

St. George's Episcopal Church

Uniting in Worship.
Welcoming in Grace.



5224 Minnetonka Boulevard

St. George's Episcopal Church

This is a free publication for members and friends

Saint Louis Park, MN 55416

connect@stgeorgesonline.org

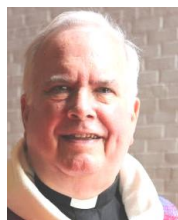
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December 2021

Volume 28, No. 12

ECMN: CONVENTION, 2021 NOVEMBER 5 & 6 HELD VIRTUALLY

by *The Rev. Tom Gehlsen*



The annual ECMN convention was held November 5th & 6th. Again this year, the convention was held virtually due to the “uptick” in Covid cases in Minnesota. The convention gathered on Friday afternoon to conduct the necessary annual business of our church. On Saturday there were numerous opportunities for prayer and educational sessions.

The focus of the convention is found in the annual address by the Bishop. Bishop Loya presented four overall areas for the Church of Minnesota:

Discipleship – transforming encounters with Jesus;
Justice -- having transformative encounters with Jesus;
Faithful Innovation – creating a culture of experimentation;
Vital Communities – sharing life together deeply.

In conjunction with the above areas the Bishop brought forth four major themes that he hopes the ECMN Community with all find agreement:

Believe in Jesus – Become a model of Him proclaiming the Resurrection that will lead to love and justice for all.

Act Like One Body – We are called to this in our Baptism:

There is one Body and one Spirit;
There is one hope in God's call to us;
One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism;
One God and Father of all. (*Baptismal*)

Be Patient – With self and others.

Agree to Die – We have been in a dying church for over 50 years. We need to “Let go & Let God!”

As we move forward out of the pandemic, we hope to return to simplicity and reprioritizing of our ministry making disciples of all people. Now we can travel light, walking with Jesus!



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

2:30 p.m. & 4:30 p.m.

Submitted by:

John Hoffacker



The baby's due Friday, December 24, and we're planning to celebrate with two worship services — **2:30 p.m.** and **4:30 p.m.**

The earlier service, **2:30 p.m.**, will be a little more intimate and focused on a family celebration. We hope to have lots of people participating in the liturgy; people of all ages.

Candlelight will shed the evening darkness at **4:30 p.m.**, and our choir will feature a few more voices. The music will be ancient and modern, and wonder will fill our celebration.

We're hoping to worship together in the church, but if the virus is raging, we might have to change plans. We'll do what we must, intelligently and compassionately, to strengthen the souls and spirit of our community. Merry Christmas anyway!

**PARISHIONER
PROFILE
of the month
Ron Holbach**



I was born in Wausau, WI on May 8, 1943, the first of four kids born to my parents, Leonard & Elizabeth. I remember being awoken after the birth of at least one of my sisters and saying something like “another girl!!!” Despite that, I got along and still get along quite well with all three of my sisters. I like to say “I have three sisters and I’m not afraid to use them.”

I worked for over 30 years in the Insurance Industry, at one time managing the largest Workers’ Compensation Claim Handling Office in the state of Minnesota. I have two children, Sara and Aaron, whom many of you probably know, along with Aaron’s family who have been off and on St. George’s attendees for some time. All three of their kids; Rob, Sydney & Claire, were baptized at St. G’s. I also have three grandchildren, Alexander, Isabel & Madeleine, by my daughter Sara, as well as four more “step” grandchildren; actually, grandchildren of my late girl-friend, Karen Hurlbert, whom I lost to cancer in September, 2018.

Karen (my Hunny) and I met thru her daughter Sue and son-in-law Jeff, whom I worked with, in August 1986, and were inseparable from that time. I passed the phone to her late one night when her first granddaughter was born and was present at or shortly after the birth of her two youngest grandchildren, so I believe I rightfully consider them as my “own.” I try very hard not to differentiate, just as I do with my kids and hers, Sue, Jean & Barb. Karen introduced me to her “cradle” Episcopal Church, St. George’s, in 1987, and we attended together from then until her passing in 2018. I, of course, have continued to attend as it has since become “my” Church also.

