has been an important part of our shared ministry, and I pray it continues after I am gone, because that would mean I get to see many of you again, as this is what the bishop has in store for me after retirement. I will continue as a diocesan coordinator to organize and lead adult teams in the spring and fall, and youth and family teams in the summer, for work in the Dominican Republic and regionally. God willing, it is also my hope to organize and lead at least one more pilgrimage to the Holy Land towards the end of 2026. Please keep me, and our parish family, in your prayers over the next eight weeks that our planned transition goes smoothly.

Father Tom

Church office
closed for
Memorial day



Deacons Corner

Greetings!!

The Lord is Risen! He is risen indeed. Alleluia!!!

We often hear people refer to an unexplainable event as a “miracle,” and we have become a bit too used to hearing the term used out of context and meaning. The good that Jesus did was miraculous in so many ways and had no explanation for what took place other than it was an “act of God.” We often hear the term “act of God” today as it references tragic events such as hurricanes and tornadoes. But the acts of God Jesus did were good things!



The miracles of Jesus were never intended to be spectacles for the entertainment of the crowd. They were meant to lead hearts to Him, but many hearts were hard. Indeed, Jesus rebuked the Pharisees, who asked to see a sign after He had performed many, calling them “wicked and perverse” (Matthew 12:39). Jesus lamented humanity’s desire to see signs and wonders — the desire for the spectacular—because it got in the way of faith. His goal was not to satisfy human curiosity but to lead hearts to believe in Him for salvation. The ultimate purpose of every miracle was not the immediate physical relief of the broken but the revelation of Jesus as the Savior of mankind.

When Jesus called Lazarus out of the tomb, He was foreshadowing His own resurrection, proving that He alone holds the keys to life and death. In raising Lazarus, Jesus assures all who trust in Him as Savior and Lord that they too will rise — and not just physically. When we believe in Christ, He awakens our dead spirits so that even on this side of heaven we can experience abundant life through Him.

I wish a blessed and joyous Easter to you and yours.

Deacon Ted

Parish Life

Online Giving

Our new online giving platform is up and running on our website. We are switching over to one provided by Servant Keeper, the same company that we use for parish administration and finances. In addition to lower fees for online giving, Servant Keeper also allows online donors to cover the cost as part of, or in addition to, their offering. Another feature that we encourage members to take advantage of is the ability to sign into Servant Keeper when making a donation. If you use the same email that you have on file with the church, your donation should be seamlessly entered into the system. If you do not wish to create a sign-in, while we will still receive your donation, we will be unable to designate it to your giving account as they will appear as anonymous donations. Something else you can now do with online giving is to designate to one of several options. Please visit our website and see if online giving works for you. If you have any questions, please contact Corey Hagen.



Bishop's Visit

Mark your calendars!!! The bishop will be visiting us on Sunday (8 Jun) to help us celebrate the feast of Pentecost. As is our custom, please plan to wear something red for our annual parish picture.



Holy Week

Special Thanks to our Altar Guild who worked so hard to make sure our worship space was prepared for the many services we had throughout the week. We also want to thank the Vocal and Bell Choirs, along with our organist Grace Roby, for their gift of music that enriched each of our Triduum services.

Palm Sunday



Maundy Thursday



Good Friday



Vigil



Air Conditioner Repair

As we made the switch from winter to summer, we learned that one of our air conditioning compressors has seized and will require replacement. This unforeseen breakdown means the air-conditioning in the admin and Christian ed wing will not function as well as it could until a new compressor is installed. We are waiting to learn how much the repair will cost.

2025 Parish Directory



Our 2025 parish directories will be available at the Spirit Hub beginning Sunday (18 May). We apologize for the delay in distribution as we have been working to update the family photos. If you wish to update your photo, please forward it to the church office by Monday (12 May).

Columbarium Biographies

If you have a loved one interned in our Columbarium and have not provided us with a photo and short biography to add to our book of remembrances, you should be getting an email over the next week. Photos and biographies can be dropped off with our parish administrator or emailed to the office at holyspirit@chsepicopal.org, or drop them off with our parish administrator. Any photos dropped off will be scanned and returned to the family.

Youth Activities

Palm Folding

Special thanks to our Journeys youth who, along with some parish volunteers, folded all the beautiful palm crosses we enjoyed receiving during our Palm Sunday service. By the way, please don't throw them away as they dry out. Save them and bring them to church on Shrove Tuesday next year. Palms and crosses returned are then burnt and used for ashes during our Ash Wednesday service.



Stations of the Cross

Special thanks go out to our Journeys youth who led us through the Stations of the Cross during Holy Week. It is always a blessing to have them take the lead in this blessed offering. We would also like to thank the many parishioners who joined us for this special service and who stayed to join us for evening Compline later that night.



Crossings

On Wednesday (14 May) our Journeys youth will gather for their last meeting of the program year for dinner (at 6:30pm) and worship (at 7:00pm). During our worship service we will acknowledge our graduate Isaiah Hagen, and all those who are transitioning from Rite 13 to J2A, and from J2A to YAC. Members of the parish are invited to join us for our end of program year celebration. If you wish to join us for dinner and/or worship, please stop by the Spirit Hub and let us know so we can plan accordingly.



