



DECEMBER
HIGHLIGHTS

ADVENT AND
CHRISTMAS

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From the Pulpit Rev. Doug Neel

Dear friends in Christ,

Everything old is new again. A friend told me about an article by this name in the July issue of *Sojourners* magazine. Thanks to the internet, I was able to find and read the article. It addresses what I believe is one of the major issues facing Christianity in our country: the issue of religion versus spirituality. More often than not, people outside of the church describe themselves in this way: "I consider myself to be a spiritual person, I'm just not religious." Usually this means that their relationship with the Spirit through meditation, readings or some other means is personally fulfilling, but they experience no need for the institution of the church. I personally have a difficult time separating spirituality from the Body of Christ. In fact, my experience is that personal spiritual growth flows from the corporate life of the church. "Of course you believe that," others might say, "you are a priest, a representative of the institution." Which is true. But back to the article: what the author realized was that

everything old is new again. Spiritual practices as old as Christianity, and some of them even older, practices that were deeply embedded in the ancient Judaism inherited by Jesus are becoming *fashionable*. Many ancient practices fell out of favor during the reformation

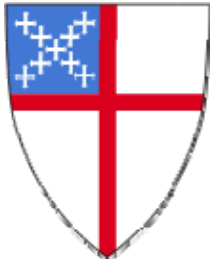


and became even less popular in face of 19th and 20th century rationalism. But the winds of change are blowing. Many churches are surprised to find spiritual practices that they rejected centuries ago are once again being embraced by many outside of the church. As an example, I was impressed to find that the local Unitarian Universalist church was sponsoring a workshop on the labyrinth. The labyrinth is a Medieval Catholic design that is used for meditation. Everything old is new again.

The article specifically talks about spiritual practices like meditation, fixed hours of personal prayer, fasting, pilgrimages, tithing (especially giving time and talent for community projects) and the practice of sabbath (a set time or day for rest and separation.) I remember a friend of mine in Dallas, the pastor of a Unity Church, describing a pilgrimage that members of his church were taking to place known for the presence of "Spirit." Remember *Canterbury Tales*, the medieval stories about a group going together on a pilgrimage to a "spiritual" place? Pilgrimage was an essential concept for ancient Hebrews. Everyone who could, joined the pilgrimage to Jerusalem for Passover. Scriptures tell us that Jesus was a frequent Passover pilgrim.

At our recent vestry retreat, we discussed not only ways that our parish family can grow in its spirituality, but this modern conflict between spirituality and religion and the phenomenon of old becoming new. By the way, the practice of retreat is

Continued on page 2 (Fr. Doug)



Our Ministry

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Mission Statement:

**St. Patrick's is God's House, open to all;
 a Community called to love and serve
 the Lord by God's grace with joy and
 gratitude.**

December Calendar of Events

Sundays	9 am Christian Education, 10 am Church Service
Wednesdays	11:30 am Healing Service, 12 noon Bible Study, 6-8 Advent class (thru Dec. 23)
Thursdays	2 pm Prayer quilters, 4 pm Choir practice
Fri. Dec. 4	Newcomers wine/cheese - Sullivan's
Sun. Dec. 6	2-3:30 pm ECW Christmas tea
Sat. Dec. 12	11 am ECW Christmas brunch
Sun. Dec. 13	3:30 pm Big Brothers Big Sisters concert
Wed. Dec. 16	4 pm DOK
Sat. Dec. 19	8:30 am Men's Fellowship breakfast meeting 10:30am Spiritus
Sun. Dec. 20	11:30 am Vestry meeting 5 pm Sunday Night Unplugged
Mon. Dec. 21	10 am - 6 pm Bell ringers at City Market
Thurs. Dec. 24	5 pm Christmas Eve pageant 8 pm Christmas Eve (incense)
Fri. Dec. 25	10 am Christmas Day service (Rite I)



Continued from page 1 (Fr. Doug)

another "old" practice that is "new again." But back to the vestry: I believe one of the things we realized is that these "new" practices craved by the non-church world are gifts that we have to offer, not only to our parish family, but to the wider community. Our spiritual tradition is a light that we should not hide under a bushel. In our efforts to *go deeper* in our faith, we must remember that the community around us is also craving to grow spiritually, regardless of whether they will ever desire to become Episcopalians.