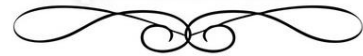
1) If I could live anywhere in the world for a year, where would it be and why? It would be Australia and/or New Zealand. I visited both in early 2020, just before the COVID hit, and I enjoyed my visit immensely. Both were beautiful countries populated by wonderful people who spoke English in a passable and understandable (most of the time) manner.

2) Do you have any hidden talents? DJ (DeeJay) “Rockin Ron” – I have a Record Collection of over

22,000 items and, in the past, have enjoyed making “mix-tapes” and CDs for friends and family. I probably would have gotten into this more had I had the time and the technical, electronic-related knowledge and skill. Over the years, I have amassed a trove of trivia knowledge about records and the recording industry.

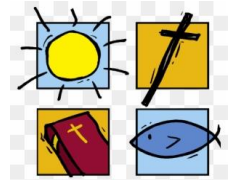
3) What TV show or movie have you recently watched that you would recommend? I am a big fan of the Motor-trend or Velocity Channel (just say either into your Comcast remote) and the automobile reconstruction and restoration shows they have. I especially like shows such as “Texas Metal,” “Garage Squad,” “Full Custom Garage,” and the show featuring Kindig-It Designs.

4) Who is your favorite musician? Without a doubt – Roy Orbison! The greater part of my record collection, as compared to any other artist, consists of Roy Orbison material. One of my greatest disappointments was to have tickets to see Roy live at the old Carlton Celebrity Room in Bloomington many years ago, only to find that his appearance was canceled when he was not able to make a connecting flight out of England.



EDUCATION UPDATE

*Submitted by Heather Whitesell
Children & Youth Coordinator*



In Chapel we’ve been following the Gospel of Mark. The kids were encouraged to create glasses and use them to look into the future. What will the world look like in 50 years? What will Jesus find when he returns?

Youth News:

The youth continue to learn the history of the Episcopal Church. During Advent, we’re thinking about what it means to prepare for the coming of Jesus. We’ll continue discussion around service project for the year. Any ideas are welcome.



RENEW THE DRAGON UPDATE

By Kathie Brown, Campaign Chair



The last project funded by the capital campaign is finally complete. New insulated glass has been installed in the coat hall windows. These are much more energy efficient than the previous single-pane glass.



St. Louis Park Emergency Program's Annual Toy Program

Submitted by Camille Schroeder

The STEP annual Toy Program is in progress and toys and Target gift cards are needed for the project. Donations of Target gift cards in \$10 and \$20 amounts are needed for children 0 to 18 years of age. Donations of toys are also needed for children ages 0 to 8 years of age. Please, no violent toys or stocking stuffers. There are gift lists available online at Target and Amazon. You can purchase a gift there and have it shipped directly to STEP. Of course, you can buy a gift anywhere to donate.

Please place your donations in the red wagon in the Narthex and they will be picked up and delivered to STEP. If you want to deliver your donations yourself, they can be delivered to the alley door at STEP, 6812 W Lake Street, St. Louis Park. Donations can be made until Friday, December 10, 2021.

And don't forget food donations. The need is great and the donations we make go a long way in helping out those with food insecurity. Think of donating some special food or ingredients for a special recipe during this holiday season. You might even enclose the recipe. Be creative. Many thanks for all you do.



Many thanks to Gregg Jacobson, Bruce Wachutka and Carole Leonard for raking and bagging 34 yard bags of leaves at St. George's Church this November.

St. George's Women's Group (The Women of St. George's)



The Women of St. George's is a social group that is open to all women in the parish. We will be meeting on the fourth Monday of the month at noon on Zoom for the time being. Consider joining us on Monday, December 27th at noon on Zoom.

Return of the "Forward Day by Day" booklets

To usher in the holidays, we are happy to announce that Forward Day by Day is back! We are all set to receive copies once again, just in time for the holidays. They will be located in the Narthex as before. Take one along for yourself and one to share with a friend to deepen your Advent/Christmas journey!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

By Sarah Schulte

Welcome Committee



Volunteers needed! Do you enjoy talking on the phone? Are you missing conversation with St. Georgites? Let us get you connected to others in the congregation!

The Welcome Committee is looking for volunteers to call parishioners who are unable to attend in-person services and/or access the livestream. These calls build community with those who are unable to gather at the church, keep us connected, and help boost spirits.

