

Saint David's News



Opportunities are shown in
bold italics in this issue

<http://www.saintdavidsgf.org/>
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Gales Ferry, Connecticut-----An Episcopal Church founded in 1963 -----Jan. 2010

Dates for Your Calendar

Jan 25	7:00 p.m.	Outreach Committee
Jan 26	4:30 p.m.	<i>Community Dinner</i>
	???	Deanery Meeting
Feb 1 to Feb 23		Father Chuck on Vacation
Feb 16	6:00 p.m.	<i>Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper</i>
Feb 17		Ash Wednesday
Feb 26/27		Vestry Retreat
Feb 28		St. David's Day (Flower Donation Cards available by Chart)
March 19, 20, 21		<i>Emmaus Weekend</i> #11 Here at St. David's
March 28		Palm Sunday

Stay **REALLY** current! Check the announcements
section of the parish web page -
<http://www.saintdavidsgf.org/>

Women's Group 6:30 am on Tuesdays (1st & 3rd)
Men's Group 7:00 am on Wednesdays
Holy Eucharist & Healing Service 9:30 am on Wednesdays
Women's Study 10:30 am on Wednesdays
Bible Study 7:10 p.m. on Wednesdays
Adult Choir 7:00 p.m. on Thursdays
Divine Ringer 12:20 p.m. on Sundays

From the Rector

St. Francis' Message

Most of us are familiar with the prayer attributed to St. Francis which concludes:

*For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.*

That is the message that I saw and experienced in reflecting on our Christmas celebration.

I see it in our new and renovated facilities. A number of us have given generously, some sacrificially, to bring this dream into reality.. and now what joy as we see it used for our Christmas feast, folks greeting one another in the gathering space and children being nurtured in the classrooms. We have just begun receiving the fruit

I saw it at the St. Vincent de Paul Christmas party. Those who gave of their time to be there certainly received the gift of seeing joy. For me, this joy was focused in a young girl perhaps age 12. She received a new pair of shoes with such joy that she immediately put them on and danced around with the tag still attached. You would have thought they were golden slippers!

I saw it, received feedback, and heard it from those who delivered meals for the feast. Many folks were very grateful for the meal and the opportunity to share it with others, but mostly I believe they were touched by the fact that someone cared. Many who helped and served were more filled than those who ate.

The human inclination is to acquire and hold onto, including life itself. But the truth is that it is in letting go and giving that we receive real life.

So my New Year wish for you, my St. David's family, is that your lives will become increasingly abundant as you give, pardon and die to self.

Fr. Chuck †

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Vestry Update from December, 2009

At the regular December vestry meeting the following Outreach committee recommendations were approved: \$750 for grocery gift cards for families attending the St Vincent de Paul Place Christmas party, \$500 to assist Groton Regency in remembering each facility resident, and \$500 to reimburse Jim

Rock for food pantry items provided to St Vincent de Paul Place. \$2,000 was also approved to support the Christmas Feast.

Treasurer, Chris Curcio, reported that as of November 30, our financial condition was solid and her report was accepted.

An update on the Stewardship committee was presented by Father Chuck and Steve. Approximately 70 pledges had been received totaling \$230,000. A friendly reminder will be sent to the parishioners who have yet to submit a pledge card.

The weekend of January 9 and 10 will be used to host a community open house and celebratory dedication of our new and renovated facility. Bishop Smith will dedicate the new facility at a 5PM service on Sunday January 10 with a reception to follow.

Our annual meeting will be held on January 31, 2010 with one service at 9 AM followed by the meeting. The nominating committee, Mike McLane, Nancy Randall, and Steve Forbes, has met and started the process of identifying new members.

Linda Dierman reported that she and her husband Allan and other representatives of the Seabury Deanery have been invited to attend the Diocese of Ecuador's annual convention in February, 2010.

Finally, the vestry approved a motion to allow Tom Sedlack to contract with a private monitoring company for our new fire alarm system. We had been using the Town dispatch center and this arrangement was not providing us with required information.



Cancellations of Events

As we discovered in December, Mother Nature can disrupt the ability of people to get to church, or even into the parking lot! Fortunately, there are several electronic means of discovering if any services or events at St. David's are cancelled due to the weather.

Cancellation of church events will be on the church's answering machine. In addition, they will be posted on the church web page, provided our webmaster (Dian Wishart) can get to her computer. WTNH, Channel 8, will show cancellations on the "closures" notice that appears across the bottom of their TV picture during bad weather. These cancellations also appear on their "Weather Closings" page on their web site:

www.wtnh.com

Finally, those with cell phones, which can receive text messages, can request notification of specific types of cancellations by going to this web site:

http://www.wtnh.com/subindex/about_us/text_alerts



ST. DAVID'S DAY FAMILY TALENT SHOW SUNDAY FEBRUARY 28TH!