Advent is a time to go deeper, a time for preparation and growth. In between shopping and Christmas parties, skiing and travel, remember this - everything old really is new again. Find and share our heritage.

Your Pagosa Pilgrim

Christmas Services

This year there will be two Christmas Eve services and one on Christmas Day. The 5:00 p.m. service on December 24 is directed especially to families with children and will include many of our favorite Christmas carols. The 8:00 p.m. service is a formal service with special music and with incense. Both of these are Rite II services. On December 25, there will be a Rite I service at 10:00 a.m. The church office will be closed on December 25.

Newcomer Wine and Cheese

On December 4th, St. Patrick's newcomer committee is hosting a wine and cheese party for visitors and new members of our parish. The reception will be from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00. p.m. The event will be at the home of Don and Teri Sullivan, 1464 S. Pagosa Boulevard.

Advent at St. Patrick's

Advent is the beginning of the New Year with the church calendar and a time of preparation for the Feast of the Incarnation, also known as Christmas. This is a good time to make "New Year Resolutions." St. Pat's is offering a number of ways for its members to participate in this season and to grow

Wednesday night class – Fr. Neel is offering a class on the history of the Anglican Church in England and in the United States. The class will be a mixture of lecture, video and group discussion.

Adult Sunday School – the Adult Sunday School class will be looking at the book, *What do you want for Christmas?* Dr. Moore, the author, invites us to explore the relationship between material gifts and the meaning of Christmas. Reading and discussing this book is an excellent way to prepare for Christmas.

Project Empty Stocking – Help provide Christmas gifts for many children in our county who would not receive a gift. St. Patrick's is joining with other groups to make "someone's Christmas brighter." Choose a red tag from our narthex bulletin board and purchase the gift described on the card. What a wonderful way to join St. Nicholas.

Decorating the Chrismon Tree – Different groups and individuals in the church are making Chrismon decorations for our new tree. Chrismons are ancient symbols of Christ that are used to decorate trees during Advent. Join by painting or needle pointing a decoration.

St. Patrick's High Tea – Every year, St. Patrick's hosts a high tea for the community. The tea provides members of our community with the opportunity to escape the bustle.

Ring the bell – On December 21, members of St. Patrick's will ring the bell for Salvation Army. This is always a fun way to interact with the community and raise money for ministry in our county.

Chrismon Tree



On Dec 6th, St. Patrick's Church will dedicate our beautiful new Chrismon tree and the ornaments that have been lovingly created. During Advent, we decorate an evergreen tree — the symbol of God's constancy — with Chrismons and white lights. Should you wish to create a Chrismon to add to our tree, you will find a brochure in the narthex with a selection of Chrismon symbols and suggestions for creating your contribution to St. Patrick's Chrismon tree. We anticipate new ornaments will be presented each year, thereby keeping our Chrismon Tree alive and growing with symbols of our faith and love for Christ.

Please extend your thanks to Wilma Espoy for her generous donation of the lighted Frontgate Christmas Tree.



Christmas Poinsettias

The Altar Guild will again this year decorate our church with beautiful red poinsettia plants. If you wish to provide one (or more) in memory of someone or in thanksgiving for something, please fill in the information below. If you have any questions, please call Fran Smith at 731-5577.

Your name and phone number:

Given in memory of:

Given in thanksgiving for:

Each plant will cost \$10. Please make checks payable to St. Patrick's and designate "Poinsettias." Place the information above and your check in an envelope and drop it by the church office or place it in the alms basin on Sunday. Thank you so much for your support in beautifying our altar.

