

DECEMBER 2019, VOL. 70

THE MESSENGER

St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church



Advent: Preparing for Joy

FR. DAVID COX

At Christmas we celebrate with joy the birth of Jesus 2,000 years ago. Why joy? Where does the joy come from? According to many television commercials during this time, we are joyful at Christmas because we got what we wanted. Perhaps it was a new stereo (scratch that, no one wants a stereo anymore), a new coat, a new video game, a new book (is that just me?), a new laptop, a new phone, or a new piece of jewelry. Whatever it is, when we get it on Christmas we jump with joy because we have gotten what we wanted.

We know that is not how joy works. In fact, we know that the feeling we have when we get what we wanted is not joy at all. The feeling we have when we get what we wanted does not go deep, does not last long, and does not change us in any meaningful way. True joy does all of these things.

("Advent" continued on page 8)

IN THIS ISSUE:

Ministry Focus	2
Connecting With	3
Children's Corner	4
Deacon's Den	5
Guess What Gail Found Out ..	6
Celebrating St. Michael's ...	7-9
Upcoming Events	10

Focus on Ministry: Crestview Elementary School

CYD ALLOWAY

One of St. Michael's continually growing outreach ministries is our work with Crestview Elementary School in Mission. What started as a traditional parish activity of adopting Crestview families during the Christmas season, has grown into an exciting and multi-faceted outreach program that encompasses the entire school year.



CRESTVIEW
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Johnson County has traditionally been known as an "affluent" area but the reality is there are segments of our area where families are struggling at a level financially that they cannot provide adequate basic needs such as food for their families. As St. Michael's member Dee Pritchett said, "It is mind boggling that we have families here in this kind of need." To assist in meeting these needs, St. Michael's, coordinating with Crestview social worker Ada Wallace, provides the following outreach programs to assist Crestview families:

BACK-SNACK PROGRAM:

Many students at Crestview are reliant upon the school-provided breakfast and lunch during the school year. In partnership with Harvesters of Kansas City, St. Michael's is responsible for overseeing the weekly packing and delivery of food-filled backpacks to Crestview which provide nutritious and child-friendly foods for those children deemed "food insecure". The backpacks, filled with two breakfasts, milk, water, a canned fruit or vegetable and four snacks, are designed to provide supplemental food for the week-ends. Several groups, including the youth group, Sunday School, retirees, and students from Shawnee Mission East High School are among those that work to fill the backpacks in the Baker Youth Room. A group of parishioners, Bill Smith, Larry Ward, Dick LeClaire, Bill O'Neill, Dave Mackay, Rich LaBelle and Stan Boyd take turns delivering these to the school. We currently provide 65 packs to Crestview each week

as well as 45 packs to Rushton Elementary School. Amy Winter coordinates this program at St. Michael's.

ANGEL TREE:

In 2014 Meghan Hanner redesigned the parish's Christmas adopt-a-family program to be more focused on specific practical needs of identified students (66 this year.) The Angel Trees, located in Spencer Hall and the narthex, are decorated with tags detailing particular needs for each child so that parishioners may donate to insure those students will receive a toy, underwear, socks, hat, gloves, sweat suit and a \$25 grocery gift card for Christmas.



HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE:

Under the guidance of Dee Pritchett, this recently expanded program is designed to provide holiday meals to identified families to assist them with having adequate food while school is closed during long breaks at Thanksgiving and Christmas. St. Michael's donates the turkeys and hams as needed which are then supplemented by parish members' donations of canned goods, soup, crackers, peanut butter and jelly and other non-perishables. The Men in Mission and Carpenter Ants have assisted in delivering these boxes. This Thanksgiving we provided 50 meals at Crestview and are hoping to provide 25 at Christmas.

BOOKS: Retired librarian Kate Capps coordinates the acquisition of age appropriate books to be given to students at Christmas.

COMFORT CLOSET: This new project, guided by Dee Pritchett and Amy Moore, provides students with emergency supplies such as coats, clothing,

("Crestview Ministry" continued on page 6)

Connecting With... STEVE AND LAURIE BULCOCK

"We who are many are one body because we all share one bread, one cup." Those words, spoken every Sunday at the end of communion, summarize the ministry of Steve and Laurie Bulcock. One can count on Steve and Laurie's presence at the altar at the 8:30 service as they are given the consecrated bread and wine to continue on to their ministry at Shawnee PARC, a local rehabilitative and local long-term healthcare facility.