Please contact Sarah Schulte:
(schulteMSB@yahoo.com or 612-201-5731)
or Jane Sandsmark (mjsandsmark@gmail.com
or 952-221-4004) for more information
or to volunteer. Thank you!



CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS FROM PARISHIONERS

Parishioners were asked if they had a favorite Christmas tradition or favorite Christmas memory to share. It could be something from the past or something you do today - a cultural tradition, a funny tradition, things you do but you don't really know why...any tradition or special memory that makes the holidays unforgettable.

Here are the responses:

Mike & Jane Sandsmark: While we were stationed in England with the Air Force in the mid-1970's, our Vicar from the Church of England Parish Church where we attended strongly encouraged us to listen to the live radio broadcast of "A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols" on Christmas Eve afternoon. The broadcast was from King's College in Cambridge. We started doing that and the tradition has continued to this day.

Of course, with the time difference between Minnesota and England, we listen on Christmas Eve morning here (on Minnesota Public Radio).

Kitty Reese: My favorite memory was attending midnight Mass at the Cathedral of St. Paul. It was such a magical event for a young girl!

Carole Leonard: When my granddaughter Hannah was young, and I had a real Christmas tree, I would cut off the bottom one inch (so the tree would take in water), and I would write on them with a



permanent marker the events we went to together for Christmas that year (Santa breakfasts, lunches at Macy's Oak Grill, etc.) I've kept them for her.

Also, my family has always loved going to the 4 p.m. Christmas Eve service at St. George's. We've done that for over 50 years.

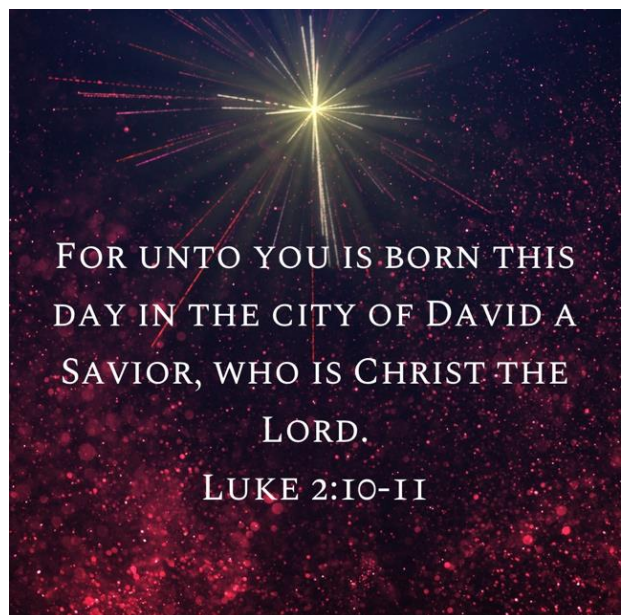
CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS (continued)



Heather Whitesell: Christmas tradition for the Mejia-Whitesell family: We always attend the Christmas Eve vigil service together. I also hang all the ornaments on the tree that my children made and those I've received from my students over the years.

Suzy Garland: One of my favorite Christmas memories is many years ago at my Episcopal church in Marshalltown, IA. We had a beautiful Christmas Eve service, the church had a lovely Carillon bell system, we'd had incense in the service, and as we left the church about 11:30 p.m., it was snowing big beautiful flakes. It seemed at that moment all was right in the world. I was filled with the glory of God.

Rachel Santos: Even as we got older, we still had to wait for each person to open their present completely and be finished before the next person would go on. My dad was notorious for opening his presents slowly...one might even say glacial! One Christmas in particular one of my sisters wrapped his gift in a fiendishly difficult to open wooden box. He struggled with the package, eventually sitting on the floor to tackle it, finally, surrounding the box, he rolled onto his side (still holding the box) and said "I am weak, but thou art strong!" To this day we still laugh about that and when something is particularly challenging we begin with "I am weak..."





WHAT'S UP WITH ADVENT!!

By The Rev. Tom Geblsen

Preparation for Christmas is an important theme for Advent, but more is involved. Advent gives us a vision of our lives as Christians and shows us the possibilities of life. The vision of life that Advent gives us is twofold: it looks back to the first coming of Christ at Bethlehem, and it looks to the future when Christ will come again. In the interval between these two events, we find meaning for our life as a Christian.