Advent Class

Father Doug will be offering a special Advent class this year. The topic is the history of Anglicanism. Two weeks will focus on the Church of England and two weeks will look at the story of the Episcopal Church. The class will combine lecture, DVD videos and discussion. This should be an excellent class for everyone who needs to learn more about the history of our church – which is all of us. The class will meet from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. every Wednesday in Advent, beginning on December 2. Please call Fr. Doug if you have any questions.



Thanks to....

THANK YOU

Linda Altman for our annual Stewardship program, the Vestry for full attendance at the fall retreat...Fr. Doug for providing the Wednesday night Inquirers' classes....to Gina

Willis who hosted November's beautiful potluck dinner at Coyote Hill Lodge....to the Men's Fellowship for transporting and setting up the tables and chairs for the potluck....to Dick Boblit and Jim Dorian for snow shoveling duties on early mornings to clear the walk for Sunday services....thanks to Bruce Jones for doing such a thorough job of clearing our parking lot & drives in the

winter....to ECW ladies arranging Christmas decorations and ornaments....to Wilma Espoy for donating a beautiful tree to the church....to Jim Barker and Don Sullivan for picking up our newly donated tree....thanks to all our many volunteers and cooks for the Loaves and Fishes Thanksgiving dinner where they served 420 people this year....to everyone who filled a box for Operation Christmas Child.... and the church men who are doing remodeling and improvements in our kitchen and coffee area....to everyone who has shopped for or brought food for the Food Pantry,and to all who serve and volunteer in all of our church ministries.



Christmas Tea!

The annual Christmas tea will be held at the church on Sunday, December 6 from 2 - 3:30 p.m. It's time to think about what kind of finger food you can contribute for the Christmas tea. Anything is acceptable as long as it doesn't need to be kept warm or cold. Just prepare what you would like and bring it with you to church on Sunday, December 6th. Hosts Linda Warren and Jan Nanus will take care of setting it out on the serving table for the tea.

If you have some nice teacups and saucers or mugs, we'd love to dress up our tables with them! (Just remember to take them home with you after the tea!)

We hope to see you on December 6th enjoying some wonderful food with your friends! Tickets are available for \$5 at the church office.



ECW Christmas Luncheon

A holiday luncheon will be held on Saturday, December 12 at Muriel Cronkhite's home - 273 Walnut Place.

A Chinese auction will be held at 11 a.m. with lunch to follow at 12:30 p.m. Muriel will furnish the entrée and drinks. Please bring a dessert or salad to share.

Please bring a wrapped gift with a value of no more than \$10 for the Chinese auction. Also bring an unwrapped Christmas ornament to serve as a table decoration; you will take a different one home. The sign-up sheet will be available at church.

Mark Your Calendar April 23-24, 2010

The Women's Retreat

Friday & Saturday, April 23-24, 2010

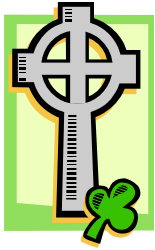
Wallace Bruce Cabin, Pagosa Springs, CO

Sponsored by ECW, St. Patrick's Episcopal Church

www.stpatrickspagosa.org



What's your vision? Jim Vierbicher, Jr. Warden



I don't mean "Is it 20/20?" I mean what is your vision for St Patrick's? What do you envision our activities to

be in 2010? What will our youth programs be? Programs for young families? What about the whole spectrum of Christian Education? The music program? What will be the scope of our Outreach/InReach programs? Who will be in church on Sunday morning? Perhaps as importantly, what will St Patrick's look like in two to three years, e.g. 2011, 2012?

A couple of years ago, when Father Bob told us he would be retiring in the summer of 2008, we engaged in a congregation-wide survey of just those same questions. In addition to talking about various issues and programs, we resoundingly said we wanted a full-time rector. Fr. Doug is the result of those efforts as we worked with the diocese to find not only a full-time rector, but also a rector who could fulfill most of those congregational aspirations.

By most all measures Fr Doug's first year plus has been a success; we have laid a solid foundation for 2010, 2011 and beyond. But there are many details to be filled in; much work to be done. Has our vision remained the same?

