



From the Rector

Katie and I met in college (during orientation, I think). We were fast friends, but we never dated until after graduation. Truth be told, we never dated at all. We spent Thanksgiving together and before I got home (I was in school in Arkansas, she in Virginia), we started talking about getting married sometime in the spring. But we couldn't wait, and we got married while we were together over Christmas break. We got married on the Feast of the Epiphany, January 6. Now, I wasn't expecting to get married over Christmas break. Fact is, I had a plane ticket to get home by self. But instead, I went home by a different route, with Katie and all of her stuff. I have been living for 26 years in the season after that particular epiphany. And my life has not been the same.

The word epiphany points to a manifestation, an appearance of the divine. The Feast of the Epiphany refers to the visitation of the Magi (also known as the "three kings," although the Bible never calls them kings or specifies that there were three of them). God's appearance in the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem is recognized, acknowledged by these Eastern philosophers and sages, their ancient wisdom giving way to God's new action in the world. Or as the magi

say of their encounter in T. S. Eliot's poem, "The Journey of the Magi:"

We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,
With an alien people clutching their gods.

To me, this is one of the most compelling, most intriguing parts of the whole story. After they encounter Jesus, the magi "left for their own country by another road" (Matthew 2.12). The story reminds us that when we have an encounter with the divine, it's hard to go back to the old ways of doing, the old ways of being.

In the incarnation, in that epiphany, God begins a new relationship with the world. As John puts it, "the word became flesh and lived among us." But things for us change as well. Maybe it's our perspective, our mindset. Maybe it's our expectations, our politics and relationships, or our relationship with the world. Maybe we find a new sense of purpose or new priorities, new passion, a well of love and compassion. Maybe we realize our need for repentance, but we also realize that there is forgiveness and mercy ready-to-

hand. Maybe we are given new eyes to see or ears to hear. Maybe we feel alive again for the first time in who knows how long. And so, we go home by a different road, with a different mindset, new eyes, perhaps, or new life.

In what remains of this season after the Epiphany, may you be open to encountering God. But be ready for a change. Be ready for a new perspective or new purpose, for a new sense of yourself or a new calling, for new life to spring up inside of you. Like the magi who encountered God in the face of the child of Bethlehem, be ready to go home by another road.

- Bradley Pace, bradleypace@stjohns-laf.org

The Journey of the Magi

A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey:
The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter.
And the camels galled, sore-footed, refractory,
Lying down in the melting snow.
There were times we regretted
The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces,
And the silken girls bringing sherbet.
Then the camel men cursing and grumbling
And running away, and wanting their liquor and
women,
And the night-fires going out, and the lack of
shelters,
And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly
And the villages dirty and charging high prices:
A hard time we had of it.
At the end we preferred to travel all night,
Sleeping in snatches,
With the voices singing in our ears, saying
That this was all folly.

Then at dawn we came down to a temperate valley,
Wet, below the snow line, smelling of vegetation;
With a running stream and a water mill beating the
darkness,

And three trees on the low sky,
And an old white horse galloped away in the
meadow.

Then we came to a tavern with vine-leaves over the
lintel,
Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of silver,
And feet kicking the empty wineskins,
But there was no information, and so we continued
And arrived at evening, not a moment too soon
Finding the place; it was (you may say) satisfactory.

All this was a long time ago, I remember,
And I would do it again, but set down
This set down
This: were we led all that way for
Birth or Death? There was a Birth, certainly,
We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and
death,
But had thought they were different; this Birth was
Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.
We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,
With an alien people clutching their gods.
I should be glad of another death.

*T. S. Eliot, "The Journey of the Magi." 1927. Poets.org.
Accessed on 12 January 2024.
<poets.org/poem/journey-magi>*

From the Curate

Catechism Series – Installment 7

The Catechism outlines the Old Covenant, the law given to God's people to establish their relationship with God, in its second section. After a robust exploration of the Ten Commandments, sin and redemption, and the second person of the Trinity, we now come to a discussion of the New Covenant. This is a new relationship with God given by Jesus Christ to his apostles and through them to us. By offering us this connection to God, Jesus promised to bring us into the kingdom of God and to give us life in all its fullness. As we follow Jesus' teaching and the prompting of the Holy Spirit, God will use us to manifest on the earth the kingdom we have been brought into through Christ. And as we follow Jesus and work to bring forth the kingdom of God, we will find that we experience life in greater abundance.

The fulfillment of the promises of citizenship in the kingdom of God and of full, abundant life (sometimes called eternal life) comes to us now in this life. But those promises will also be fulfilled in a new way in the life the faithful experience after death. We experience them now, but we will also experience them then when all things are made new, including us.

