

Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church



The Servant

Christmas, 2003

Volume 12 Issue 2

West Valley City, Utah

From Our Priest-in-Charge

A Christmas Blessing

With all of the joys and wonders this season brings, I am especially grateful to spend this Christmas with you at St. Stephen's. I am looking forward to enjoying your parish traditions during this season.

As we look forward to our services on Christmas Eve, I hope you will take this opportunity to invite family members, friends and neighbors to join us for worship at any of the three services (5 p.m. Children's Service, 9 p.m. Latino Service, 10:30 p.m. Carols and Holy Eucharist at 11 p.m.) as well as the Open House throughout the evening.

Lastly, here is a Christmas blessing I found some time ago, written by Fra Giovanni in 1513.

"No heaven can come to us unless our hearts can find rest in today. No peace lies in the future which is not hidden in this present little instant. Take Peace!

"The gloom of the world is but a shadow. Behind it yet within our

reach is Joy. There is radiance and glory in the darkness, could we but see, and to see we have only to look.

"Life is so generous a giver, but we, judging its gifts by their covering, cast them away as ugly or heavy or hard. Remove the covering and you will find it a living splendor, woven of love, by wisdom, with power. Welcome it, grasp it, and you touch the Angel's hand that brings it to you.

"Life is so full of Meaning and Purpose, so full of Beauty, beneath its cover, that you will find earth but cloaks your heaven. Courage then to claim it: that is all!

"And so, at this Christmastime, we greet you. Not quite as the world sends greetings, but with profound esteem and with the prayer that for you now and forever, the day breaks, and the shadows fall away."

Peace,

Lee Shaw ^

Vestry Report

The Annual Parish Meeting will be after Church on Sunday, January 25, 2004. Food and refreshments will be provided before the meeting starts at 12 noon. There will be elections for the two vacant Vestry seats, for Diocesan Convention Delegates and Alternates, and reports from the Vestry and other committees and ministries. There may also be changes to our bylaws. Please plan on attending and casting your votes for candidates and issues that are important to the survival of St. Stephen's. — *Carly Burton.*

Sunday School

Sunday school is going well. We have a regular show of kids each Sunday. Our teachers are doing a fantastic job. Thanks to all for your commitment. — *Amy Penrod.*

Adult Sunday School

We're at the end of our book study, *Living with History*, by Fredrica Harris Thompsett, Volume 5 of the New Church Teaching Series, and will take a break over Christmas. We'll have more news soon about our program for 2004. — *Martin Willcocks.*

Search Committee

The Search Committee met Thursday, December 11, as scheduled. We reviewed various courses of action and plan to meet again no later than the last Sunday of March after church. Meanwhile, we look forward to gaining input from everyone in the congregation about what each person would like in the next rector for St. Stephens. To that end, we are acquiring a locked box for people to submit either an essay or the filled out form from the last search process. Also, each of the members would welcome personal comments. Finally, persons may request an audience of the full search committee to discuss their concerns, issues, and feelings. — *Fran Crookston.*

Worship Committee

A meeting will be held after Christmas to establish a Worship Committee. It will have representation from each of the Church's ministries, including the Altar Guild, Hymn Selection Committee, Lay Ministries, WoW!, our Web Site, etc. — *Lee Shaw.*

WoW!

WoW! continues to meet Wednesday, December 31, and every Wednesday, with Dinner at 6 p.m., Midweek Holy Eucharist at 7 p.m. and a one-hour program at 7:30 p.m. that varies each week. — *Marjorie Ball.*

Altar Guild

The Altar Guild has a calendar in the Sacristy for members to sign up. The greening of the church is on Dec 21 after the service. Children & adults are invited to participate. — *Betty Johnson.*

Hymn Selection Committee

The Hymn Selection Committee met December 9, and picked the following hymns for the Christmas season:

Hymns	Christmas Eve Children's	Christmas Eve Late	Christmas 1 Dec. 28
Processional	79	83	102
Gradual	111	89	83
Offertory	101	87	98
Communion	Instrumental Music	115 and music	112
Communion		111	109
Recessional	100	100	93
Carols	Before Late Service (3 verses each)		Before Gradual
The Latino congregation may join in carol singing in Spanish, see handouts.	(First five)	(Second five)	64
	96	105	56 v. 1,4,5
	99	109	81
	107	94	265
	83	115	115 v. 1,2
	101	111	128

The next meeting of the Hymn Selection Committee will be Tuesday, December 30 at 7:00 p.m. We will pick hymns for January.