Youth Sunday

What a blessing we enjoyed when the youth of our parish took over our 9:30 Sunday service and filled the Sanctuary with an abundance of love. From being greeted at the door by our youthful greeters, and again outside the sanctuary by our team of youth ushers, to their wonderful offering of song and bells at the beginning of our worship, and let us not forget all those who served at the altar and our youth

preacher, MacKenzie Caskey, who shared with us an amazing look at how the she, and we, connect to the scriptures we hear each week.



Vacation Bible School

VBS will be June 23-26th

Welcome to Summer! Summer means Vacation Bible School (VBS)!! This year's theme is Rocket Racers and learning about Elijah. Each day we will hear and participate in Elijah's story, play lots of games, make crafts, and have snacks! We always need volunteers for the different pieces of this ministry. Here are some opportunities to ministry for our kids: Decorations group, Craft Preparation, Games Preparation, Food Preparation and Serving, Volunteer during VBS any or all days, Photographer (I always forget to take pics)



We will be planning and working on VBS Sundays after the 9:30 service starting May 18th. You don't need to be there for every Sunday to help. Stop By the Spirit Hub to sign up or Contact Cindy Pekarek 402-670-0575 cell .

Outreach

Mobile Pantry

The March Mobile Food Pantry was a little wet and the crowds were not as big as usual. I wanted to send out a big “Thank You” to Father Tom and the volunteers for setting up some canopies to keep the food – and the workers – dry. The volunteers also hand out the food, sign in our customers, and help with setting up and closing down the pantry. The product that was left over was donated to the Bellevue Food Pantry. In addition to the normal offering of grocery items, we were able to hand out laundry detergent and ground beef to our guest families thanks to a grant from the Diocese. Thank you, Father Tom, and Sharon, for getting these special items for us to hand out.



Our April pantry is Sat (26 Apr). There is NO pantry in May. As always, we ask volunteers to arrive by 9:30am, entering through the Thomas Dr parking lot entrance. For more information, please contact Deacon Ted.

Adult Mission Team



Our adult team leaves for the Dominican Republic this Saturday (3 May). During this trip, they will complete the work we have been part of at Mission Santa Anna, and begin work at the Church of the Good Samaritan located in San Francisco de Marcos. A DioNeb team will return to Good Samaritan again 3-10 Nov. If you would like to know how you could be part of our next team, please contact Fr Tom.

Youth-Family Mission Team

Our team has formed, and our youth are busy fundraising to help offset the cost of their trip. Each of our youth, and adults, are selling shares of stock in their pilgrimage/mission. If you would like to help fund their trip, you can either buy a share of stock directly from a member of our team, or by noting common stock in the memo line of your check. All common stock donations will be split evenly among the team unless otherwise noted. All stockholders will be invited to join our team on Friday (15 Aug) in the parish hall, for a stockholders’ dinner during which our team can offer their thanks and share some pictures and thoughts on their experience. This trip is open to all parish youth between the ages of 12-20. Youth 12-15 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Passports are needed. If you have a passport, and are interested in joining the team, please speak with Fr Tom by Sunday (18 May).



Youth Summer Pilgrimage



Planning is underway for our summer pilgrimage. This year our youth will be heading out to Alliance, NE. While there, we will be staying at St. Matthew’s (Mother Kim Culp’s parish). Our plan is to spend part of a day on a working ranch learning about life in rural Nebraska, getting a tour of a local recycling plant (and possibly helping sort some of what they recycle), serving during a neighborhood lunch for the homeless, as well as doing a little sightseeing and spending time in worship, and most importantly at the city pool. This trip is open to all parish youth 12-18. Adult chaperones are needed. The cost for this trip is \$300 per person. Parish scholarships are available to all participants to help offset the costs. If you are interested, please stop by the Spirit Hub and sign up.

Vestry Meeting Minutes

April 10, 2025

Vestry Members present: Fr. Tom Jones, Cindy Pekarek, Margie Crawford, Rick Horejs, Judy Darrel, Vince Cummings, Barb Smith, Brian Caskie, Marsha Adams-Treasurer

Fr. Tom opened the meeting with prayer.

Search Committee Report: Cindy said in the next month the search committee will have a social gathering to meet and get to know the candidate & their spouse. Bill and Marsha said the search committee is right on track and where we are supposed to be. They are working on another in-person meeting rather than Zoom.

Finance Report: Marsha presented the financials for the month.

Looking at budget vs actuals we are currently at 116% for the pledge offering. This will dip during the summer months. Under expenditures, the copier fees were \$834. That was for 2 quarterly bills that were sent late by the copier company. Workman's Compensation Insurance is \$695, that is a yearly payment and under the budget. Snow removal was higher than the monthly budget at \$1070 because it included 2 bills for February and March. We pay based on how much snow we get. Our total expenses are 95% for the year.