How do we get on board with Jesus' offer? Christ commanded us to believe in him and to keep his commandments. The belief required here is more than mere intellectual assent. It's more like ongoing trust in Jesus. When we say, "I believe in Jesus," we are saying that we trust in his goodness and put our hope in his promises. We proclaim our faith that by following his teaching, trying to emulate him, with God's help, and trusting in the power of his resurrection, we will experience the eternal life and connection to God he promises us.

If belief is the first part of accepting Jesus' offer of relationship, keeping what he commanded us is the second. He taught us that we are to love God with all our being and to love our neighbors as we love

From "An Outline of the Faith" also known as the Catechism The New Covenant

Q. What is the New Covenant?

A. The New Covenant is the new relationship with God given by Christ, the Messiah, to the apostles; and, through them, to all who believe in him.

Q. What did the Messiah promise in the New Covenant?

A. Christ promised to bring us into the kingdom of God and give life in all its fullness.

Q. What response did Christ require?

A. Christ commanded us to believe in him and to keep his commandments.

Q. What are the commandments taught by Christ?

A. Christ taught us the Summary of the Law and gave us the New Commandment.

Q. What is the Summary of the Law?

A. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

Q. What is the New Commandment?

A. The New Commandment is that we love one another as Christ loved us.

Q. Where may we find what Christians believe about Christ?

A. What Christians believe about Christ is found in the Scriptures and summed up in the creeds.

-The Book of Common Prayer, 850-1.

ourselves. Jesus said those two tasks pretty much sum up the scriptures. But then he added a new

Eucharist, he also commanded us to love one another as he loves us. That prompts us to ask an important the question: How does Christ love us?

Jesus loved his disciples unconditionally. He continued to love them despite their mistakes, their unbelief, and their outright betrayal. He loved them as a servant. On the night he gave the new commandment he modeled this by washing all their feet. He also loved them sacrificially. He took on a human body to refresh the relationship between God and humanity, and he laid down his human life to defeat sin and death and open the way of divine

commandment just before his arrest and crucifixion. On the night Jesus instituted the Holy connection for everyone. Jesus did all these things at a specific time and place for his disciples, and the reverberation of those actions continues today. He did those things for them and for us.

The New Covenant is brought about by Jesus Christ. It is centered on him, so what we believe about him is key. Where do we find what Christians believe about Jesus? We find that information in the Holy Scriptures and find it summarized in the creeds which are addressed in the next section of the Catechism.

– Jason Fortner, jason@stjohns-laf.org

The 2024 St. John's Annual Meeting will be Sunday, January 28

The St. John's Annual Meeting will be Sunday, Jan. 28, after the 10:15 a.m. service. There will be only one service that Sunday followed by a carry-in brunch. Please plan to attend and bring a dish to share. Sign-up sheets will be up in St. John's Common's. Please note: Annual reports are due by Wednesday, January 17. Reports should be sent to our Associate for Administration and Finance, Teresa Lohrman, at teresa@stjohns-laf.org. If you have questions, please call the office at 765.742.4079.



Welcome New Vestry Class

Welcome to the new vestry class of 2027: Rick Bowerman, Randy Brist, Maggie McClure, and Julie Peretin. The vestry also welcomes Mike Benner to serve a vacant one-year term. The Wardens, Clerk, and Finance Committee Chair will be elected at the vestry orientation retreat in February. – Bradley Pace, bradleypace@stjohns-laf.org

Support the Episcopal Campus Ministry at Purdue Volunteer for Sunday meals

The Purdue Campus Ministry is inviting St. John's folks to take help prepare dinner for our students on Sunday nights. The church can pay for the ingredients (save your receipts!). Hilary Cooke, the Episcopal Campus Minister at Purdue, can help navigate recipes to address dietary concerns. For more information, contact Hilary at hilary@goodshep.org or sign up at www.signupgenius.com/go/20F094AABAA22A5F49-47019083-esaspring#/



Mardi Gras Pancake Supper

Sunday, Feb. 11, from 5-7 p.m.

We will celebrate our Mardi Gras Pancake Supper with a live jazz band, a float parade, and loads and loads of PANCAKES! Tickets are \$5 apiece and \$13 for families of 3 or more. Kids under 5 eat free. For more information, contact the St. John's office at 765.742.4079. – *Bradley Pace, bradleypace@stjohns-laf.org*

Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, Feb. 14 at Noon, 5:30 p.m., and 7 p.m.

