

NEWSLETTER



Episcopal Parish of Ames

August 2017

What good is going to church? A personal view

Sometimes I talk to people who say that they don't come to church often because it's not very exciting, or they have other things to do, or their kids feel bored. And they are right. Like work, or class, or investing, or nearly anything else in life, most days in church are quite average, and nothing terribly exciting happens. Sermons sometimes hit a chord for me, but most times they provoke analysis of the language, or disagreements with the way things are explained, or critiques of the delivery. (After many years of practice, I'm good at all these reactions.) The way that the service is run is rarely novel in the church we attend (a good thing, actually), so much is simply the same from week to week. So why go? Why not be like those people who come for Christmas and Easter only, but not week after week?

First, I go because I believe what I say in the creed, the prayers, the readings, and the hymns (at least most of the hymns). So church is a place to nourish myself spiritually. Like physical nourishment, spiritual nourishment doesn't always have to involve eating at fancy restaurants or having the best meals. Most days I simply need food. Spiritual nourishment can come through the readings, the music and singing, the confession and the wine and bread, and sometimes even the sermon. And sometimes I am nourished without realizing it. But there is another more important source of nourishment: the people.

As I look around the congregation, I realize that church is the one place where I get to know other people of all types, and I learn about the bravery with which so, so many of them face life. The vigorous mothers of teenaged children who were diagnosed with cancer and spent months in treatment, not always successfully. Another who got cancer being treated for another disease, and beat the cancer only to see it come back. The woman who died of ALS, and her family who miss her. The man who has enriched my life as his own is approaching its end. The man who lost his job in his mid 50s and bravely seeks out new work that matches his very substantial skills. The high-schooler who, when I put my money in a special basket for my birthday, watched and figured out how old I was. And told me. In front of the congregation.

The kindergartener who reads aloud in front of the congregation, one word at a time, then beams. Retired professors who give of their time to tutor students 60 years younger. The amazing older parishioners who struggle with health issues, yet always show up, and always have a kind word. The Trump supporters who nonetheless treat other people fairly, challenging my own biases. Those who make sure that elderly parishioners have a ride home or someone to sit with. Very ordinary LGBT parishioners who teach me tons about who I am and who they are, and that we are not very different. The college students who sing in the choir, and the one who exuberantly comes down to greet people during the passing of the peace. Kids I've taught in Sunday school, growing from month to month, and becoming amazing teenagers and young adults. Others who struggle. And most show up week after

week, even in the summer when they probably could sleep in. We all are a source of nourishment for each other, individually and as a group.

And this makes me realize that nowhere else in my life do I find such a varied cross-section of people, who by their presence and their courage teach me about how to live life. They may ask questions about the fairness of life, but they largely live a life of faith that God has not given them more than they can handle. They don't necessarily care about my job or the things that drive me most of the week, but they care about me and my family and how we're doing. And with most of them, I share faith, and doubts, and a place to meet each week. This is why I continue to go, as weeks blend into months and advent into the long growing time of the summer and fall. The community we share is utterly ordinary in one way, so ordinary that it sometimes seems expendable. But perhaps that is what this community is supposed to be. It's what the early Christian church was, with slaves and free, poor and rich, Jew and Gentile, and at its best, this community still is what binds me together with others.

Faithfully,
John Levis

EPISCOPAL PARISH OF AMES

Parish Office

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Clergy

The Reverend Canon Alexander A. Aiton, Jr.,
Rector
The Reverend Donald R. Payer, Deacon
Emeritus

Parish Assistants

Jeannie Garcia, Secretary
David Moore, Chaplain
Dr. Miriam Zach, Music Director/Organist
Amy Mellies, Director of Christian Formation
Wendy Ware, Organist
Jane Galyon, Newsletter Editor

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Vestry, 2017

Senior Warden: George Smith
Junior Warden: Bruce Bjorklund
Treasurer: Scott Saienga
Clerk: Deb Fisher
Nicola Bowler Phyllis Heffron
Michael Howell Maddy Losby
Doug McCay Dorothy Yoerger

