



Revelations

December 2006

Volume 25, No. 10

St. John's Episcopal Church, Sturgis, Michigan

Bringing God and people together to know and live the Good News of Jesus Christ

"The Greatest Gift"

December Highlights

December 2 (Saturday)

1 pm - 6 pm Sturgis Library Historic House Tour
(including Rectory)

December 2 (Saturday) 1st Sunday of Advent

5:00 pm Come as you are "Seeker's Service"
(Great Hall) and informal Potluck

December 3 (Sunday) 1st Sunday of Advent

8:00 am and 10:00 am Holy Eucharist
9:00 am Christian Education - all ages

December 6 (Wednesday)

5:30 pm Boots and Shoes Kiwanis Christmas Party

December 7 (Thursday)

7:00 pm Daughters of the King (Thurston Woods)

December 10 (Sunday) 2nd Sunday of Advent

8:00 am and 10:00 am Holy Eucharist
9:00 am Christian Education - all ages

December 12 (Tuesday)

1:00 pm Bishop's Bible Study for Clergy
5:30 Exchange Club Christmas Party (outreach)

December 13 (Wednesday)

3:00 pm Foundation Committee

December 16 (Saturday)

10:00 am Liturgy Training Meeting

December 17 (Sunday) 3rd Sunday of Advent

8:00 am and 10:00 am Holy Eucharist
9:00 am Christian Education - all ages

4:00 pm Caroling for our Homebound and Reception
Contact Jo Johnson. Meet at Church.

December 19 (Tuesday)

7:00 pm Vestry Meeting

December 23 (Saturday)

10:00 am Rehearsal for Christmas Eve Mass

December 24 (Sunday) 4th Sunday of Advent

8:00 am Holy Eucharist

10 am Advent Procession with Children

11:30 Snacks and Decorate Church

December 24 (Sunday) Christmas Eve

4:30 pm Children's Christmas Eucharist

7:00 pm Sung Holy Eucharist

and Christmas Reception

December 25 (Monday) Christmas Day

9:00 am Holy Eucharist with hymns

December 31 (Sunday) 1st Sunday after Christmas

8:00 am Holy Eucharist

10:00 am Lessons and Carols with Communion

9:00 am Christian Education - adult

December 31 (Sunday) Eve of the Feast of the

Holy Name 6:00 pm Potluck and Games

Watchnight Service and Holy Eucharist

Behold, I tell you a great mystery: the Creator of ALL chose to submit to creation by becoming one of us. Two thousand years ago, planet earth became the place where God chose to hang out with men and women as a human being, for a few brief years. He was born a baby in Bethlehem and his parents called him Jesus. Those few brief years of Jesus' life changed the history of everything.

This is why Christians celebrate the Feast of the Nativity. Christmas for the "friends of Jesus" is not fundamentally about frantic shopping, and decorating, and often artificial "happiness." Christmas is about our profound gratitude for the Incarnation of God – God taking on the flesh of Jesus and exploding the Divine Light into a dark world of fear and disease and sin and war. We do not walk alone! This is the message of Christmas! God loves us! This is the message of Christmas! God heals us with his Presence! This is the message of Christmas!

When we approach the birth of Jesus, we come to a stable, a place where God (the invulnerable ONE) is extraordinarily vulnerable. What this ultimately means is that when we walk with Jesus in our life, it is God who walks with us; and God can walk with us into those places where we are most vulnerable and needy. When we walk with Jesus in our life, we can face everything, including our own sinfulness, the insults and offenses of others against us, the injustices and hatreds between humans, war, natural disasters, the loss of our loved ones, our aging, our own mortality – everything. We can face everything because Jesus, God with us, is still with us – as close as we ask, as soon as we ask.

When we walk with Jesus we can also celebrate everything, because we realize that everything is a gift from God. Jesus, the Risen One, is the gift who reveals all our gifts – the gift of life and breath, the gift of love of family and friends, the gift of beauty, the gift of hope and laughter, the gift of community, the gift of healing and salvation. When we give gifts to each other this Christmas, let us especially remember that they are only signs of God's gifts to us.

My challenge to you this Christmastide is that you once again accept the greatest gift that God has given you – his presence. Allow his life to deepen within you as you contemplate the Mystery of the Nativity. Let the little child within you reach out to the little child in the manger. And then, let everything you do for others, as you celebrate this holiday, come from that renewed relationship with the Lord of Life.