Looking at the Change in Equity, we moved a lot of money because of vestry motions, the lighting project and the roof project. Grants were also distributed. The \$10,000 drop in the endowment funds is because of the stock market

On the balance sheet we have many outstanding checks mostly because many of them were written at the very end of the month.

M04-10-01: Barb moved, and Judy seconded to accept the reports as presented. Motion passed with unanimous approval. M04-10-02: Vince motioned, and Judy seconded that we pay the bills. Passed with unanimous approval.

On the Changes in Equity Report, Fr. Tom noted some expenditures.

Fund	Expense	Amount
Alter Guild	Deacon Stoles	\$72
Magdalene Omaha	Donation	\$671
Building	Final Roof payment	\$75, 591
Lighting	Final Lighting payment	\$27, 593
Conelly	Lighting	\$2,716
McVey	Bell Choir-replacement parts	\$44
Connely	Bell Choir-replacement parts	\$94
Outreach	Food Pantry supplies	\$555.90
McVey	Embossing chapel altar book with their name	\$45
Ronie, Brown, Conly, Oltman	New Chasuble and Stole	\$1000

Because of a Rausman grant, the diocese will pay us back for the cost of the meat and the laundry detergent. We have \$288 left in the grant for future pantries.

Altar guild will also order a new frontal, ambo (lectern) hanging, and a new burse & veil to match the chasuble. This is the set that is coming apart.

UPCOMING EVENTS

20 Apr	Easter
21 Apr	Office Closed
26 Apr	Mobile Pantry
3 May	Adult DR Trip (3-9 May)
3/4 May	Evening & Morning Prayer
11 May	Finance Committee/Inquirer's Class
15 May	Vestry
18 May	Worship Committee

Decision Items:

We still do not have microphone parts. Fr. Tom will keep in touch with the provider.

We missed the deadline for the DioNeb Diocesan Grant.

Fr. Tom has enrolled in Everymail for \$16 per month. He has applied to be a non-profit with Google at which point it will be free.

Discussed what vestry members will be at Thursday-Saturday evening services.

Margie wants to have a craft fair & raffle items on Saturday May 17th. Proceeds from vendor tables and raffle tickets will go toward the youth group's trip to the DR. Margie will handle publicity. Judy will help with everything else.

Fr. Tom said AA has requested use of the parish hall every Saturday from 8-9:30. They have a group of 30-40. Vestry discussed and thought we would not be able to provide the privacy they would need. We will be a back-up place if time allows. **M04-10-03:** Fr. Tom moved to allow AA to hold a Saturday meeting from 8-9:30am each week. Judy seconded the motion. Following a discussion, the motion failed and AA's request was denied

M04-10-04: Judy motioned and Vince seconded to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously.



FINANCIAL REPORT

Financial Report as of March 31, 2025

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
Pledged	\$ 19,316.00	\$ 18,297.58	\$ 56,851.00	\$ 54,892.75
Other Inc.	\$ <u>813.02</u>	\$ <u>2,394.67</u>	\$ <u>15,174.86</u>	\$ <u>7,184.00</u>
Total Inc	\$ 20,129.02	\$ 20,692.25	\$ 72,025.86	\$ 62,076.75
Expenses	\$ 19,680.76	\$ 21,126.83	\$ <u>60,629.29</u>	\$ 63,380.50
			\$ 11,396.57	

UPCOMING PARISH EVENTS!

Mother's Day



May 02 - First Friday Sack Lunch - noon
 May 11 - Finance Committee Meeting - 11am
 May 11 - Inquirer's Class- 11am
 May 14 - Journeys Crossing - 6:30pm
 May 15 - Vestry Meeting - 6:30pm
 May 17 - Parish Clean-up - 9am
 May 17 - DOK meeting - 11am
 May 18 - Recognition Sunday
 May 18 - Worship Committee Meeting
 May 26 - Office Closed



LAY MINISTRIES SCHEDULE

Ministries	May 4	May 11	May 18	May25
VPOD	Judy D	Margie C	Brian C	Patrick H
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	Altar Guild	Meals on Wheels	Acolytes	Food for Parish Members
Altar Bread	Judy D	Judy D	Judy D	Judy D
Recycle Team	Jan S	Marcia A	Susan H	Karen G
LEM Saturday 5:00 pm	Amber H	Charlotte A	Kristi S	Toby W / Kathy B
LEM Sunday 8:00 am	Doug A	Doug A	Doug A	Doug A
LEM Sunday 9:30 am	Brian C Jen W	Vince C Carol S	Grace W Jan S	Lori E Michele H
Acolytes Crucifer Torch Torch	Isaiah JH Mya H MacKenzie C	Evelynn C Vincent C Mya H	Isaiah CH Cadence K Olivia H	Kyper M Amanda N Ailynn M

Please submit articles for the
 June 2025 FLAME to the
 church office by May 19th.
 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 @ 10:45 am*
Wednesday: *Bible Study @ 10:15 am*
Journey 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 May 19th.

Webpage: www.chsepiscopal.org

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