Newsletter, August 2017, Vol 23, Num 7

This publication, Newsletter, is published monthly except July by the Episcopal Parish of Ames, a non-profit organization, 2338 Lincoln Way, Ames, Iowa 50014. Comments or inquiries may be sent to the church office. The **deadline for the next Newsletter is Monday, August 28.** Submit articles to Jeannie at St. John's or via email to church@stjohns-ames.org and jgalyon@iastate.edu

August Coffee Hour

August 6

8 & 10 a.m. VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

August 13

8 & 10 a.m. VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

August 20

8 & 10 a.m. VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

August 27

8 & 10 a.m. VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

August Lectionary

August 6

The First Lesson: Exodus 34:29-35
The Psalm: Psalm 99:5-9
The Second Lesson: 2 Peter 1:13-21
The Gospel: Luke 9:28-36

August 13

The First Lesson: Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28
The Psalm: Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22, 45b
The Second Lesson: Romans 10:5-15
The Gospel: Matthew 14:22-33

August 20

The First Lesson: Genesis 45:1-15
The Psalm: Psalm 133
The Second Lesson: Romans 11:1-2a-29-32
The Gospel: Matthew 15:21-28

August 27

The First Lesson: Exodus 1:8-2:10
The Psalm: Psalm 124
The Second Lesson: Romans 12:1-8
The Gospel: Matthew 16:13-20

Save the Date – Revival 2017

St. John's by the Campus, Friday, September 15, 2017, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Bishop Scarfe has invited all parishes in the State of Iowa to participate in a renewal of our baptismal vows. On Friday September 15 we will gather at 7 p.m. for an opportunity to reawaken and rediscover God's Holy Spirit at work among us. It's an invitation to rekindle and recharge your faith and ministry and to share in Christ's abundant joy and strength. More

information about Revival 2107 is located on the [Diocesan Website](#).

To prepare, we are asked to join in daily prayer for 40 days before and 10 days after the event. The prayers that we will share together are located online at [40 days of Prayer](#) and printed copies will be available at church. We begin our 40 days of prayer on Sunday August 6, 2017.

We are still in the planning stages of the St. John's Revival. If you would like to help, please contact Ed Gillott (edg813@gmail.com), Nicola Bowler (nbowler@ses.cdsp.edu), or Jeannie Garcia in the parish office (515-292-6655 or jeannie@stjohns-ames.org). We know there will be wonderful music, warm fellowship, and a variety of prayer stations. Please join us!

Sanctuary Candle

The Sanctuary Candle burns in remembrance of memorials or celebrations. **The following dates are open:** Sept. 3; and Oct. 22.

New Rector of St. John's –

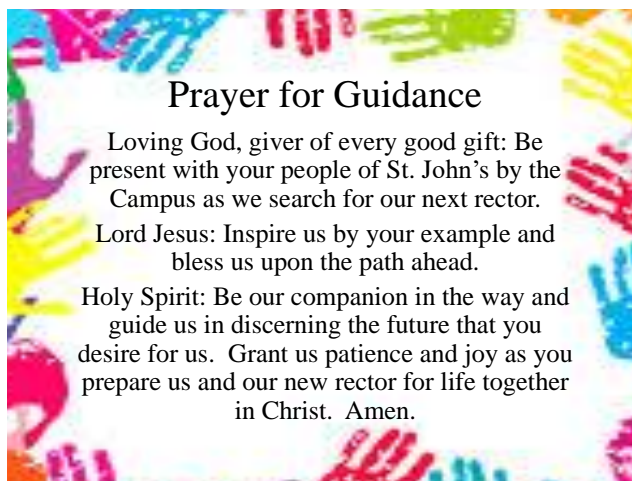
Search Process update

The Search Committee met on July 20 to discuss a timeline for the search process of finding a successor for Father Al. We are looking forward to providing opportunities in September and October to share together what we appreciate about St. John's by the Campus and what we hope for the future. Meanwhile we invite you to approach any of us with your questions or concerns, or write a note for our consideration and put it in the 'Ideas' box in the parish hall.

As an important part of our preparation for a new rector, we invite you to pray with us as part of your personal prayer life. We invite you to use the following prayer.