In Christ's love,

Meredith



DECEMBER

27th
Ralph and Marietta
Abston

28th
John and Ann Wiedlea
31st

Tom and Dorothy
Fairchild



- 03 Audra Noecker
- 04 Christian Perry
- 05 Janene Breneman
- 08 John Mayer
- 09 Lori Kauffman
- 10 Thomas Kinsey
- 13 Chloe Hunt
- 14 Betty Freeman
- 15 Connie Griffith
- 15 Brianna VanWormer
- 16 Amanda Smith
- 20 Linda Odell
- 28 Jessie Schaeffer
- 29 John Cook
- 29 John Wiedlea

Join us at 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, **DECEMBER 2**, for a "Come as you are" **SEEKER'S SERVICE**. There will be an informal Holy Eucharist with contemporary music. If you feel like dinner, then bring a dish to pass and join us for an informal "potluck." What we bring is what we eat. **INVITE YOUR FRIENDS!**



The **2005 Giving Tree** will make a positive difference in many lives this year by adopting **Hope House**, a not-for-profit resource center and shelter for women and children enrolled in Addiction Prevention. Your gift enables Hope House to help women become more productive members of our community. Gifts will be given directly to the House on December 16th by our carolers. A wish list of needs will be posted on the Giving Tree on December 2nd.

On **November 5** we blessed our **pledges** for 2006. If you have not yet made your pledge, please mail it to the office or drop it by soon. It will help with the budget process.

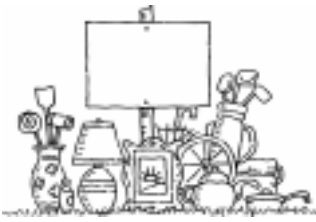


FRIDAY FRIENDSHIP MEALS

Please support our **Friday Friendship Lunch Program** by donating your time, talent or food to this worthy cause. On average, we are currently serving 40 hot meals a week to the needy. This requires not only food to be available, but also man power to create, serve and clean up after the meal.

We are getting ready to print the New 2007 phone directory.
If you would like to make changes to your listing information, correct any mistakes, or add email addresses, birthdays or anniversaries to our lists, please contact the office no later than December 10.





EARLY NOTICE!
 St. John's will be having a rummage sale in May 2007. Please keep this in mind as you pack away your seasonal items.
 Keep your eye on Revelations for the rummage sale's exact date and location.

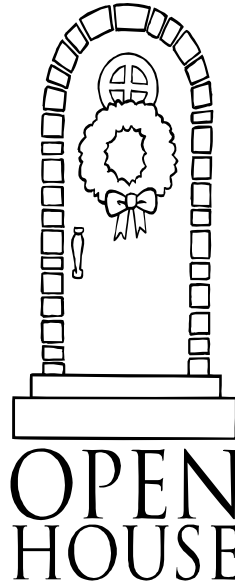


JANUARY HIGHLIGHTS

On Saturday, December 2, 2006, St. Johns Church, Great Hall and Rectory will be part of the "Apples of Gold" Christmas Home Tour.

We are looking for volunteers to help in the preparation and decoration of the event as well as volunteers to welcome and assist in dispensing information and guidance to our visitors that day.

Those interested should contact Emily Baker at 651 6043.



January 4 (Thursday)
 7:00 pm Daughters of the King (Thurston Woods)

January 6 (Saturday) Epiphany
5 pm Come as you are "Seeker's Service" (Great Hall) and informal Potluck

January 7 (Sunday) Baptism of Our Lord
8:00 am and 10:00 am Holy Eucharist
 9:00 am Christian Education - all ages

January 9 (Tuesday) - Rector's schedule
 1:00 pm Bishop's Bible Study in Battle Creek

January 11 (Thursday) - Rector's schedule
 12:00 noon Sturgis Ministerial Association Meeting

January 14 (Sunday) 2nd Sunday after Epiphany
8:00 am and 10:00 am Holy Eucharist
 9:00 am Christian Education - all ages

January 16 (Monday) Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

January 20 (Saturday)
How Shall We Minister Conference
 Small Church Conference Series

January 21 (Sunday) 3rd Sunday after Epiphany
8:00 am and 10:00 am Holy Eucharist
 9:00 am Christian Education - all ages
 Sustaining Pastoral Excellence Retreat for Rector (Sunday evening through Tuesday)