St. David's Day will be celebrated Sunday February 28th with a **family talent show** in our parish hall! Maren Schober and Karen Ysewyn are planning the event.

This event is for all ages. This is a time contribute a solo or instrument solo or get together with your friends for a short comedy skit. Singing and instrumental groups are encouraged to perform. Don't be shy. This is a time to share the talent God has given you.

Please use the sign ups so we can plan a program around your talent contributions.

The talent show will start about 12:45 p.m. following a finger food lunch which follows the 10:15 worship service.

*** St. David's Day this year is a PARENT-CHILD DRESS ALIKE DAY.

This is not a costume contest...a dress alike day. This is also a couples DRESS ALIKE DAY. Use your imagination. What can you come up with?

Please also sign up for supporting help. We **will need lunch coordinators, Master of Ceremonies, Program Design and Printing, Photographers, Props and Stage Hands, Sign Makers, Set Up and Clean Up** crew.

Any questions? Call Maren or Karen

Let's all get behind this and make this a great St. David's Day!

Maren Schober



How will we follow the Star this year?

Advent is marked by preparations for the birth of Christ, Christmas celebrates the Incarnation. On January 6th we begin the Epiphany Season, the focus of which is the mission of the Church to the world, in light of the Nativity. The light of the world arrived with the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. The word epiphany means to show forth, make public, to reveal, and from the Greek language, manifest.

From the Gospel of Matthew we read about wise men from the East who first revealed or made manifest the Christ to everyone and demonstrated that God's saving work in the world is not to be limited to the chosen few from the Jewish nation.

After all, God revealed the truth about the Star of Bethlehem to foreigners. Upon receiving God's truth, they acted in faith by journeying a great distance

in search of the newborn king of the Jews in order to worship, pay homage, and give gifts to him.

"Wise men" is a translation from the Greek word magi, who were most probably Zoroastrian priests of the magi class from somewhere in Persia. These magi were renowned for their esoteric knowledge, gifted dream interpretation, and prophecy. They were often employed by kings and wielded immense political power. This is probably why the wise men are often referred to as The Three Kings.

Early Zoroaster scripture foretells the story of Saoshyant, who would be born of a virgin, become the savior of the world, herald the Judgment Day, resurrect the dead, and bring about the eventual destruction of evil powers in the material world. Perhaps, because the wise men from the East diligently studied their own sacred works, they were open to receiving God's truth. This is in contrast to Herod whose lack of familiarity with Jewish scripture, necessitated assembling chief priests and scribes to ascertain where the Christ was to be born. His response to the truth of Christ's manifestation was so very different from the magi's response, "When Herod, the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him;" Matthew 2:3.

The Epiphany Season is about making the magi story our own story. The wise men from the East, in faith, were led by the Star of Bethlehem. Theirs was a journey to a distant place to pay homage, to worship, and give gifts to the newborn king of the Jews and thereby revealed Christ to the world.

Will we act in faith and will our journey bring us closer to Christ thereby in some way reveal Christ to the world, like the magi? The Light of Christ has been born and now dwells in each of us; during the Season of Epiphany let us diligently seek to manifest that indwelling Spirit of Christ in our thoughts, words, and deeds--to bless the world and ourselves. "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good." 1 Corinthians 12:7. As we journey through the Season of Epiphany we may need some contemplative time to determine what it means personally and corporately, as members of St. David's Church, for us to be led by the Star, to be followers of Christ, to pay homage to our Lord, to worship our Savior, to open our treasures and give gifts to Christ our King. We may also need to seek an understanding of our varied gifts, given by God, to discover our own unique way(s) to manifest or reveal Christ to the world. "As each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace:" 1 Peter 4:10. God delights in diversity and gives diverse gifts to his people for a blessing to all the world. Each of us, and as a faith community, will need to discern how we will use the gifts we are given and in what ways will we be good stewards of God's grace as we attempt to follow the Star this wonderful year of 2010. Since the time of the Star that guided the magi, God continually longs to fill us with His Holy Light. During this Epiphany Season I pray we empty ourselves of anything that would hinder that divine process so that His Light

may more perfectly shine in and through us, radiating to the world and everyone we encounter.

How will we manifest Christ in the world during this New Year?

Hilda Zeigler



STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship, as one definition states, is responsible management of our God-given resources of time, talent, and treasure. It enhances our relationships with God and one another.

As a member of our Christian Ed team, I am always searching for new and fun ways to bring the weekly lessons to our children, a way in which they will understand the message and be able to apply it to their daily lives. As a member of our newly formed stewardship committee, I am striving to better understand stewardship and apply it to my own life. My greatest teachers continue to be the young people in and outside of our church.