Faithfully,

Nicola Bowler (Vestry and Search Committee Chair), Jim Fisher, Bill Gutowski, Michael Howell (Vestry), Greta Muller Levis, Chris Moon, Wendy Nutini, Ian Warren



Prayer for Guidance

Loving God, giver of every good gift: Be present with your people of St. John's by the Campus as we search for our next rector.

Lord Jesus: Inspire us by your example and bless us upon the path ahead.

Holy Spirit: Be our companion in the way and guide us in discerning the future that you desire for us. Grant us patience and joy as you prepare us and our new rector for life together in Christ. Amen.

Emergency Residence Project

Thank you to all who have signed up for an evening meal at the Emergency Residence Project shelter this year. **We have one meal left that we a commitment for: Wednesday, November 8.** Contact person is Dorothy Yoerger (232-4384) for scheduling and questions.

Monday Daisies

We need volunteers to take flowers to shut ins or to people who are in need of encouragement. There are several dates open in August.

Readers for the 10 a.m. Service

We need volunteers to sign up to read for the service. A signup sheet is in the Parish Hall.

Welcome to St. John's and the exciting adventure that is parking in Campustown

Greetings to all new students and visitors! We are delighted to have you with us at St. John's and want to be sure you have a great experience while attending our services and programs. Please take a minute to read the following information on our how the parking lot works.

On Sunday morning, all parking spaces designated by the white lines are available to those attending services. **Be careful not to park in the apartment building parking spaces designated by the yellow lines or you will be towed.** If the parking area is full, public parking is available along Chamberlain Ave. or in the City parking lot to our southeast. It is not necessary to feed the meter on Sundays.

All leased parking space are designated with the letter E and are numbered 1 to 20; several slots are still available for lease. Vehicles who have leased spaces display a numbered blue and white parking decal in the rear window. The terms of the lease state that the cars must be out of the parking lot early Sunday morning to make room for those attending our Sunday Services.

If you are parking at St. John's for activities during the week, **it is important register your vehicle with Jeannie in the church office (515-292-6655) and place the parking decal in driver side rear window.** Please use the parking spaces in the two center rows of spaces on

Monday through Saturday to avoid taking someone's leased spot.



Please help us spread the word. We do not want anyone using our building to be towed and then have to deal with the inconvenience of retrieving their vehicle and paying towing company fees that can exceed \$250. Thank you!

St. John's Work Days

We had two outside work days this summer, one on June 10 and one on July 8. Thanks to all who helped care for the landscaped areas around the perimeter. On Wednesday, June 28 from 8:30 to 11 a.m., 10 4H youth participating in the annual statewide conference were at St. John's as a community service project. Amy Mellies and Ed Gillott were there to help direct their efforts, and it was a pleasure to work with these young people. The outside crew weeded and trimmed shrubs around the perimeter, while another crew inside painted over a wall on the garden level.

Next up - More landscaping and shrub trimming. Please join us for one of our next work dates:

- Saturday August 12- 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. - Work day & spruce up before ISU classes start.
- Student move in weekend - August 19 and 20 - It's a nice little fundraising opportunity for youth or college group to raise money 'leasing' parking spaces for students moving back in, with a little help from Ed & Diane Gillott. Anyone, anyone?
- Saturday, September 16 - 8 am to 10 am - Work day

Food at First

Thanks to everyone who helped with the Food at First meals this summer! On June 24 Joanna smoked 40 pounds of beef brisket and created a tasty cream sauce to go with the lobster ravioli.

Roger whipped up some tasty baked beans, and John took the lead on the time consuming task of baking the raviolis. The meal prep really is a team effort, and everyone did a great job! The crew included Diane Gillott, Joanna Muggli, Helen McRoberts, John and Greta Muller Levis, Roger Balmer, Kathy Johnston, Daniel Appau, Laurie Bryant and our new friend Sonjia. That may sound like a lot of people, but we kept everyone busy and worked until 1:45 mopping the dining room and kitchen floor.

On July 22, Michael Howell was head chef. I do not have a report on who worked and how many were served. We sounded the call for volunteers on the Monday before, and had a terrific response. Thanks to all who helped! We are always looking for volunteers in the summer months. Please look ahead and sign up on the list in the parish hall if you are available on August 26.

