

NEWSLETTER



Episcopal Parish of Ames

May 2017

How Do You Know that God Exists?

I had two experiences this past week that relate to this question. On Saturday I talked with a young man who was really questioning the existence of God. He sought me out because of the ending of a relationship, but really was struggling with the age-old question of does God exist? I do not think that anything I said resolved this matter for him, though we did have a good at length conversation.

On Sunday evening I drove down to the cabin in Missouri to turn the heat off, returning to Ames on Monday. Early Monday morning after being awakened by the chatter of birds, Jade and I went for a walk in the woods. I noticed for the first time an abundance of small, delicate light purple flowers growing wild throughout the woods. Now I never took a botany course in college so I have no idea what these beautiful wild flowers are, but I was struck and moved by their great beauty and the very fact that they grew for such a short time in the midst of the tall, shady trees. They were not planted by any earthly person.

It reminded me of a book I had just finished reading about Katharine Hepburn. Her friend of several decades wrote the book not as a critical biography, but as a way of preserving some of the reflections that the actress had on so many issues. Ms. Hepburn was definitely not a person one would consider to be an active participant in any faith community. One day however walking near her Connecticut summer home she stopped and uprooted a stem of Queen Anne's lace. She turned it over and showed her friend the intricate structure of small little stems that hold individual flowers, making the topside of the plant seem like a sturdy single blossom. She made the comment to her friend that she could not understand why people did not believe in God, in a superior being that could create such a remarkable plant.

Nature so often presents us with the opportunity to reflect on the creation we live in and the creator behind this marvelous world. Whenever I visit the cabin I always marvel at the beauty that I experience. I usually return home with gratitude for the refreshing bit of nature that encourages me to look at our local natural beauty like the flowering trees that presently are in bloom all over Ames.

I think I definitely agree with Ms. Hepburn that one would have to be an idiot to think all this just happened by chance. I urge you to see God in the world around us, the cycles of nature, and the incredible smell of the rich Iowa fields as they are planted this spring. All are pretty convincing.

Faithfully,

EPISCOPAL PARISH OF AMES

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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
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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, May 2017, Vol 23, Num 5

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 Thursday, May 25.** Submit articles to Jeannie at St. John's or via email to church@stjohns-ames.org and jgalyon@iastate.edu

May Coffee Hour

May 7
8 & 10 a.m. VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
May 14
8 & 10 a.m. VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
May 21
8 & 10 a.m. VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
May 28
8 & 10 a.m. VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

May Lectionary

May 7
The First Lesson: Acts 2:42-47
The Psalm: Psalm 23
The Second Lesson: 1 Peter 2:19-25
The Gospel: John 10:1-10
May 14
The First Lesson: Acts 7:55-60
The Psalm: Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16
The Second Lesson: 1 Peter 2:2-10
The Gospel: John 14:1-14
May 21
The First Lesson: Acts 17:22-31
The Psalm: Psalm 66:7-18
The Second Lesson: 1 Peter 3:13-22
The Gospel: John 14:15-21
May 28
The First Lesson: Acts 1:6-14
The Psalm: Psalm 68:1-10, 33-36
The Second Lesson: 1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11
The Gospel: John 17:1-11

Opportunity for Healing Prayer

Prayer for healing **following the 10 a.m. Eucharist on May 7.** After the postlude, we invite those who wish to participate to gather near the altar rail for a short litany, followed by prayer and the laying on of hands by the rector. Following the example set by our Bishop and former Bishops, we invite you to request prayer not only for yourself but also for others not present that you would like to represent.

Vestry Special Offering Sunday

The Vestry decided that the first Sunday of every month there will be an offering taken for a local charity. **On May 7 the offering will be for Habitat.**

Sanctuary Candle

The Sanctuary Candle burns in remembrance of memorials or celebrations. **The following dates are open:** July 2, 9, 16; Aug. 20; Sept. 3; and Oct. 22.

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 two meals that are needed to complete the 2017 year commitment: Wednesday, September 13 and 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 that are open May 21, 28; June 4, 18, 25; all of July and August.**

Music

If you have any hymns that you would like to sing, please sign up in the Parish Hall. Dr. Miriam Zach would like to see what you are all interested in singing.

Zach honored with Charles and Mary Sukup Endowed Artist Award in Organ

Dr. Miriam Zach, adjunct assistant professor of music and theatre, is the inaugural recipient of the Charles and Mary Sukup Endowed Artist in Organ at Iowa State University. She was honored at a medallion ceremony held Wednesday, April 5 at the Martha-Ellen Tye Recital Hall in Music Hall.

