



The Flame

December 2022

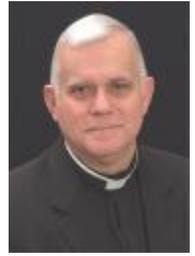
Our Mission is to be a welcoming place where people meet Christ and grow in their relationship with God through our worship, service, and fellowship.

Holiday Craft and Bake Sale

Karen Gray is still looking for some volunteers to help with this year's Holiday Fair, Bake Sale, and Christmas Flea Market on Saturday 3 Dec. If you have a couple of hours you can help out, would like to bake something for the bake sale table, or have Christmas decorations you wish to donate, please let Karen know. Volunteers can sign-up by calling Karen (or the office). Baked items and flea market donations can be dropped off Friday before the sale.



Fr. Tom's Tidbits



It is hard to believe another year has come and gone and we are once again preparing to celebrate the good news of the incarnation, that with the birth of Jesus, God came among us, as one of us, to show us the way back into right relationship with him and one another. While being reminded of this strengthens our hope in the love of God, the hustle and bustle of the season, along with the other things that turn our worlds upside down, it is not always the most joyous of times; and as the days grow shorter, and the temperatures colder, we can really struggle to get ourselves all excited about what is just a few short weeks away.

This is one reason we are offering a Blue Christmas service this year. It is our hope that through the liturgy we share, we can see beyond those things that draw our attention away from the joy that we might otherwise know. During the service we will ask God to help us let go of those things we can, and to help us carry those we cannot, leaving the service reassured that whatever we face in the coming weeks, months, and years, we do not face them on our own, but resting in the hands and arms of God; renewing our hope in God's promise to be with us always.

Knowing God is with us, is not only a keynote of this holiday season, but something I give thanks for each and every day. Through the ups and downs of our crazy lives, it is a real comfort to know that even in those times we feel alone, we are not. This is a truth I have tried to share our fourteen years together, and I hope to share in the years to come. As we enter our fifteenth year together, and looking ahead to what the future holds for our parish family, let this truth give us strength to face whatever challenges we encounter along the way and the ability to hold onto hope found in the promise of God to be with us always.

May the upcoming celebration of the incarnation, bring a joy into your heart that pushes aside any struggles, doubts, or worries so that the love of God, which surrounds us, and embraces us, may not only be felt, but welcomed in a way that invites others to see in us the hope we know, and the hope they seek. Have a blessed holiday.

Father Tom

End of year giving

As the year comes to an end, we still face some fiscal challenges. Your Vestry recognizes that this has been a hard year for everyone, and they do not wish anyone to give more than they are able. If you have fallen a little behind in their 2022 giving, and are able, please catch up as you can.

For those who are required to take minimal distributions from your IRAs, you can reduce the tax incurred by contributing a portion of your withdrawal directly to a qualified charitable organization (which includes CHS). To learn more about how this is done, please contact your financial planner or visit www.irs.gov/retirement-plans/retirement-plans-fags-regarding-iras-distributions-withdrawals.



Christmas Services

As we prepare our hearts for the holiday, let each of us set the hustle and bustle aside for a little while and join in community during one of our holiday services. As is our custom, we will offer services both on Christmas Eve and Christmas Morning. (see times below). Did you know that between the 7 and 10 pm services on Christmas Eve we hold a pot luck meal? If your family does not celebrate the holiday on Christmas Eve, you are invited to join us and if you are able, bring a dish to share. It is a great time to visit and relax with our parish family. Because Christmas falls on a Sunday this year, we will offer our regular services on Christmas morning.

Christmas Eve

5:00 pm: A family orientated service including our youth bell choir, and our vocal choir

7:00 pm: Service will include our adult bell choir, and our vocal choir

10:00 pm: Service will include our adult bell choir, and our vocal choir

Christmas Morning

8:00 am: A simple service held in our chapel.