WoW! Worship on Wednesdays

WoW! will resume after the New Year on Wednesday, January 7. Each week, we have a dinner at 6:00 p.m., Midweek Holy Eucharist at 7:00 p.m., and about an hour program, project, or discussion at 7:30.

Please Note: The Rev. Lee Shaw's home address is: 4887 So. 1710 E., Salt Lake City, UT 84117. His home phone number is 278-3014.

Points to Ponder

"God bless us, every one!" - Tiny Tim, in *A Christmas Carol*-Charles Dickens.

**God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea, and rides upon the storm.
Blind unbelief is sure to err, and scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter, and he will make it plain.**

— William Cowper (1731-1800), Hymn 677.

Articles

Our Christmas Season and its Music — Martin Willcocks

Part of the charm of this Christmas Season we celebrate, for the twelve days between Christmas Eve and Epiphany, is the tradition of music — hymns and carols about the birth of Jesus; a tradition that carries over into Epiphany for the arrival of the Magi.

Every year, I tune in to KBYU-FM at 8 a.m. on Christmas Eve for the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols from the world-famous sanctuary of Kings College Chapel in Cambridge, England. When I lived in Cambridge, from 1960 to 1970, this was still the best way to hear the broadcast, since one had to camp outside the Chapel overnight for a small chance to get inside at 3 p.m. In any case, I was usually visiting my family at that hour.

Each year, Kings College commissions a new carol that is broadcast to the world for the first time during this service. While the lessons are always the same, and always in the poetry of the King James Version of the Bible, the carols vary each year, except for the processional and recessional. And the choirboy who sings the first verse of "Once in Royal David's City" *a capella* to millions of people worldwide is called upon just ten seconds before the service begins, so every choirboy has to be able to take on this privileged status!

But Christmas isn't about just listening to the music. By the time we reach it, we've been subjected to *Jingle Bells* and *The Christmas Song* so many times that these tunes become jaded. It's small wonder, then, that so many people turn off the lights and throw out the tree just as soon as possible after Christmas Day, preparing to stay up late for the New Year (which of course we celebrate at the beginning of Advent in our religious tradition.)

Still, the hope of the world is in the Incarnation, and if we have that hope, we are charged up to our spiritual best by the twelve days of Christmas, beginning with our glad participation in the Christmas services, the carols, the telling and retelling of the story of the journey to Bethlehem, the birth in the manger, the terrified shepherds witnessing the angels' message, and the arrival of the Magi. We are saddened by the cruelty of King Herod in the massacre of the innocents, and expectant with Simeon at seeing our Savior at last, in the Temple that knows not who He is!

Let us join in the carol singing with gusto this Christmas Eve, and listen to the story of redemption on the Sunday after Christmas, when we at St. Stephen's traditionally have our own festival of lessons and carols. We will also hear about our Patron, St. Stephen, in the Collect and the Homily. And, charged by the Holy Spirit, let us step forward to our ministry in the world, to do the work that the Lord has given us to do, to love and serve Him as faithful witnesses, with strength and courage, gladness and singleness of heart.

Sometimes a light surprises the Christian while he sings; it is the Lord who rises with healing in his wings — William Cowper (1731-1800), Hymn 667.