Each Sunday Steve and Laurie lead a service at Shawnee PARC, drawing from the bulletins returned at the end of our 8:30 service. When they first started this service, their average attendance was 10-15 residents; the current attendance is 35 with attendees coming from various denominations. In addition to the Sunday service, Steve provides daily devotions to 10 residents, many bed-ridden patients. Their ministry has recently expanded to include visits with parishioners at Chateau Mission and Glenwood Village. As Steve says, "Our church sent us out to them to give nourishment. Giving back - that's what Jesus wants us to do."

So, just who are the Bulcocks? Let's find out a little bit more.

Steve and Laurie have been members of St. Michael's for nine years and were married by Mother Lisa Senuta here. Laurie is a realtor with Reece Nichols and Steve, while technically retired, continues to work part-time at Matt Ross Community Center in Overland Park. They are a blended family with six children between them (as well as a beloved cat.)

What brought you to STMAA?

Laurie, raised Southern Baptist, had attended services here prior to meeting Steve, a former Roman Catholic. They began attending together while dating and were ultimately married by Mother Lisa Senuta at STMAA nine years ago.



What ministries are or have you been in and what do/did you like best about them?

Besides their Eucharistic visitor activities, they were active for several years with youth confirmation and the youth group, with whom they traveled on five mission trips, including trips to Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota, West Virginia and Honduras. "Giving back. That's what Jesus wants us to do," Steve added. Laurie also enjoys participating in the Women Who Love movie night and the fellowship in that group.

What particularly inspires you at STMAA?

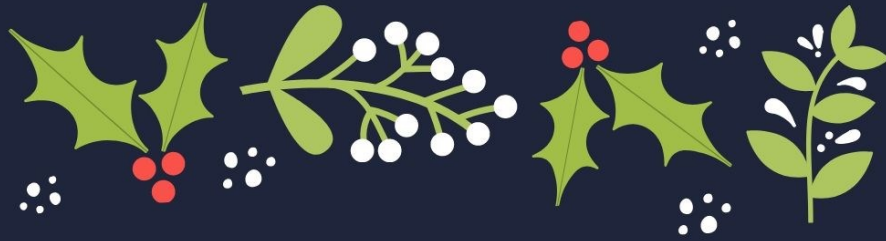
Both immediately agreed it is the culture and the opportunity to minister. "People are friendly," said Steve. "There is an openness and acceptance of all and the sense of being a family." They enjoy the 8:30 service, particularly the music and both "love" Father David's sermons.

What advice would you give a visitor about becoming a member of the parish?

Steve: "Jump in with both feet – don't be afraid. Have faith and patience." Laurie echoed that sentiment adding, "Get involved in small groups."

("Connecting With" continued on bottom of page 5)

Children's Corner



LOOKING FOR THE TRUE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS?

these family activities are sure to get you in the SPIRIT



ST. NICHOLAS SERVICE & DINNER

SUNDAY DECEMBER 15
5:00 LESSONS & CAROLS
WORSHIP SERVICE
DINNER TO FOLLOW

This short worship service is focused on the Light of the World. Enjoy singing classic carols and then a festive pasta dinner... with a visit from St. Nicholas!



ANGEL TREE SUNDAY DECEMBER 16 PRESENTS DUE

The true spirit of giving is practiced by sponsoring a local child in need from Crestview Elementary. Take a tag off the Angel tree, purchase the items and returned them unwrapped.



CRESTVIEW COMFORT CLOSET ITEMS DUE BY JAN 5

We are collecting clothes for the nurse at Crestview elementary to distribute clothes in emergency situations.

Please consider donating:
Long sleeve plain t-shirts S, M, L, & XL
Hoodies same sizing S, M, L, & XL
Sweatpants S, M, & L
Gloves for the bigger kids

FAMILY CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE DECEMBER 24TH 4:00 PM





DEACON'S DEN

The Role of a Deacon in our Church

SUZI DRURY



The four deacons assigned to St. Michael's by our bishop play a vital part in the life of our church. Deacons are called to cultivate and extend Jesus' servant ministry to a world that needs it.