10:00 am: A simple but uplifting service that includes Christmas Hymns and communion

Blue Christmas Service

While Advent is a season of hope, and Christmas a season of joy, we know that not everyone feels hopeful or like celebrating. Feelings of grief, depression, loneliness, and loss may be heightened and magnified and that even those who are not struggling with losses, may feel the stress of preparations and expectations around the Christmas holiday. This service is meant to provide us with a time and place of solace and encouragement during the often hurried and overwhelming days surrounding the celebration of Christmas. We come together in our worship to seek healing and a safe space to share grief, loneliness, or confusion when these emotions often feel out of place during the holidays.

HOLIDAY LAY MINISTRIES SCHEDULE

Ministries	Dec 17 5pm	Dec 24 5pm	Dec 24 7 pm	Dec 24 10pm	Dec 25 9:30
VPOD	-	-	-	-	Margie C
Hospitality Team Greeters ,Ushers & Coffee Hour Host	<u>Greeter</u> Barb S	<u>Ushers</u> Doug A Lora C <u>Greeters</u> Nancy B Barb S	<u>Ushers</u> Vince C Brian W <u>Greeters</u> Bill F	<u>Ushers</u> Chris D Dean O <u>Greeters</u> Dean & Joan O	<u>Ushers</u> Ryan & Casey M <u>Greeter</u> Deanne M
Altar Guild	Team 2	Leslie N Toby W Sharon J	Sharon J	Jan S Joan O Sharon J	
LEM	Vince C Terri S	Jan S Jennifer W	Anika S Lori E	TBA	Margie C Ken G
Acolytes	Crucifer- Torch Torch	Isaiah H Kyper M Ailynn M	Anika S Vincent C Evelynn C	Olivia H Alex W	TBA LEM

Youth Activities

Youth Group Roller Skating



Last month our youth took a night off from their regular activities and enjoyed a night of roller skating. We had a few first-time skaters, and some who have skated for many years. Everyone had a great time and it was surprising to find that the skating rink was not overcrowded. Our journeys youth and mentors want to thank all the parish youth who came and joined in the fun.



Christmas Pageant

On Sunday, 18 Dec (during our 9:30am service) our parish youth will offer us another rendition of the Christmas story. This is always a holiday treat at CHS and all youth are invited to join in. There are parts for all age groups. As usual, our Christian Ed team will be organizing this blessed event. If your youth wish to participate, please contact Cindy Pekarek (our Christian Ed Director) ahead of time. Practice times will be announced in the parish bulletin and the Weekly Spark.



Journeys Break



Our Journeys program will take a break over the holidays. We will not meet on 28 Dec or 4 Jan. We will resume meeting at 6:30 on Wednesday (11 Jan 23). Journeys is open to all parish youth in grades 6-12. For more information, contact Fr. Tom or any one of our J2A Mentors.

New Year's Eve lock-in

Permission and Childcare Registration slips are now available at The Spirit Hub. Our youth group, under adult supervision, will offer childcare between 7 pm and 1am on New Year's Eve for youth 3-9 years of age. The cost is \$5/hour per child and all proceeds go to support youth mission and camp scholarship funds. Youth between the ages of 10 and 18 are asked to arrive at 6pm for dinner and to help prepare the parish hall for our guests and are then invited to stay the night for an evening of fun, food, and just a little craziness.

With New Year's being on Sunday this year, we are inviting youth who spend the night to stay for our 8am service. Parents are asked to pick up youth at 9am New Year's morning. We are always in need of adults who are willing to help chaperon during this event (especially during the hours we offer childcare). If you have a couple of hours to offer, or even the whole night, a sign-up sheet is located at The Spirit Hub. For more information, please contact Fr. Tom.



Outreach

Trunk or Treat



On a cool Sunday afternoon at the end of October, we held our 6th annual Trunk or Treat. Neighborhood youth turned out in almost overwhelming numbers. We ran out of S'Mores within the first hour and even had to send out for more candy to keep up with the demand. Costumes were amazing (and not only those the kids wore). Special thanks to our parish youth who came by to help and do a little trick or treating of their own, and to the 17 families who opened their hearts (and trunks so marvelously decorated) to serve the youth in our local community. Plans are already in the process to better prepare for next year's community event.



