

Church of the Holy Spirit News & Notes

November 2014—Volume 17, #12

Advocations – December 2014

Then the master said to the slave, “Go out into the roads and lanes, and compel people to come in, so that my house may be filled.” (Luke 14:23)



Peter waiting on the front steps with his jack o' lantern and bowl of candy.

This was Peter's and my fourth Halloween in Plymouth. The first year we were here, we had moved in barely two weeks previously. I bought a couple of bags of candy and we left the porch light on, and I think we got three trick-or-treaters. The following year was similar. Our house is on the edge of the student neighborhood and off the beaten track for trick-or-treating, so people simply didn't know we were there.

Last year, Peter was old enough to know and anticipate that we might not get very many trick-or-treaters, so he made several construction paper signs with ghosts and pumpkins and other Halloween iconography on them, pointing people to the kitchen door. Still, we topped out at maybe half a dozen.

This year, after participating in Main Street trick-or-treat and about half an hour of neighborhood trick-or-treat, Peter shucked off the (amazing, but heavy and uncomfortable) cardboard pyramid costume that my mother had made, and really got down to the business of making sure that trick-or-treaters came to our house. He set himself up on the front steps (clearly visible from the street, as opposed to the kitchen steps) with a lit jack o' lantern and a bowl of candy. When a gaggle of kids in costume appeared at the end of the block, I went down the steps and waved and yelled to them, “Come here! We've got candy!” Peter enthusiastically joined in whenever trick-or-treaters came near. He was so committed to remaining at his post that I heated up our dinner and brought it out to eat on the porch (thankfully it was a clear, mild night!). And this Halloween? We got something like 30 trick-or-treaters – many times more than we'd ever had before. (How Mom felt about having so much less “leftover” candy to eat is another question ...)

This experience immediately put me in mind of the verse from Luke's gospel quoted at the beginning of this article. What a difference it makes when, instead of leaving the light on and waiting inside the house for people to come and ask us for candy, we go out and sit on the porch and wave them down! When we are really convinced that we have something wonderful to offer, we don't sit passively waiting for people to find us; we buttonhole them, unable to keep the good news to ourselves!

If you've found the spiritual equivalent of Halloween candy at church, what are you doing to flag people down and make sure that they share in the deliciousness and the joy?

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Church of the Holy Spirit

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Vestry Members

Senior Warden

Joan Bowers

Junior Warden (property issues)

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Wavell Fogleman

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Stewardship wrap-up for 2014

We are well underway with the pledge drive for 2015, but I feel that an update on the 2014 picture would be timely as well.

2014 has been a challenging year for the Church of the Holy Spirit, financially. Several faithful and generous pledgers have either moved away, or found themselves unable to fulfil their pledges for entirely valid reasons. Going into the month of November, the deficit stood at about \$17,000, about \$5000 more than originally foreseen. Thanks to a strong year in 2013, we have the ability to move \$10,000 from the Bartlett Fund (the church's endowment) into the operating budget to begin to fill that gap, but clearly we would like to make up the entire amount if at all possible.



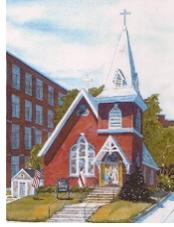
November and December tend to be strong months as folks wrap up their year-end giving and catch up on their pledges, but if you are in a position to dig a bit deeper as you do so, please pray and reflect on whether you are called to help improve CHS' financial position as we go into 2015. As we face the important decisions we will be making the coming months, one of the ways our community can be strengthened is by everyone who is able, pitching in the resources we need to do our ministry here in Plymouth and the surrounding area.

Thank you for your commitment, your support and your prayers!

Advocations (continued from page 1)

This parable begins with Halloween, but serves as an excellent segue into Advent. The world is hungry for the truth and hope of the Advent season, for the acknowledgement that we are all longing for something and that the object of that longing is God. And Advent and Christmas are a great time to invite your friends to church. The **Blue Christmas service** (4 PM, December 20), the **Christmas pageant** at Holderness School Chapel at 9:30 on December 21, the **Christmas Eve services** at 5:30 and 10:00 PM (with carols beforehand at both), or **Christmas Day Lessons & Carols** with Eucharist (Pajama Church) at 9 AM – bring folks along and let them sample the wonder and joy of the season, and then let them know that spiritual nourishment is to be found here year round!