The award provides a named faculty position for a world-class organ musician and instructor in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Charles Sukup ('76, '82 M.S. agricultural engineering) is president of Sukup Manufacturing Co., the world's largest family-owned grain handling and storage equipment manufacturer, and an ISU Foundation governor. He and his wife Mary ('75 home economics education) are longtime supporters of Iowa State through a variety of academic and athletic programs.

Dr. Zach, who has performed around the world, St. John's as the Music Director/Organist last fall. She also joined the ISU faculty at that time. Along with promoting the study of organ and teaching Iowa State students, Zach will coordinate a monthly organ series and plan the annual Organists of Iowa Series at Iowa State.

Food At First

On April 22, we served 48 guests at Food at First! Thanks to head chef Michael Howell, Beverly Baustian, David Oakland, Keith Phillips, Marlene and John Lowthian, and Helen McRoberts. I hope I did not miss anyone.

Our next meals will be May 27, June 24, July 22 and every 4th Saturday of the month that follows. For more information contact Ed Gillott, Michael Howell or Jeannie in the parish office.

For more information on the Food at First ministry, check out the Web Site at <https://foodatfirst.wordpress.com/>

Book Club

Book Club will finish discussing, section 2, of "Cold Case Christianity" by J. Warner Wallace on **Wednesday, May 3 at 6 p.m.** Please grab a copy and join us!

Parish Picnic

We will have a parish picnic at Moore Memorial Park in the Big Bluestem Shelter from **12-2 p.m. on June 11.** Hamburgers, hot dogs and water will be provided. Please bring a side dish or dessert to share.

Summerfest in Campustown

Summerfest is **June 3 from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m.** Summerfest is FREE and open to the public. The event will feature family-friendly activities from 3-7 p.m. including a root beer garden, face painting, balloons, a petting zoo and more. There will also be live music and a beer garden (21+) open until 9 p.m. This year St. John's will be joining with Dogtown University, helping out with Bingo and give out prizes from Dogtown. Please sign up in the parish hall if you

would be willing to help out for a few hours. If you have questions please contact Amy Mellies.

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.

Monday Daisies

We need volunteers to take flowers to shut ins or to people who are in need of encouragement.

May through August are available as no one has signed up for any of these months.

Metro Chapter Events.

Revival 2017 - Date to be determined

The Bishop has agreed to re-schedule our REVIVAL 2017 weekend to the fall when our students are here. Stay tuned for more information and a date.

Revival 2017 is an opportunity to gather together in local congregations to reawaken and rediscover God's Holy Spirit at work among us. It is an invitation to rekindle and recharge your faith and ministry and to share in Christ's abundant joy and strength.

Volunteers will be needed to help prepare for the event and encourage participation. Additional information is available at <http://iowaepiscopal.org/Ministries/revival-2017.html>

Summer Ministry School and Retreat, Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA, June 23 - 25, 2017

Information about the 2017 Summer Ministry School and Retreat is now on-line at the Diocesan Website.

[Ministry School and Retreat](#)

Parking Update

Thanks to everyone who parked on the street for Easter Sunday! What a difference it made! There were plenty of parking spaces available at 9:00 for the brunch and at 10:00 for the late service.

The 10 parking spaces along Stanton Ave. are available for lease Monday through Saturday for

\$50 per month. The vestry has approved leasing 10 more parking spaces along the east property line. Vehicles who have leased spaces display a numbered blue and white parking decal in the rear window. All the parking spaces available for lease have a number painted on the surface. (Numbered E1 to E20). On Sundays, all parking spaces designated by the white lines are available to those attending services, even the leased spaces.

If our parking lot 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. If you are parking at St. John's during the week, please use the parking spaces in the two center rows of spaces.

Please be careful not to park in the apartment building spaces designated by the yellow lines or you may be towed.

Your help is needed! If you are attending a public event at St. John's sponsored by a community group, please help the organizers monitor where attendees are parking. The fee to recover a towed vehicle can exceed \$250.

Building and Grounds-

We have a new automatic door opener on the south door! Thanks to the Vestry for approving this upgrade, to Bruce Bjorklund for managing the project and to all those who donated the funds to make this happen just in time for Easter Sunday!

On Saturday, April 8, we had a good turnout for the work day at St. John's. Thanks to George Smith, Steve Prater, Dave Oakland, Leigh Ann and Natalie Long, and Beverly Baustian. The group knocked several items of our to-do list.

- Rake out the flower bed areas and clean out winter debris.
- Clean up the meditation garden and clean leaves out of the fountain.
- Clean out the playground area.
- Check and clear gutters
- Check and clean roof debris around roof drains.
- Remove snow fence and install temporary signs for leased parking spaces
- Paint parking spot numbers on the east spaces now available for lease.