Thanksgiving Baskets

Once again, we provided Thanksgiving meals, this time for 30 families, identified as in need by the Eastern Nebraska Community Action Partnership and Bellevue Together. Each box contained stuffing, mashed potatoes, two different canned vegetables, canned yams, chicken broth, cranberry sauce, biscuit mix, dessert mix (brownies), macaroni and cheese, a foil pan with baking bag for cooking, and a \$20 gift card to purchase a turkey. Thank you to all who donated funds to make this year's in-gathering a success.



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Mobile Pantry

Our next Mobile Pantry is scheduled for Saturday (10 Dec). Volunteers for our drive through event are asked to arrive by 9:30 am using the Thomas Dr parking lot entrance and to contact Margie Crawford to let us know you are coming. Watch Facebook for our event and help us spread the word by sharing it with your family and friends.



Parish Life

College Care Boxes and All Saint's Day service

On November 1st, All Saint's Day, Holy Spirit's Daughters of the King chapter met to assemble 15 college care boxes. The boxes are sent this time of the college semester (or quarter) to give the students a boost of encouragement, calories, and carbs to get them through the end of the



the semester and head into finals. The boxes included snacks such as chips, granola bars, fruit snacks, gum, hot chocolate mix, ramen noodles, and cookies. This fall, the new CHS coffee mugs were also packed into the boxes so that our students will be reminded that we are still here and praying for them.



Since Father Tom was sick, Mother Kim Culp, a Daughter of the King member, graciously stepped in to celebrate our All Saint's Day service, since this service is a service that DOK members worldwide celebrate.

Parish Clean-up

Special thanks to Dean Olander and Chris Darrell as well as the team of volunteers who helped them spruce up the place and prepare our building for the winter season. It is always a blessing when members of the parish gather to work together. There is always something that needs attention; so, if you ever have a little time and want to know if there is anything you can do around our house, please contact Dean Olander or Chris Darrell.



Family Advent Workshop



On Sunday (20 Nov) our Christian Ed team once again offered their Advent Family Workshop following our 9:30am Sunday service. With crafts for all ages, coffee hour was more than just enjoying good company and tasty snacks. Several families made ornaments to hang on the new Christmas tree, colored, assembled home advent wreaths, and enjoyed some of the other crafts available. Special

thanks to Cindy Pekarek, Jean Cook, and Lisa Weilandt for their planning, organizing, and helpfulness during this fabulous event.



Thanksgiving Eve



Our annual Thanksgiving Eve worship service was, as always, a blessed time to spend together giving thanks for all that we have, and the opportunities we have been given to share it with others. Afterwards, many hands made the holiday greenery go up quickly and before we knew it we were enjoying a feast from the wide assortment of pies present. Thank you to all who



brought a pie to share and ornaments for our new tree, and to all who joined us for the evening's fun, fellowship, and of course, amazing food.



Women of Spirit

On Saturday (10 Dec) between 2 & 4 pm in the parish hall, the Women of Spirit will be holding their first ever Mocktail tasting and recipe exchange. Gather up your favorite ingredients, bring your recipe, dust off the blender, and then join us as we taste the holiday drinks we make and enjoy a few tasty snacks. We will also reveal the Women of Spirit signature mocktail. All women of the parish (aged 16 and older) are automatically members of our group. Please note, that all drinks are mocktails, please no alcohol. Come and join us and see what the holidays taste like!



Annual Council Up Date



At the end of October, our delegates to Annual Council headed off to Kearney, NE for the Diocese of Nebraska's 155th Annual Council. This year the focus was on pilgrimage with two taking center stage. The first in 2023 delving into racial reconciliation. This pilgrimage is open to those who have taken DioNeb's class Sacred Ground, it will visit many of the well-known sites of our past where we stood for racial equality. The second, in 2024. This trip is back to the Holy Land

where we will visit many of the sites we read about in Scripture. As always, Annual Council is a real blessing and a great opportunity to learn about what other churches across the diocese are doing. Special thanks to our delegates, Judy Darrell, Michele Hagen, Leslie Nutting, and Terri Storm for taking time out of their busy schedules to represent us at Council.