Special Events



*St. Stephen's Annual
Christmas Eve Open House*

*6:00 p.m. Until 10:15 p.m.
in the St. Stephen's
Parish Hall
4615 South 3200 West, WVC, UT*

*Come as you are, by yourself, or with friends/family
Dress is Casual.
Come for a little while or spend the evening.
There will be fun, food and festivities for all ages.
You may join us afterwards for our Christmas Eve Service.
Carols start at 10:30, the service at 11:00 p.m.*

*Admission is free, but we are
accepting food for the food bank*

Special Events

The Gospel of Magdala by Karen King

Center for Spiritual Development and Renewal, 75 S. University Street, Salt Lake City, Wednesdays 12:00 - 1:00

The Wednesday Reading Group at the Center for Spiritual Development and Renewal has completed their study of *Beyond Belief* and are moving on to Karen King's book *The Gospel of Magdala* which is about one of the fragments of text found in the cache of documents at Nag Hammadi. Discussions of this gospel will include:

Its history in the early church.

How it has been interpreted and its meaning when first written.

Theological reasoning for its non-acceptance as part of the scriptural canons of the church.

Implications and the Gospel's relevance for Christians today.

Reading and discussions will begin Wednesday January 7th at the Center. For more information please call Ivan Cendese at 359-8104.

The Living Liturgy Conference will be held on January 15-17, 2004, at Ascension Lutheran Church in Ogden, Utah. It will bring together worship leaders, pastors, and church musicians from liturgical churches in Utah and surrounding states.

The Living Liturgy Committee (www.LivingLiturgy.com) was conceived as an opportunity for worship leaders to experience and study and reflect on ways to help their communities pray and worship with power, integrity, and meaning.

The registration cost is \$100 per person and includes lunch. For 2-4 persons per congregation cost is \$90 per person. For five or more from one congregation, the cost is \$75 per person. For a complete schedule and more information, call 801-782-2810, or brochures can be downloaded at www.ascensionlutheranogden.org. Registration deadline is December 20.

Affirmations:

You Can End Poverty January 24, 2004, 9 a.m.-noon, at the Diocesan Center. Call the Rev. Cheryl Moore at (801)322-4232 ext. 362 for details.

The Diocese was one of the first to endorse the Decency Principles project ten years ago. It is a practical way of empowering people to bring an end to poverty in our community. A priest of this Diocese, The Rev. Ronald Thomas, was one of the catalysts of the Decency Principles project. Linda Hilton, executive director of the Coalition of Religious Communities (CORC), offers the challenge to us to recommit ourselves to ending poverty in our lifetime.

Calendar

EVERY SUNDAY

- 9:30 a.m. Sunday School for Adults and Children
- 10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist – Rite II
- 11:30 a.m. Fellowship Hour – Coffee, Refreshments, Celebrations
- 11:30 a.m. Search Committee (when scheduled)
- 3:00 p.m. Bible Study (At Pearl Patrick’s home)

WEEKDAYS

TUESDAYS:

- 6:00 p.m. Garden Guild (mainly during spring through fall months)
- 7:00 p.m. Hymn Selection Meeting (when scheduled)

WEDNESDAYS:

- 6:00 p.m. WoW! Dinner - come, eat and enjoy, you don’t have to bring food.
- 7:00 p.m. Midweek Holy Eucharist (or Evening Prayer on occasion) - Rite II
- 7:30 p.m. 1 Hour scheduled program or discussion

THURSDAYS:

- 7:30 p.m. Vestry (when scheduled)

FRIDAYS:

- 8:30 p.m. Granger A.A. Group

SATURDAYS:

- 5:30 p.m. Spanish Holy Eucharist - Santa Eucarista - Rite II
- 6:30 p.m. Spanish Fellowship Hour

MONTHLY

- 2nd. Tuesday Hymn Selection Meeting
- 1st. & 3rd. Thursday Vestry Meetings

SPECIAL DATES

- December 24 Children’s service 5:00 p.m., Latino service 9:00 p.m., Carols 10:30 and Festival Holy Eucharist 11:0 p.m. Annual Christmas Party 6:00 to 10:15 p.m.
- December 28 Festival of Lessons and Carols and Holy Eucharist Service 10:30 a.m.
- January 11 The First Sunday after the Epiphany: Baptism, Holy Eucharist 10:30 a.m.
- January 25 St. Stephen’s Annual Parish Meeting, 12:00 noon-1:30 p.m.

Deadline for the Epiphany “Servant” is Sunday, January 4.

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