With every blessing for Advent and Christmastide,
Grace+



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Advent and Christmas Services

Blue Christmas Service: December 20, 4:00 p.m.

Christmas Pageant: December 21, during 9:30 a.m. service

Christmas Eve: 5:30 p.m. Family service/10 p.m. Festival Service. Carols before both services.

Christmas Day: Lessons & Carols with Eucharist: (Pajama Church) at 9:00 a.m.

Additional Readers Needed for Christmas Eve/Day!

In addition to the usual Sunday readers, we need one for 5:30 on Christmas Eve, one for 10 p.m. on Christmas Eve and FIVE for 9 a.m. on Christmas Day. If you are willing and able to be a reader for one or more of these services, please contact us at the office at 536-1321 or at holyspiritnh@myfairpoint.net.

Rector's Open House

Save the date for the Fourth Annual Christmastide Rector's Open House, Sunday, January 4, 4-6 PM. If you don't know the address or how to get there, call the office at 536-1321 or Grace at 996-1490. COME HUNGRY!

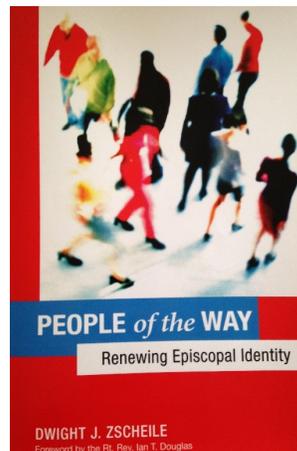
Order Your Christmas Poinsettias Now!

Though it's only November, Christmas will be here before we know it...so why not get an easy item off of your list now? As in past years, each plant will be \$15. Sign up at the back of the church, and place your payment in the collection plate marked "Poinsettias." The deadline for orders is **December 14**.

Music Fund

As we approach Advent and Christmas, please consider a special donation to the Church of the Holy Spirit's Music Fund, which helps to pay Ash, our organist, for the extra services at this time of year. Thank you!

Book Discussion Group Continues!



It's not too late to join in on the discussion of our second book: Dwight J. Zscheile's *People of the Way: Renewing Episcopal Identity*. Our next meeting will be on **December 3rd** from 5-7 p.m. at the CLC.

Zscheile, in a very short 130 pages, gives a brief history of the Episcopal Church in the United States, but then focuses on the current issues that many Episcopal churches are facing.

As the Foreword states, the book raises questions: "What does it mean to be a disciple in today's world? What does it mean to be a church member? Are they the same thing? How does the shape of life in the Episcopal Church foster depth and commitment to the way of Christ, and how does it undermine it? What does it mean to be the body of Christ in an increasingly post-Christian America? Who are we as Episcopalians and what are we here for?"

We will be meeting every two weeks on Wednesdays from 5 to 7 p.m. at the CLC to discuss these issues and invite you to join us. Let Joan Bowers (536-5889) know if you want her to order you a copy of the book.



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Beginning the “Five Practices”

A big thank-you to everyone who came out for All Saints’ Sunday and for Bishop Rob’s visit the following week!

As you probably know, the Church of the Holy Spirit has been struggling with diminished attendance at the Sunday morning services in the past year or so. There are many reasons for this, but it’s hard to deny that a good crowd in church helps everyone there to feel connected to our community and to God.



It was great to have a good turn-out for the major feast of All Saints’, as we remembered that vast cloud of witnesses that surrounds us; and for Bishop Rob’s visit as we discussed important matters than face our congregation in the coming months. But remember – every Sunday is a feast of Christ’s Resurrection, and as much as we may be motivated to attend church to see an important visitor (the Bishop) an even more important visitor – Jesus Christ – shows up every week, without fail.



As we seek to build community at CHS and follow the “Five Practices” of the saints of the Episcopal Church in New Hampshire (and in all times and places!) – remember that the first practice is Show Up! Only when we gather together can we tell the story, throw water around, share a meal, and expect God to surprise us.

And of course if we want a good crowd – we should be inviting our friends (see the “Advocations” column on the first page of this News and Notes about the Halloween parable of invitation!)

See you in church!

A Prayer for the Season

O God, you are always creating us anew: Pour your blessing on this congregation of the Church of the Holy Spirit. Lead us in the path you would have us walk. Show us how to grow in love and honesty as a community of faith. And reveal to us the ways you are calling us to serve, in this place and at this time; that whatever we build may be built to your glory alone. Amen.