January 23 (Tuesday)
 7:00 pm Vestry Meeting

January 24 (Wednesday)
 3:00 pm Foundation Meeting (tentative)
January 27 (Saturday)
 10:00 am Usher Ministry Team Training (tentative)

January 28 (Sunday) Feast of St. John (transferred)
8:00 am and 10:00 am Holy Eucharist
 9:00 am Christian Education - all ages
 11:30 noon Luncheon and **Annual Meeting**

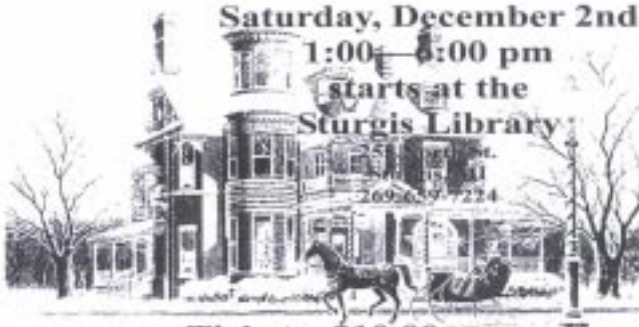
January 29 (Monday) - Rector's schedule
 5:30 pm Hospital Board Meeting

Apples of Gold

of Sturgis
 Wesleyan Church along with the
 Friends of the Library

Christmas Home Tour

Saturday, December 2nd
 1:00 - 4:00 pm
 starts at the
 Sturgis Library



Tickets: \$10.00

Bus Ticket: \$3.00 (additional) Bus leaves at 1:30

*The Christmas Home Tour, the DDA and the Downtown Businesses invite you to enjoy their Christmas in the City celebration!
 Tour begins at the library where you will receive your map and enjoy refreshments.
 Tour is self guided or you may ride the bus. Bus seating is on a first come basis.*



It's the perfect Christmas gift. - Hope on a Rope

A LOOK AT OUR WEEK

Sunday
 8:00 am Holy Eucharist
 9:05 am Adult Christian Education
 10:00 am Holy Eucharist

Monday - Thursday
 Office Hours 10:30 am - 2:30 pm

Tuesday
 5:00 pm Women's Book Study (Church)
 On hold- Look for a notice when to resume

Wednesday
 7:00 am Holy Eucharist then breakfast
 7:00 pm Choir rehearsal
 7:00 pm Men's Bible Study (home group)

Friday
 11:30 am Free Friday Friendship Meal

Saturday
 9:00 Altar Guild

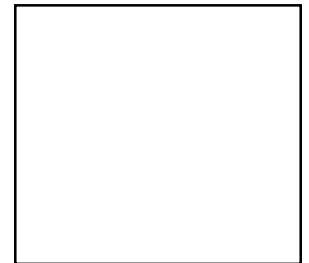
First Saturday of the month
 5:00 pm "Seeker's Service"

- St. John's Episcopal Church Staff and Phone Extensions-

The Reverend Canon Meredith HuntRector (ext. 102)
 Ruth Lahmeyer.....Director of Music
 Laura Kurella.....Business Office (ext. 100)
 Paul Currier.....Sexton (ext. 103)

Office Hours: Monday -Thursday 10:30 am - 2:30 pm - Phone (269) 651-5811 - fax (269) 651-7178

St. John's Episcopal Church
 110 S. Clay Street
 Sturgis, Michigan 49091-1711
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Christmas Music



CHRISTMAS

**MUSIC
&
FLOWERS**



I wish to make an offering toward flowers (or music) in the Church to the glory of God in memory of:

In Thanksgiving For:

Given By:

Please return this form and your donation to the Parish office by December 14th to be included in this year's Christmas services.



~ OUR PARISH IN PICTURES ~



We celebrated the 100th anniversary of McKenzie Hall, and Pam Cronkhite enjoyed a laugh with Canon Hunt during the May St. John's Guild meeting in the Great Hall.



Jim and Audra Noecker and Rick Bush were received into the Episcopal Church by the Bishop and Liz Kinsey renewed her Baptismal vows; and Pam Smith and Mary Kay Kunce helped kick off the Friday Friendship Lunch Program.



Bishop Gepert spoke to Doug Cronkhite about finances; Phyllis Palmer and Phyllis Brown helped serve up lunch in the Great Hall; and Kelly, Marilyn and Matt pop in to say a quick, "Hello!"