Our next dates will be August 26, September 23, October 28. Please check your calendars and consider bringing the family to help serve a meal at the First Christian Church! We begin meal prep at 10 a.m. and serve the meal from 11:45 to 12:15. We usually finish cleanup by 2 p.m. There is a volunteer sign-up sheet in the Parish Hall.

In addition to the meals served on the 4th Saturday by St. John's, there are many opportunities to volunteer with the meal program, the free market and the garden plot online at [Food at First](#).

St. John's Prayerground

Creating a Prayerground, a space where children feel welcome in the sanctuary, is something that I have been thinking about for a while now. As a mother of young children, I would like them to attend more of the Sunday services without constantly worrying if my children are behaving or annoying anyone. I also want them to feel more comfortable in the service and feel like they are a part of the service. I found the following article on Prayergrounds in a Facebook forum that I belong

to: <http://www.traci-smith.com/church-pray-grounds-eight-stories-and-inspiring-examples-kidmin/>

It is filled with great ideas as well as information from different churches throughout the US who have tried this. It talks about what worked and what didn't. I have taken a culmination of their ideas and would like to implement them at St. John's, with the Vestry's approval. My thoughts are to create a space up front to the left of the altar, where the harpsichord is. I would like to put a rug down with a couple of small tables and chairs. I would like to provide a bookshelf with books, soft toys and activities for the children to do. I will have activity sheets available that correspond with the readings each week. The whole idea is to create a space where children and families feel welcome and wanted. My hope is that if we start showing them when they are young that they are a part of this community that it will translate into their middle school and high school years as well. If you have any questions, suggestions or donations please get in touch with me. Thank you for your support,

Amy

Metro Chapter Events

St. John's is one of ten Episcopal Churches in the Metro Chapter of the Episcopal Diocese of Iowa. There are several opportunities before convention to get to know our neighbors better.

- August 12, 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Breaking Bread Revival @ Iowa State Fair - Polk County Farm Bureau Shelter House (located behind Pioneer Pavilion). More information is available on the Diocesan Web site. [Breaking Bread Revival](#)
- August 19, 2017 from 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. Metro Chapter Fall meeting - St. Paul's Cathedral Church, Des Moines. Anyone who plans to attend convention should try to attend this meeting. We will review the proposed 2017 budget and discuss other issues of concern in preparation for the convention.
- September 1-3 - Happening #43, Trinity Church, Iowa City

- September 15 - Revival 2017 - St. John's by the Campus, Ames
- October 27 - 28, 2017 - Diocesan Convention in Des Moines.

More information is available on the [Diocesan Website](#), and the Metro Chapter Facebook page. Ed Gillott, Metro Chapter representative to the Diocesan Board of Directors.

Christian Formation Announcements: Sunday School Classes:

All Sunday school classes will return on September 10 at 9 a.m. Godly Play is for children 4 years old to 4th grade. #JesusSquad is for youth 5th - 8th grade. The Den is for youth 9th - 12th grade. Calendars of Sunday school dates will be available in the Parish Hall in August.

Group Me

Click on the following link to join GroupMe for weekly texts regarding Sunday school classes and EYC.

https://groupme.com/join_group/23501655/TCHc8i

Parent/Youth Meeting

I would like to meet with the parents and youth, 5th - 12th grade on August 13 at 9:30 a.m. in room 106. I would like to discuss the expectations for Sunday school and youth group from the parent and youth points of view.

Blessing of the Backpacks

Please bring your backpacks on August 13 for the Blessing of the Backpacks at the 10 a.m. service. We will offer a prayer for the coming school year and have some special gifts to get the school year started off right.

Happening #43, Trinity, Iowa City, September 2-4

What is Happening?

Happening weekends offer an opportunity for young Christians in grades 9-12 to retreat from their hectic worlds to consider some of the important relationships in their lives—with parents, with siblings, with peers, with God.

The program begins Saturday at 1p.m. and ends Monday at about 1 p.m. The Happening weekend proceeds in a building block fashion, so participants must plan to attend the entire weekend.