Our deacons work to focus the parish's attention on those who need love and justice. Deacons help organize the church's efforts on behalf of the poor, the hungry, the marginalized, the hospitalized and those who suffer on account of injustice.

During regular worship services on Saturday and Sunday, and on special occasions, our deacons proclaim the Gospel, lead the Prayers of the People, assist in distributing the sacraments, and dismiss us to go forth and be Christ-like in and for the world.

The history of the diaconate is found in the scriptures. Christian writers make it clear that there have been different ministries within the church since the time of the apostles. In addition to the lay ministry of all baptized Christians, the Episcopal Church upholds the tradition of three

distinct orders of ordained ministry—deacon, priest, and bishop.

The role of the deacon is a complementary part of the ministry of the whole Church. It is a permanent role (called a vocational deacon). Transitional deacons are those who will be ordained a priest after a period of 6-12 months functioning as a deacon.

Deacons exist to remind all Christians of the servant character of Christian ministry. Within this role deacons are personally involved in service to the world while seeking to inspire and support others in their own service.

The ordination service for a deacon includes the following charge given by the bishop:

You are to make Christ and his redemptive love known, by your word and example, to those among whom you live and work and worship. You are to interpret to the Church the needs, concerns, and hopes of the world.... At all times, your life and teaching are to show Christ's people that in serving the helpless they are serving Christ himself.

BCP, Page 543

("Connecting With" continued from page 3)

What is your favorite liturgical season?

Steve: "Easter. Jesus died for us. I find all of that very moving."

Laurie: "Maundy Thursday, especially the foot-washing."

What is your favorite STMAA memory?

Laurie: "Getting married here!" Steve: "I'm not done - I'm still creating them!" A cancer survivor he added, "I am so grateful for all God has put in my life. It's time to pay it back."

GUESS WHAT GAIL FOUND OUT!



Hey! I'm relatively new to this beautiful church. But through Carpenter Ants, I've learned of so many interesting and unique features to St. Michael's.

For example...

What's so special about the organ here at STMAA? How are the sounds made from the pipes at the front of the church from the organ at the back? We no longer have wires that connect them together.

We have FIBER OPTICS!!

The organ keyboard is connected to a controller computer like our keyboard and computer at home. The organ keyboard carries a fiber optic light signal to whichever pipe Dr. Ken plays on the organ.

Lucky us! We get to hear music from the pipes both near the organ AND at the front of our church!



("Crestview Ministry" continued from page 2)

school supplies and personal hygiene items. As many families' funds may run out before month end, they are also stocking pre-packaged laundry detergent pods so families can continue to do laundry.

ST. MICHAEL'S FOUNDATION: The Foundation provides funding for supplemental snacks at school during testing and other special activities. It also provides an annual cash fund for Crestview's discretionary needs.

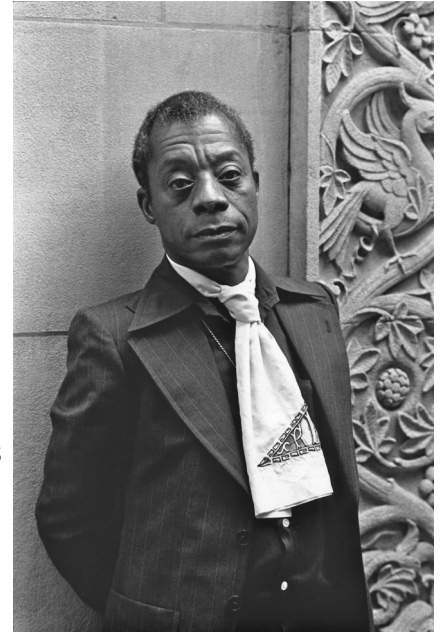
ART SHOW: At the end of each school year, St. Michael's provides space in Spencer Hall for the exhibition of Crestview student art work as well as hosting a reception honoring those students and their families.

ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES: Dee Pritchett is currently seeking volunteers to assist students in learning how to knit, working on a Home Depot student project and helping students while they shop at the school's ROAR store.

Celebrating St. Michael's Documentary Movie Night November 20, 2019

Honoring the Wisdom and Insight of JAMES BALDWIN

On November 20th, more than forty St. Michael's parishioners gathered to honor and celebrate the wise cultural criticism of the American writer James Baldwin. We watched the critically acclaimed documentary *I Am Not Your Negro*, based on Baldwin's final and unfinished book. Afterward, we had some light refreshments while talking about Baldwin's legacy and the continued reality of systemic racism in America. Our conversation was a tiny piece of the larger (and necessary) discourse about race in our country. Together, we sought to allow the Holy Spirit to speak to us through Baldwin, that we might grow just a little bit wiser ourselves. We, and our country, have a long way to go.



Over 40 parishioners gathered to watch the documentary, *I Am Not Your Negro*, on November 20.

(Continued "Advent" from page 1)

So how do we sing "Joy to the World" at Christmas and mean what we sing? We can only mean it if we have prepared ourselves to receive the joy about which we sing. Otherwise, we don't know what we mean by the word "joy" at all. But if we have prepared ourselves to receive that joy and have embraced its implications for all people everywhere, then that joy overflows us and we cannot help but sing as loud as we can, "Joy to the world, the Lord is come!" Quite simply, but profoundly, *JOY HAS HAPPENED TO US!*

We prepare for this joy by acknowledging our dependence on God and our need for God's grace and forgiveness. We repent of our sins and seek to be worthy of the forgiveness God gives us. Heeding John the Baptist's call, we seek to "bear fruit worthy of repentance," not because we can perfect ourselves, but because we can prepare ourselves for God's perfecting work in us. God makes us instruments of the joy, hope, peace, and love that define the gift of Jesus in a humble animal stall. Our Lord Jesus Christ is coming. The time is now for every heart to prepare him room.

Celebrating St. Michael's Experiencing God Small Group Advent Quiet Day, 12/5/19



Hope, Peace, Joy, Love, Fulfillment.

These were the virtues for reflection upon and on display at the Experiencing God group's Advent Quiet Day on December 5th. Participants in this special gathering took time to remember and honor women in their lives who have been exemplars of these virtues. The quiet day concluded with a potluck lunch and the wonderful, hospitable fellowship that the Experiencing God group is known for. What a splendid way to begin the Advent season!



Celebrating St. Michael's Annual Advent Festival December 8, 2019

O Come, O Come Emmanuel!



Once again, the Advent Festival is a smashing intergenerational success. The faithful of St. Michael's joined in a wide variety of crafts that will help us prepare for the celebration of Jesus' birth in just a few weeks. Spencer Hall was filled with conversation, laughter, and many smiles. The joy we anticipate during this season of Advent was peaking through already. Many thanks go to Jane Wilson and Annie Seal (pictured left), who organized this wonderful event. Thank you to Jane, and Annie, and everyone who gave their time and love to this happy day!



Jane Wilson & Annie Seal



Upcoming Events

Sunday Brunch

Sunday, December 15, at 9:45 a.m. in Spencer Hall

St. Nicholas Lessons and Carols Service

Sunday, December 15, at 5 p.m. in the Nave

Parish-wide Dinner at Conclusion of Service followed by More Carols in the Nave around 6:30 p.m.

Christmas Eve Services

Tuesday, December 24, in the Nave

4 p.m. Family Friendly Service

8 p.m. Festival Brass

11 p.m. Festival Brass and Incense

Christmas Day Service

Wednesday, December 25, at 10 a.m. in the Nave

Common Worship on the First Day of Christmas

Sunday, December 29, at 10 a.m. in the Nave

Celebration of Epiphany and the Burning of the Greens

Monday, January 6, at 6:30 p.m.

Save the Date

Annual Meeting

January 26, 2020

(Breakfast 8:30 a.m.; Meeting 9:00 a.m.; Holy Eucharist 11:00)

Chili Cook-Off and Bingo Night

January 26, 2020, at 5 p.m.

Ash Wednesday

February 26

Services at 7 a.m., noon, and 7 p.m.