First, we celebrate Christ-become-human. We view his life and experience his presence as a human being in our history. Christ came to show us what life can and should be. He gave us true and valid principles by which we can live true and valid lives. Jesus knew that the human heart could not live in isolation. He formed the Church around the concept of a people held together by love. In that community we discover unlimited possibilities and meaning. Alone we can do nothing. Together we find real meaning.

When Christ left this earth, he did not abandon us. He remains with us in his Spirit, the Church, the sacraments, the Scriptures and each other. He lives in community with us and keeps his vision of life before us.

When Christ comes again, his presence will no longer be hidden behind the signs and symbols of the liturgy or the words of the Scriptures. His presence among us will be revealed in all its fullness, a presence that will perfect and complete our community.

This is the “greater significance” of Advent. In these few short weeks, we take in the sweeping panorama of time – from Christ’s birth to his Second Coming. The season of Advent brings us the magnificent vision of life and hope for the future given to us by Christ.

Advent is our time to become more involved, more caught up in the meaning and the possibilities of life as a Christian community. Thus, we are preparing not only for Christmas but also for Christ’s Second Coming. This means that when he comes again, we will be awake and watchful. He will not find us asleep.

SIGNS OF ENDING ALL AROUND US

By John Hoffacker



Darkness seems to be winning, and our first hymn of Advent is a new poem to an old and glorious tune. The poem challenges dread's advance, and proclaims its transformation into hope.

Hope, anticipation, and preparation fill the season of Advent. We know what's coming, and we're getting ready.

The times call for senses open to reality and minds open to change. We have to be clever, creative, cheerful, and flexible. And we've shown we can do that.

In worship, our music changes for the season: we'll continue with the Entrance Antiphon — each week singing a different verse of "O come, O come, Emanuel." And we'll sing a new setting of the Trisagion. Trisagion is a Greek word (pronounced tree-SY-on) meaning "Thrice holy": Holy God, Holy and mighty, Holy immortal One, have mercy upon us.



“GREENING OF THE CHURCH” SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19 PLEASE JOIN US



The annual “Greening of the Church” will be held on Sunday, December 19, following the 9:30 a.m. service. Everyone is welcome to join us in making St. George’s beautiful as we prepare for Christmas.

There’s plenty to do; a tree to put up, roping and lights, boughs and swags, and lots of poinsettias. Many hands make light work and a fun time. If you have questions, check with Carole Leonard or Kathleen Boe.



MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARISTIC ASSEMBLY

	DECEMBER 5	DECEMBER 12	DECEMBER 19	CHRISTMAS EVE DECEMBER 24	DECEMBER 26
Readings	Philippians 1:3-11 Canticle 4 Luke 3:1-6	Philippians 4:4-7 Canticle 9 Luke 3:7-18	Hebrews 10:5-10 Canticle 3 Luke 1:39-45 (46-55)	Hebrews 1:1-4(5-12) Isaiah 52:7-10 John 1:1-14	Galatians 3:23-25 Psalm: 147 John 1:1-18
Lectors	Sarah Schulte	Claudia Hoffacker	Tom Harmon	Caryl Eschweiler	Devin Snyders
Ushers	Bill Stromberg Bruce Wachutka Tom Harmon	Tom Zaun Bob Jones Jane Sandsmark	Bill Stromberg Gregg Jacobson Bruce Becker	TBD	Tom Zaun Sarah Schulte Lou Michelich
Altar Guild	Kitty Reese Bill Stromberg	Kathleen Boe Katy Campbell Rachel Santos	Nancy Becker Bruce Becker Kathie Brown	TBD	Jane Jacobson Gregg Jacobson

December Birthdays



1 Matt Lex Al Kotula	16 Pamela Moore
3 Shannon Engel Westlund	17 Lindsay Benjamin Claudia Hoffacker Mari Mejia
6 Lou Michelich	18 Dr. Hope Thornberg
11 Robert Holbach	24 Loren Dwyer
12 Laura Harmon Drew Monroe	27 Patricia Janke
14 Suzy Garland	29 Blossom Tsang
16 Oyinkansola Kuku	31 Ed O'Donnell