That's where you come in - all of you. As you know, this is the time of the year when we prepare the budget for the next year, seek nominations for the vestry, etc. But it also means this is when we look at programs for next year, and beyond. The vestry met in its fall retreat Saturday, November 7. Time was spent looking back at some of this year's programs, assessing their successes and shortcomings, looking ahead at possibilities for the coming year, and discussing what our primary focus ought to be for 2010.

If you had been at that retreat what would you have said? It's not too late! All of this planning is in its early stages. The Finance Committee doesn't meet to formally discuss the 2010 budget until November 17. The plan(s) won't be considered for approval and recommendation to the congregation until the December

vestry meeting. Fr. Doug, the wardens, and the vestry would like to hear your thoughts and ideas.

It's not just the program for 2010 and the budget that is under development. We will also elect new vestry members and a Jr. Warden at our annual meeting in January. As usual, we will elect three new members to the vestry. John Gwin and Bud Short are retiring and we need to fill Judy Cole's position. Also we need to elect Erica DeVoti to formally fill out Bryan Sickbert's term; she was appointed by the vestry on an interim basis earlier this year. Additionally, the Jr Warden's position is up for election each year. Who do you want to represent you? Who in your opinion will best implement the mission of St. Patrick's Church? Get your thoughts to the Nominating Committee, John Gwin, Bud Short, Becky or me and/or to Fr. Doug.

St Patrick's has been blessed; St. Patrick's will be a blessing!

- Jim Vierbicher, Jr. Warden

"We will also elect new vestry members and a Jr. Warden at our annual meeting in January.....Who do you want to represent you? Who in your opinion will best implement the mission of St. Patrick's Church?"

Treasurer's Report - October 2009

Operating Budget	September	Year-to-Date
Giving	\$13,595	\$121,836
Other Income	\$172	\$1,917
Total Income	\$13,767	\$123,753
Expenses	\$16,808	\$156,802
Gain/(Loss)	(\$3,041)	(\$33,049)



St. Patrick

Stewardship 2009

I would like to express my gratitude to all the folks who worked on this year's campaign.

What so impresses me about the St. Patrick's family is the willingness of our members to pitch in to help at a moment's notice. That is part of what makes ministry so rewarding and assures our Church of a great future in the community. So here goes:

Susan Santore for making the beautiful pledge basket and designing the Vestry Resolution document.

Teri Sullivan for updating the ministry list, and being a wonderful sounding board over many cups of coffee.

Loretta Barker - ditto on the ministry list, coffee and the loan of books on stewardship.

Joan Scott for updating the ministry list on the web site.

Cheryl Gwin and Sally Neel for helping with the pledge cards.

Sally Neel for the inspirational special music.

Dinah Rogers for exhibiting endless patience as I interrupted her at the

office on a constant basis, helping me run off hundreds of letters, fielding my numerous questions, and always offering suggestions and encouragement.

The Vestry - ditto on encouragement, advice and suggestions.

Fr. Doug for never being too busy to listen, acting as my editor in chief, sense of humor when I needed it most, a wealth of information and giving me the confidence to take this on.

So to everyone, get involved at St. Patrick's and don't be afraid that you will somehow have to "go it alone." The help is always there and the experience of working together simply priceless.

A final note: if you haven't yet returned a pledge card, think about doing so at this time. It is not too late to help with the 100% participation goal!

A blessed Holiday Season to everyone,

Linda Altman Stewardship Chair

Recycling - Inconvenient Christianity



When I lived in Ohio we were provided a bin for our recyclables picked up by the city each week. In Pagosa we take them to the transfer station ourselves. How

inconvenient! My guess is that God could care less that I'm inconvenienced. Stewardship of God's creation is central to our Christian vocation. **PAGOSA DOES RECYCLE**, albeit in an unreliable and inconvenient way, **THANKS BE TO GOD!** St. Patrick's recycles, **THANKS BE TO GOD!**

Like most things at our church, recycling happens because of volunteers. I am the recycling volunteer and, inconveniently, I pick up recyclable church waste and take it to the transfer station on a regular basis. I ask each of you to embrace the inconvenience of our Christian faith and take your recyclable waste to the Pagosa drop off point at the transfer station on Trujillo Rd. (open 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM Tues – Sat). If not, add the failure to do so to your confession of "things left undone." St. Patrick's is not a recycling drop-off point!