Thanks also to Michael Howell for mopping and cleaning the floors in the kitchen and Parish Hall and to Bruce Bjorklund for converting our exit signs and emergency light to new LED units.

It has been a great month for volunteers working on our building! Next work day will be **Saturday May 6 from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.** If you would like to help or would like more information, please contact George Smith or Ed Gillott.

Christian Formation Announcements:

Sunday School Classes

4yo - 4th grade will be in Godly Play. 5th-8th will be known as #JesusSquad. 9th - 12th will be in The Den. All classes will meet on May 7, 14 and 21.

Mark Your Calendar for these Upcoming Youth Events:

May 7 - Classes for all at 9am - EYC at 5pm
May 14 - Classes for all at 9am
May 21 - Classes for all at 9am
June 19 - 22 - VBS at First United Methodist Church – 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

VBS

We are partnering once again with First United Methodist Church and United Church of Christ for VBS! Join us June 19 - 22 from 9am - 12pm. This year's theme is all about Super Heroes! We will learn about Super Heroes in the Bible as well as in our community. There will be a closing ceremony on June 22nd at 6 p.m. for anyone who would like to come and listen! As always we are looking for volunteers to shepherd the children from class to class. If you are interested please contact Amy Mellies. You can register your children here:
<http://2017.cokesburyvbs.com/AmesVBS2017>

March Vestry Meeting Minutes

Clergy Present: Father Al Aiton, Rector

Vestry Members Present: George Smith, Michael Howell, Maddy Losby, Nicola Bowler, Doug McCay, Phyllis Heffron, Bruce Bjorklund, Dorothy Yoerger, Deb Fisher.

Others Present: Amy Mellies, Director, Christian Formation, Ed Gillott, Charlie Yoerger

Minutes: The minutes of the February 21, 2017 were approved with the addition of Michael Howell agreeing to write the Easter letter.

Christian Formation/Youth: Amy stated that there were not any new events scheduled for the youth this month over what had been previously reported. She still needs volunteers for dinners on April 9 and April 30.

Treasurer's Report: The financial reports were approved as presented.

Audit Report: it was agreed that Doug McCay would talk to Kevin Houston to see if he would be willing to do our audit. Doug later reported that Kevin was willing as long as he could do it after tax season.

Cleaning concerns: There was concern that the cleaning has been very inconsistent lately, and not up to the standards that the parish would like to see. Michael Howell and Bruce Bjorklund will visit with the company about the concerns. A motion was made by Bruce Bjorklund, and seconded by Doug McCay to accept the consent agenda. Motion unanimously passed.

Announcements: The Bishop's Revival 2017 will be held at St. John's on June 3rd.

Prayerful Considerations:

Maintenance Issues and Parking: Ed spoke about the status of discussions with Gilbane, and shared communication from them that presented two options. Neither option is agreeable or workable for the parish. That led to further discussion of our maintenance issues and how to move forward with those expenses. The priorities relate to roofing, fixing the parapet wall, and replacing carpeting. Additionally, the ongoing concerns over limited parking were discussed. Ed will get bids for tree removal in the parking lot, and the cost to pave the area once the tree was removed. This would give us a limited amount of additional parking space. A motion was made by Phyllis Heffron and seconded by George Smith to go ahead and add an automatic door opener and closer on the south entry door. This would facilitate handicap access to the building, and help with building access for the general public as well. It was suggested that we use memorial funds to help offset the cost of this update.

Search: Bruce Bjorklund and George Smith met with Rev. Steven Godfrey, the Diocesan Transition Ministry and Ministry Development Consultant to discuss the responsibilities of the vestry during the period of clergy transition. A meeting has been set for March 28, at 7 P.M. to meet with Bishop Scarfe. The focus of the meeting will be the clergy transition process. Fr. Al will not be in attendance at this meeting.

Closing Prayer: Fr. Al

Adjournment: 8:30 p.m. Motion by Bruce Bjorklund to adjourn.

Submitted by: Deb Fisher, Clerk of the Vestry

May 2017 Events

May 3 (Wednesday)

Last Wednesday Morning Prayer – Summer Break

May 6 (Saturday)

St. John's Work Day 8:00 a.m.

May 11 (Thursday)

Last Deepening Faith 7:00 p.m. - Summer Break

May 16 (Tuesday)

Vestry Meeting 7:00 p.m.

May 21 (Sunday)

Daughters of the King Meeting

May 24 (Wednesday)

Last Wednesday Bible Study – Summer Break

May 27 (Saturday)

Food At First 10:30 a.m.

May 29 (Monday)

Memorial Day - Offices Closed