Other Notes

Office Closed and No Sunday School Dates

Please note, to give our office staff a little break, the office will be closed 22 & 26 Dec, as well as 30 Dec and 2 Jan 23. Also, there will be Sunday school on Sunday 25 Dec or 1 Jan 23. Sunday school will resume Sunday (8 Jan 23).



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Presence Candle and Bread Baking reminders



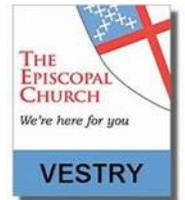
We still have some opportunities available to either donate a presence candle for the sanctuary or chapel, in remembrance or thanksgiving. To reserve one of the available openings, please stop by the Spirit Hub to sign-up. Please remember to fill out a blue card (in the front of the book) for your candle.

Please sign up to help provide the bread we share during communion. A copy of our bread menu can be found on the office bulletin board across from the chapel.



Vestry Meeting Minutes November 17, 2022

No minutes were available at time of printing due to the holiday. They will be posted on the bulletin board in the hall at a later date.



FINANCIAL REPORT

Financial Report as of October 31, 2022

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
Pledged	\$ 19,803.10	\$ 16,704.42	\$ 161,619.70	\$ 167,044.17
Other Inc.	\$ 799.00	\$ 1,457.33	\$ 13,527.92	\$ 14,573.33
Total Inc	\$ 20,602.10	\$ 18,161.75	\$ 175,147.62	\$ 181,617.50
Expenses	\$ 16,001.74	\$ 18,873.83	\$ 176,489.50	\$ 188,738.33
			\$ -1,341.88	



UPCOMING PARISH EVENTS!

- Dec 02 - Set-up for Craft/Bake Sale
- Dec 03 - Holiday Craft & Bake Sale - 9am - 3pm
- Dec 10 - Mobile Food Pantry 10am - 11:30 am
- Dec 10 - Women of Spirit Mocktails - 2pm - 4pm
- Dec 18 - Pageant at 9:30 service
- Dec 23 - Office Closed
- Dec 24 - Services 5pm, 7pm, & 10pm
- Dec 26 - Office Closed
- Dec 30 - Office Closed
- Dec 31 - Lock -In - Starting 7pm



LAY MINISTRIES SCHEDULE

Ministries	Dec 4	Dec 11	Dec 18	Dec25
VPOD	Kristi S	Ken G	Michele H	Margie C
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
Recycle Team	Jan S	Marcia A	Lynda W	Karen G
LEM Saturday 5:00 pm	Alberta Y	Charlotte A	Kristi S	Alberta Y
LEM Sunday 8:00 am	Rick S	Doug A	Rick S	See page 3
LEM Sunday 9:30 am	Lori E Margie C	Ken G Michele H	Terri S Jan S	See page 3
Acolytes Crucifer Torch Torch	Isaiah H Kyper M Ailynn M	Anika S Vincent C Evelynn C	Olivia H Alex W	See page 3

*Please submit articles for the
 January 2023 FLAME to the
 church office by December 19th.
 Thank you*



Like Us!
 Facebook



Regular Services:

Sunday: 8:00am Holy Eucharist Rite I
9:30 am Holy Eucharist Rite II *
Wednesday: 9:30 am Holy Eucharist *
Saturday: 5:00 pm Holy Eucharist
* Broadcast live on Facebook

Education: September- May

Sunday: Sunday School @ 10:30 am
Wednesday: Bible Study @ 10:15 am
Journeys to Adulthood @ 6:30 pm

Office Hours:

Monday – Thursday: 9:00 am–3:00 pm
Friday: 9:00 am–Noon

Rector’s Day Off:

Friday

The Flame is a monthly production of the Church of the Holy Spirit, Episcopal, in Bellevue, Nebraska. We welcome all stories, pictures, and suggestions, but must reserve the right to choose what we can print. Please send articles and pictures to CHS Admin at holyspirit@chsepiscopal.org. The next deadline for submitting news is November 21th

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

The Flame
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