Bryan Sickbert

Annual Mammogram Trip - Joan Scott



Boob Bus

It's time to start planning for our 5th annual Pagosa Girls Santa Fe Mammogram trip, also known as the "Boob Bus." Our next trip will be February 15 to 17, 2010, and we hope you can join us!

Once again, our hotel reservations are at the Inn on the Alameda where you may stay one or both nights. Each room includes 2 queen beds at our special group rate of \$100 plus tax per night and includes a wine & cheese reception from 4 to 5 pm and buffet breakfast from 7 to 11 am. Rooms may be shared by 2 to 4 ladies (there is an additional charge for more than 2 per room) and the Inn will arrange to split each room's bill between the occupants.

On Monday, Feb. 15th after the hotel's happy hour we will continue the fun in a private suite with a pajama / pizza party (bring your own beverage.) On Tuesday, Feb. 16th our group dinner will be at 6:30 pm at Mexican restaurant "Mucho Gusto" next to the hotel. The restaurant will provide separate checks that include a gratuity.

If you are interested in going on the Boob Bus, it is now time to call for your mammogram appointment and plan who you are going to room and ride with. If you are not going or are making alternate arrangements please let us know so we can remove your name from our list.

Nancy Crouse has all the information on mammograms and has sent an email with details; please call her at 264-9355 or email wcrouse@centurytel.net if you have questions or did not receive her email. I take care of hotel & dinner reservations; if you have questions call me at 731-1727 (I will be away Dec. 3 to 27) and email your reservation requests to jscott77@centurytel.net by January 5, 2010. I'll send another email in January with instructions about providing your credit card information to the hotel.



- Food
- Fellowship
- Community Outreach

Want to get in touch with your spirituality while gathering with friends and community? Join us.....



Housekeeping Items

Potluck Dinner

There will be no potluck dinner in December due to the holidays.

Food Pantry

Our pantry has helped more than twice as many people as last year. Some weeks, the food literally flies off the shelves. Our food needs fluctuate each week. Most recently, we are in need of canned soup, jars of jelly, and canned fruit. Please try to bring a can or two to church every Sunday in Advent.

Art and Photography Show

There will be an Art and Photography Show in the church library either the end of February or the beginning of March. The idea is to have it along with a Sunday Night Unplugged, so there is still some planning to do. However, in the meantime I hope you all are thinking about what you would like to show. This is not a juried show, so there is no worry about being judged. It is just to share our expression of the beauty all around us. If you have any questions please contact me by email until the 5th of December. Lynne McCrudden

pagosagirl@yahoo.com

Directory Updates

Pick up your copy of the new directory published November 2009.

Late corrections (please note these in your new directory):

Bill & Sue Gottschalk - all stays same, but DELETE their Texas address.

Prueter, Herb and Mary Ella - ADD: 1332 E. Orangewood Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85020 - 602-331-7328

Shamrock Deadline

The deadline for the December issue of the *Shamrock* is Sunday, December 27. Please give your articles to Dinah, fax to 731-5804, or email to: pohlyrobert@msn.com

Church Bulletin Bloopers

- Our youth basketball team is back in action Wednesday at 8 PM in the recreation hall. Come out and watch us kill Christ the King.
- Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Don't forget your husbands.
- The peacemaking meeting scheduled for today has been cancelled due to a conflict.
- The Lutheran men's group will meet at 6 pm. Steak, mashed potatoes, green beans, bread, and dessert will be served for a nominal fee.
- Ladies Bible Study will be held Thursday morning at 10. All ladies are invited to lunch in the Fellowship Hall after the B.S. is done.
- This afternoon, there will be a meeting in the south and north ends of the church. Children will be baptized at both ends.
- Tuesday at 4:00 pm there will be an ice cream social. All ladies giving milk will please come early.
- The pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday.