A pair of youth leaders, called co-rectors, lead the entire weekend. These high school-aged young people guide the journey. The youth team is assisted by a spiritual director (clergy) and other adult leaders. In addition to songs and games, youth leaders present short talks on topics such as reality, Jesus Christ, God's love, and prayer. Small groups provide the opportunity to learn and share together.

Staff register by August 12, and participants by August 23. Cost is \$30 and scholarships are available. You can register online at: <http://iowaepiscopal.org/Ministries/children-youth.html>

Mark Your Calendar for these Upcoming Youth Events:

- August 13 - Parent/Youth meeting at 9:30 a.m.
- Blessing of the Backpacks 10 a.m. service
- August 19 - Happening Staff retreat
- September - 2 - 4 - Happening #43 at Trinity Iowa City
- September 10 - Sunday school classes resume at 9 a.m.
- September 30 - NB staff retreat
- October 13 - New Beginnings #19 at Trinity Iowa City

May Vestry Minutes

St. John's Episcopal Parish of Ames, Meeting Minutes

Clergy Present: Father Al Aiton, Rector
Vestry Members Present: George Smith, Michael Howell, Doug McCay, Phyllis Heffron, Bruce Bjorklund, Dorothy Yoerger, Nicola Bowler, Deb Fisher.

Vestry Members Absent: Maddy Losby

Others Present: Amy Mellies

Minutes: The minutes from the April meeting were distributed prior to the meeting and there were no corrections.

Christian Formation/Youth: Classes are over for the school year and will resume in the fall. EYC will gather over the summer at an Emergency Residence Project dinner in June, a Campustown pickup in July, and participation in Food at First in August. In April, two youth attended Happening, and in July we will have two youth attending an Episcopal Youth Event.

Treasurer's Report: The financial reports were approved as presented. It was noted that the cost for the door opener came in less than was expected. The project was completed quickly and there have been many positive comments. There was discussion about dissatisfaction with the cleaning service. Bruce Bjorklund will get a copy of the list of cleaning expectations and meet with the cleaning company.

Permission for Alcohol: The Music Teachers Association will meet June 5 & 6, and have requested permission to serve alcohol at their event.

Announcements: Reminder that the Bishop's revival has been moved to September 15. The Bishop's annual visit will be December 17.

Prayerful Considerations: A discussion of Amy's proposal for a "prayer ground" was held. A "prayer ground" is a concept in churches that allows for an area in the sanctuary where children can spend time during the service. The idea is to make an area where they can quietly participate in the service on a child's level and feel comfortable. The proposal is for an area for ages 0-10 years of age, with table and chairs, bookshelves, and other objects to meet this objective. Amy will summarize the plan in an article for the newsletter and bulletin, as well as speak about it throughout the summer. This will serve to introduce the concept and solicit comments.

Consent area of the agenda was approved after a motion for approval by Dorothy Yoerger, and seconded by George Smith.

Maintenance Issues and Parking: There is nothing new to report on conversations with Gilbane. Estimates are being gathered to replace the carpet.

Search: Fr. Al excused himself from the meeting prior to discussion on the search for a new Rector. The search committee has been named. The following parishioners have agreed to serve:

Nicola Bowler, Greta Muller Levis, Wendy Nutini, Chris Moon, Jim Fisher, Ian Warren, Bill Gutowski, Michael Howell.

The next step is for the committee to set up a meeting with Steve Godfrey. Michael Howell will contact him and get a meeting scheduled.

Closing Prayer: Michael Howell gave a closing prayer, and the meeting adjourned

Submitted by: Deb Fisher, Clerk of the Vestry

August Events

August 7 (Monday) 7:30 p.m.

Search Committee meeting

August 10 (Thursday) 7:00 p.m.

Deepening Faith

August 13 (Sunday) 9:30 a.m.

Parent/Youth Meeting

Blessing of the Backpacks 10:00 a.m. service

August 15 (Tuesday) 7:00 p.m.

Vestry Meeting

August 19 (Saturday)

Happening Staff Retreat

August 23 (Wednesday) 6:00 p.m.

Resuming Choir Practice

August 24 (Thursday) 7:00 p.m.

Deepening Faith

August 27 (Sunday) 10:00 a.m.

Choir sings