Ash Wednesday is Wednesday, February 14. We will have three services this year:

- 12 (noon) – Joint service with downtown churches. Location is TBD
- 5:30 p.m. service for children and youth focusing on the traditions and meaning of Ash Wednesday
- 7 p.m. Traditional liturgy with the St. John's choir

Each service will include the imposition of ashes and Holy Eucharist. Let us come together and begin a Holy Lent. – *Bradley Pace, bradleypace@stjohns-laf.org*



New Fire: An Ecological Reading of the Easter Vigil

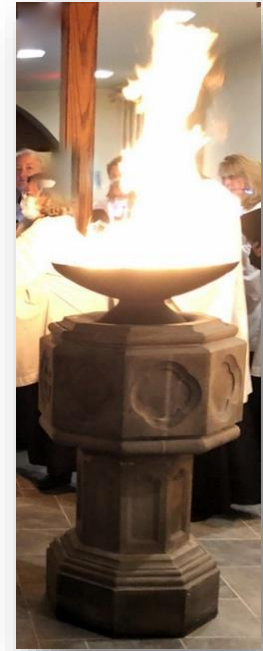
Beginning Feb. 18 after the 10:15 a.m. service

Theologically and sacramentally, baptism and Eucharist go hand in hand, and no other special liturgical celebration combines the two like the Great Vigil of Easter. This spectacular liturgy leads those who participate in it through the entirety of salvation history from creation to the exodus to Christ's death and the light of his resurrection. It is replete with deeply meaningful symbolism that engages all of one's senses. It also provides something unexpected: a unique opportunity to reflect on humanity's connection to and place in the created universe.

Over the course of four concise sessions, New Fire will explore the intersections of theology, liturgy, and ecology in the Easter Vigil during the weeks leading up to the service. The hope is that our conversation will help us experience the Vigil in a new and powerful way.

We will bring our own experiences to this discussion, and we will also employ the lenses of feminism and queer eco-spirituality as we seek to dive deeper into the meaning of this crucial Episcopal liturgy.

The class will meet in the church itself at St. John's from 11:30am to 12:30pm on February 18, February 25, March 3, and March 10. We will be engaging with all the liturgical elements of the Vigil, so there will be smells and there will be bells as well as bread, water, and wine. – *Jason Fortner, jason@stjohns-laf.org*



A Beautiful Way to Celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany

Because in the mystery of the Word made flesh, you have caused a new light to shine in our hearts, to give the knowledge of your glory in the face of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord....

Many thanks to everyone who helped St. John's celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany. Thanks to Amanda Yauney and Michael Bennett for their direction. Thanks to Pixie Sickafoose and Ezra Peretin in their roles as Mary and Joseph. Thanks to all the children who participated in the service and to their parents, grandparents, and guardians who supported them. Thanks to everyone who contributed to the festive reception afterwards. And thanks to those who came afterwards to help clean up and put away our Christmas decorations. Thank you for making the Christmas season and the Feast of the Epiphany joyous! –*Bradley Pace, bradleypace@stjohns-laf.org*



St. John's Financial Summary

December 2023

INCOME	Jan-Dec. 23	Budget	% of Budget
Operating Income	\$495,336.31	\$495,736.62	99.9%
Non-Operation Income	\$40,391.40	\$58,557.40	69.0%
Transfer Income	\$27,935.64	\$42,100.00	66.4
TOTAL INCOME	\$563,663.35	\$596,388.02	94.5%
EXPENSES			
Outreach	\$67,675.49	\$86,001.00	78.7%
Program	\$25,490.08	\$28,620.00	89.1%
Administration	\$4,820.81	\$4,450.00	108.3%
Personnel	\$331,144.05	\$342,185.51	96.8%
Office	\$29,002.74	\$28,912.00	100.3%
Property	\$116,709.37	\$106,219.51	109.9%
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$574,842.54	\$596,388.02	96.4%
Net Income (loss)	\$-11,179.19		

ST. JOHN'S LAFAYETTE

600 Ferry Street · Lafayette, IN 47901-1142
 765.742.4079 · www.stjohns-laf.org
 stjohns@stjohns-laf.org · @stjohnslaf

Parish Staff & Leadership

Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows, Bishop
Bradley Pace, Rector
Jason Fortner, Curate
Teresa Lohrman, Associate for Administration
 & Finance
Michael Bennett, Director of Music
Amanda Yauney, Director of Christian
 Education

St. John's is a parish of the Episcopal Church in
 the Diocese of Indianapolis.



Save-the-Date

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 Sunday, Jan. 28 after the 10:15 a.m. service
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- Ash Wednesday
 Wednesday, Feb. 14