Red Cross Blood Drive

The Blood Drive was a success and we would like to thank all of the blood donors, as well as everyone who helped organize the event. With our success, we will be hosting another Blood Drive on **January 9th, 2015** --so please save the date! If you'd like to be involved in the next drive, please contact John McGovern at 533-6003.

Do you have news to share? We'd love to hear from you! Send your announcements to Melissa Greenawalt, Parish Administrator, at holyspiritnh@myfairpoint.net. Submissions should be received by Wednesday morning to be included in that week's email newsletter.



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Family Worship - Fall 2014

Family Worship has been humming along all season, and there are just two sessions left for 2014! All sessions are Wednesdays from 5:30-7:00 and consist of dinner, followed by a short Bible story and activity. On December 3, we will meet at the Holderness School for dinner in the dining hall; on December 17, we will have a potluck in the Undercroft.

December 3 Jerusalem
December 17 Advent/Christmas

All are welcome! We hope to see you there--and bring your friends! Questions? Please contact Grace at holyspiritrector@gmail.com.



Looking for Meaningful Christmas Gifts?

Two CHS parishioners, Joan Bowers and Marcia Santore, have books available from Forward Movement publishers that would be appropriate for family use or gift giving.

Joan Bowers has 12 meditations published in *Meeting God Day by Day: A Year of Meditations* (the 2015 Daybook). This is a book of daily devotions written by more than 30 writers who share where they meet God in their daily lives. The meditations range from the humorous to the profound, from observations about family life to reflections based on community and travel. *Meeting God Day by Day: A Year of Meditations* is item #2299 (\$16) and is available from Forward Movement as a 384-page paperback.

Marcia Santore has illustrated three retellings of traditional Christmas carols (Jonathan provided a music score for each as well): *Good King Wenceslas* (Item #2173), *The Snow Lay on the Ground* (Item #2177), and *In the Bleak Midwinter* (Item #2178). Individual books are \$8.00, but all three books can be purchased together as the *StorySongs Collection* (Item #2211) for \$20.00.

Any of these books can be purchased online at www.forwardmovement.org, and there are paper order forms available in the church basement as well.

Help CHS While You Shop

Have hard-to-shop-for folks on your Christmas list? A Hannaford gift card might be the solution—and CHS benefits as well! Simply visit John McGovern during coffee hour to purchase one or more \$50 gift cards (if you attend the 8 a.m. service, Grace will help you). You can pay with either cash or check; *if paying with cash, we would appreciate exact change!*

The Postcard Ministry Needs YOU!

We are looking for volunteers for postcard ministry for November and December. You only need to do one month, and it's easy and fun! We are also running very low on cards to send, and would appreciate donations of cards. Please put donated cards in the "Postcard Ministry" box at the back of the church. To volunteer, please contact Kathy Lennox at 536-4779.

December Celebrations

Birthdays

Nathan Hoch	Paul Wilson
Grace Burson	Stephen Lambert
Stephen Buttolph	Jane Keller
Russ Carlisle	Matt Lynch
Susan Fogleman	Nick Sevigney

Anniversaries

Jurgen & Lilah Piper
Albert & Brenda Conrad
Wavell & Susan Fogleman

December 2014

Stay connected with CHS!



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 Exec. Comm. Mtg- 11am-CLC	3 Family Worship- 5:30pm-HS	4	5	6
7 8:00/9:30 Eucharist- CH	8	9 Vestry Mtg-7pm-CLC	10	11	12	13
14 8:00/9:15 Eucharist- CH	15	16	17 Family Worship- 5:30pm-CH	18	19	20 4:00 pm-Blue Christ- mas Service-CH
21 8:00/9:30 Eucharist- CH Christmas Pageant- HS	22	23	24 Christmas Eve Ser- vices-5:30/10:00 pm Carols before 10 pm service	25 9:00am Christmas Service-CH	26	27
28 8:00/9:30 Eucharist- CH	29	30	31		Regular events: Morn Prayer: 8:30am T-F-CLC AA: 7am M-F-GH 7pm W-GH	Al-Anon: 7pm M-GH Yoga: 7pm T-GH NA: 7pm Th-GH Choir pr: 7pm Th-CH