Last month in our Sunday school class, we were teaching ways to share our gift of God's love with others. We talked about those who are lonely and those who have less than we do. The children made cards for a local nursing home, each with a special message. Simple enough one might say, but these young people thought earnestly about each recipient, what they might say to this person to help them feel God's love and strength, how they could bring them comfort. These cards were filled with love, encouraging words of hope and faith. These children eagerly opened their hearts and shared their gifts of time and love with complete strangers.

I recently had the privilege of attending my first Emmaus weekend as an observer. It was an amazing and powerful weekend for me and the evidence of stewardship was everywhere. I was greeted by a dozen young people yelling my name, clapping and cheering that I had arrived. I can only think that this must be the way we are greeted in Heaven. The entire weekend was filled with sharing of amazing talents and time. They used their gifts of love and laughter to fill my heart just as God does. They used their gift of time to make sure all my needs were attended to just as God does. They were willingly sharing their gifts from God with me, a complete stranger.

1 Peter 4:9-11 says, "Be hospitable to one another without complaining. As each one has received a gift, use it to serve one another as good stewards of God's varied grace. Whoever preaches, let it be with the words of God; whoever serves, let it be with the strength that God supplies, so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong glory and dominion forever and ever".

I am continually amazed by the gifts these young people have been given and how eagerly they share them with all those around. They are truly participants, not spectators, in stewardship. As we begin a turning point in our lives here at St. David's, let each of us remember the gifts these young people offer, and like them, be participants not spectators.

In God's amazing love,

Linda Dierman



Saint David's Directory

If you have not yet received a copy of the new Church Directory, contact Pam in the church office or Pete Landolt (860-536-6487). Copies are available for Saint David's Family use. If you are inclined, we are accepting a \$5.00 donation to cover the printing cost of the booklet.

Pete Landolt



The Gathering Group

Now that our expanded facilities are available, The Gathering Group is in full swing. We meet in the library every Sunday from 9:15 to 10:05, between services. If you are new to the parish and want to meet some folks, this is a good place to be. Or if you just want to hang out and socialize for a bit, stop in a visit us. We don't take attendance and there are very few rules to our discussions; only that we have an enjoyable gathering. If you have questions about the group and what we do, call Pete or Judy Landolt (860-536-6487)

Pete Landolt



Rock the Sound Christian Concert

(Attendees comments)

"My experience during the concert was fun, interesting, and rejoicing. It was fun because I love rock music and rock concerts. One band, Family Force 5, was not your typical Christian rock band, but I still liked them. Lastly it was rejoicing because we were celebrating with God." Jon

"With not being to that many concerts I thought the Rock the Sound concert was fabulous. It was a fun learning way to get closer to God. Also with the others being there that I was friends with helped the experience. Over all the experience was wonderful being able to be closer to God." Cara

"I attended the 2009 Christian Rock Concert this past week with all my friends from church. The music was unbelievable and the message was beautiful. I enjoyed bonding with all my friends and becoming closer with the new. I cannot wait to go next year!" Anna

“Last year 6 of us went to Rock the Sound- this year there were 16 of us! It was wonderful. I loved singing and dancing with my St. David’s family. The very best was during one song when we all held hands in worship together. I hope next year we need a bus!” Miss Pam



The Peace and Announcements

Our mission statement begins: “St. David’s is a warm and caring parish...” That is a true statement. We clearly enjoy the fellowship we share and see ourselves as an extended family. As commendable as that is, and it is; it has the potential to divert our focus when we worship. This shows up in two places: Sharing of the Peace and making announcements.

The Peace is not a time to check in with everyone. It is a shared expression of thanksgiving to God for the peace we have received through the confession and forgiveness of our sins. Clean and restored, we share His peace with one another. It is important that each one speaks and hears this declaration of peace, but it loses something when it becomes an extended time of greeting.

The second diversion can be announcements. We have made some progress with efforts to minimize them and move them to the end of the service, but our tendency is expansion. Please try to get necessary announcements in the bulletin so the need for verbal ones is limited.

From the Worship Committee and Fr. Chuck.



Pledge Campaign 2010-

As of January 6th, 87 pledge units have been received for 2010 from our 150 active families. Can we persuade those who have not yet made a pledge to respond soon? This will help us finalize a realistic budget for 2010. Thanks for "sharing the blessing".

Building Fund Status 12/31/09

Anticipated - \$687,862

Actual - \$652,870

Pictures (in color) are available at:

<http://gallery.me.com/mmclane#100635>
Use slideshow button at bottom of window for full screen
Or try the “mosaic” button, also at the bottom
(Pictures can be downloaded, if you wish)
If you can’t click on the above link, try to copy and paste
into your browser.