Check out the events in December SOME EVENTS ARE ONLINE

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 11 a.m.- GBD (Zoom)	2 6 p.m. AA	3	4
5 9:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist	6	7	8 11 a.m.- GBD (Zoom) 7 pm – Peer Support Group–closed (PH)	9 6 p.m. AA	10	11
12 9:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist 11:30 a.m. Youth Group	13 7 p.m Finance	14	15 11 a.m.- GBD (Zoom)	16 10:30 a.m. Welcoming Committee 6 p.m. AA	17	18
19 9:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist	20 7 p.m. Vesty	21	22 11 a.m.- GBD (Zoom) 7 pm – Peer Support Group–closed (PH)	23 6 p.m. AA	24 Christmas Eve Christmas I at 2:30 pm Christmas II at 4:30 pm	25 Christmas Day
26 9:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist	27 12 noon Women of St. George (Zoom)	28	29 11 a.m.- GBD (Zoom)	30 6 p.m. AA		

**GOSPEL-BASED DISCIPLESHIP – 11 A.M. EVERY WEDNESDAY – <https://zoom.us/j/397934453>
Meeting ID: 397 934 453 – You may also join audio by phone: +1 312 626 6799**

KEY: GBD – Gospel-based Discipleship HE – Holy Eucharist CEB – Christian Education Building
LL – Library Lounge G – Garden PH – Parish Hall

Annual Meeting and Vestry Nominations

Submitted by Kathleen Boe, Rector's Warden



NOMINATIONS
ARE OPEN

The Annual Meeting for St. George's will be held on Sunday, February 6, 2022. At this meeting, new Vestry members will be elected. The Vestry has appointed a Nominating Committee to develop a list of candidates for the open Vestry seats.

In addition, according to our bylaws, persons may be nominated by petition signed by no fewer than 15 voting members of the congregation. This must be delivered to the Vestry Clerk (Laura Harmon) not fewer than 30 days (January 7, 2022) before the Annual Meeting. If you have any questions on this process, please see either me or Father Tom.

More details will come on the Annual Meeting as we get closer to the date. At this time, we are planning to hold the meeting virtually in the afternoon.

Christmas Memorials & Thanksgivings

If you would like to contribute to one of the funds listed below in memory or thanksgiving of loved ones this Christmas, please indicate your wishes below. There will be an insert on Christmas Eve naming these memorials and thanksgivings.

- Altar Flowers
- Music Program
- Outreach

NAME: _____

AMOUNT: \$ _____

In Memory of:

In Thanksgiving for:

Please return this sheet to either the collection plate or mail to the Church Office. **The deadline is Monday, December 20, 2021.**



About St. George's

5224 Minnetonka Boulevard
St. Louis Park, MN 55416
952-926-1646

www.stgeorgesonline.org

Office hours Monday-Thursday
8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

PARISH STAFF:

Rector: The Rev. Thomas J. Gehlsen, Ph.D.

tomg@stgeorgesonline.org

*(Fr. Tom's contact for emergencies when the office
is closed – 651-319-3570)*

Deacon: The Rev. Diane McGowan

smarl@aol.com

Parish Administrator, Marion Hunner

office@stgeorgesonline.org

Music Director, John Hoffacker, D.M.A.

johnh@stgeorgesonline.org

Children and Youth Coordinator, Heather
Whitesell

heatherw@stgeorgesonline.org

ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE:

Christina Christensen, Mezzo-soprano;

Vanessa Vaughan, Bass

VESTRY:

Kathleen Boe, Rector's Warden; Sarah
Schulte, Parish Warden; Bruce Becker, Jill
Burns, Gregg Jacobson, Jane Sandsmark,
Rachel Santos, Cyprian Troyer, and Bruce
Wachutka.

Clerk of the Vestry:

Laura Harmon

Parish Treasurer:

Connie Kotula

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**Sunday Services
are now in person
and available on St. George's
YouTube Channel**

**Sunday Worship at St. George's
9:30 a.m.**

**NOTE: If you would like to receive
a print copy of the church newsletter,
please contact Marion in the office.**