November Worship Schedule - 10:00 am

December 6 - 2nd Sunday of Advent

Canticle 4 or 16; Baruch 5:1-9 or Malachi 3:1-4; Philippians 1:3-11; Luke 3:1-6

LectorJim Dorian
 ChaliceJan Nanus & Don McLeod
 UshersNancy & Bill Crouse
 GreetersBecky Dorian
 Coffee Hosts.....

December 13 - 3rd Sunday of Advent

Canticle 9; Zephaniah 3:14-20; Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18

LectorDon McLeod
 ChaliceTom Thorpe & Linda Warren
 Ushers.....Jim & Becky Dorian
 Greeters.....Charlotte Jones
 Coffee hosts

December 20 - 4th Sunday of Advent

Canticle 3 or 15 or Psalm 80:1-7; Micah 5:2-5A; Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-45 (46-55)

LectorBud Short
 ChaliceCharlene Short & Loretta Barker
 UshersDon McLeod & Ken Jones
 GreetersMeg Boblit
 Coffee Hosts.....

December 24 - Christmas Eve, the Nativity of our Lord

Jesus Christ I: Psalm 96; Isaiah 9:2-7; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14 (15-20). II: Psalm 97; Isaiah 62:6-12; Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:(1-7), 8-20. or, III: Psalm 98; Isaiah 52:7-10; Hebrews 1:1-4 (5-12); John 1:1-14

Lector 5 pm Sabra Miller, 8 pm Sally High
 Chalice-5 pm Dick & Meg Boblit, 8 pm Ken & Charlotte Jones
 Ushers..... Bud & Charlene Short
 Greeters.....
 Coffee Hosts.....*

December 25 - Christmas, the Nativity of our Lord

Jesus Christ I: Psalm 96; Isaiah 9:2-7; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14 (15-20). II: Psalm 97; Isaiah 62:6-12; Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:(1-7), 8-20. or, III: Psalm 98; Isaiah 52:7-10; Hebrews 1:1-4 (5-12); John 1:1-14

LectorHank Williams
 ChaliceRon Jyleen & Charlene Short
 UshersDick & Meg Boblit
 Greeters
 Coffee Hosts.....*

December 27 - 1st Sunday after Christmas

Psalm 132:1-13, (14-19) and 2 Samuel 23:1-7 or Psalm 93 and Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14; Revelation 1:4B-8; John 18:33-37

LectorMichael McCrudden
 ChaliceBill Crouse & Jan Nanus
 Ushers.....Ken Rogers & Bud Short
 Greeters.....Linda Altman
 Coffee Hosts.....*

* Please see the sign up sheets in the narthex. We need coffee hosts, so please sign up for a Sunday that you could provide a simple coffee hour by making coffee and bringing some cookies.

December Celebrations

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 Ron Jyleen | 18 Coleman Smith |
| 2 Sharon Vierbucher | 19 Daisy Jones |
| 3 Andrew Jones | Barbara Ward |
| 5 Alice Robinson | Ben & Judy Collins |
| 7 Wes & Marcie Lewis | 21 Bob & Topsy Woodson |
| 8 Rada Neal | 22 Don & Teri Sullivan |
| 9 Don McLeod | 24 Bob & Penny Searles |
| 11 Julie Beecherl | 26 Bonnie Brooks |
| Carol Knapp | 29 Duane & Brenda Winkler |
| 12 Margaret Page | 30 Robert Neel |
| 13 Rudy Sapper | Henry & Mary Beckman |
| 14 Madison Rockett | 31 Becky Dorian |
| 15 Kylie Corcoran | Carolyn Shipman |
| 17 Sue Cowdery | |

