

**E-News for the Week of Sunday, January 10**  
*The Baptism of Our Lord: First Sunday after the Epiphany*

**Readings**

Isaiah 60:1-6  
Psalm 29  
Acts 8:14-17  
Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

**Participants**

**Celebrant:** Rev. John Lemkul  
**Altar Guild:** Antje Mann  
**Communion Assistant:** Bob Furst  
**Lector:** Paul Lombardi  
**Liturgical Assistant:** TBA  
**Organist:** Ann Gnagey  
**Greeters:** Karen and Peter Grant  
**Ushers:** Jim Wilhite

**Upcoming Week**

**Wednesday, 1/6**

6:15 p.m. Choir  
7:15 p.m. Bells

**Thursday, 1/7**

10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Quilting Group  
Pastor Nancy Study Leave Begins

**Sunday, 1/10**

9:00 a.m. Sunday School (Children—Adult Class resumes on the 17th)  
10:00 a.m. Worship Service

**Monday, 1/11**

Elizabeth Returns from Vacation

**Tuesday, 1/12**

6:00 p.m. Property Committee  
7:00 p.m. Social Action Committee

**Wednesday, 1/13**

6:15 p.m. Choir  
7:15 p.m. Bells

Click [HERE](#) for a long-range calendar.

**Upcoming Birthdays**

1/8 Jessica Wisloski  
1/10 Shona Bruno  
1/12 Dale Bergdahl

**Pastor's Message**

Dear Ascension parishioners,

Thanks to all who made our Advent and Christmas celebrations beautiful and moving. I especially thank Lydia Wisloski and her Sunday school teachers and parents for the Advent children's' program and all our musicians, and their leaders, Jeri Bergdahl, Ann Gnagey, and Denise Puisto, for musical leadership on Christmas Eve and other services.

Gratitude, love, and sense of loss are mingled in our response to this note from Denise Puisto: *Ascension friends: it is with mixed feelings that I write this note. I have accepted a new job in Idaho, and we will be moving there very shortly. I will miss all of you very much, but this is a great opportunity that we couldn't pass up. I am leaving the musical groups in a bit of a lurch, so I would like to make an impassioned plea that those of you with any hidden musical talents consider stepping forward to help... especially any piano players! My last Sunday at church will be 1/17/16; I hope I get to see many of between now and then! I wish you all peace, Denise Puisto*

Denise exemplifies in her life some of the important qualities of Gospel fellowship and service: most especially, joy, commitment, and humility. She inspires me to learn how to be more faithful. Over her decades at Ascension, she has served in many capacities. Last Saturday, when I knew she was leaving soon, I made this list of recent involvements: Worship Team leadership, children's musical expressions, women's fellowship, permissions for service music, accompanist for Adult and Bell choirs, leader of the Contemporary choir, bell choir member who sometimes plays eight bells and also coaches the new youngest member, sanctuary decorations, logistics about building improvements, and long-range planning.

To plan for these ministries without her participation and leadership, Church leaders have stepped up to make sure that our musical leadership continues to be fulfilling and inspiring and that other needed roles are filled. Grief and missing her will remain (however, if logistically possible, she will participate with the next Worship Team meeting via Skype).

During the service on the 17th you will have an opportunity during the time of prayer to express gratitude for Denise's ministry. We will conclude the service with a Farewell and Godspeed.

Meanwhile, I encourage you to send emails or letters of appreciation to Denise.

Remember, we are eternally one body in Christ.

*Blessings, Pr. Nancy*

### **Prayers are requested**

Pr. Ann Larson's brother died after a long illness, and she is away with her family. Please keep them in your prayers.

## **Sunday School News**

### **Children**

Pictures from the Children's program are up! [CLICK HERE FOR PHOTOS](#)

Sunday School for Children resumes this **Sunday, 1/10!**

### **Adults**

The class is reading Pope Francis I *Encyclical Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home* as the Bishop has suggested. Anyone can join at any time; you can purchase a book from Pr. Nancy or read the Encyclical on line for free. No class preparation is needed, as we read aloud and discuss each paragraph. Adult classes are currently on break, but will resume on **Sunday, January 17.**

## **HARK! IMPORTANT UPCOMING NEWS AND EVENTS**

### **Christmas and Epiphany**

We will continue to celebrate Christmas until Epiphany, January 6. Pr. John Lemkul will preach and celebrate on **Jan. 10** with a focus on Epiphany, which will conclude our Christmas celebrations. **Additionally, the Worship Team will lead the congregation in taking down and packing away the Christmas decorations after Sunday service this Sunday, the 10<sup>th</sup>. Please assist if you are able and would enjoy. There is a rumor that the tree will be burnt.**

### ***Pr. Nancy's Study Leave***

The third course in the Doctorate of Ministry Program at Boston University School of Theology, is titled "Contextual Leadership." It is taught by Dr. Walter E. Fluker, author of Ethical Leadership: The Quest for Character, Civility, and Community. He is the Martin Luther King, Jr. Professor of Ethical Leadership, the editor of the Howard Thurman Papers Project and the Director of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Initiative for the Development of Ethical Leadership. This course (1/17/16-1/16/16) ends the day before we celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. holiday at the Worship service on January 17, which is especially meaningful, especially as Dr. King received his Ph.D. from the BU School of Theology. As always I appreciate your prayers, as this course is intensive and will conclude with a paper later in winter, which will involve Ascension's ministries.

**Kelli Tylenda, Council President, will be in charge at Ascension, with pastoral back by Pr. Nancy and by the Rev. Ken White, Minister at College Street Congregational Church, Burlington. Should an emergency arise, please contact Kelli at any time on her cell phone, 802-310-8776 and she will reach out to Rev. White directly.**

### ***Coffee Hour***

The 2016 coffee hour list has been posted. Please sign up!

### ***Quilt top kits available***

If you would like to help make mission quilts for Lutheran World Relief but cannot join us on the first and/or third Thursday or the month at church, you can assemble quilt tops at home. There are kits that consist of cut fabric squares (11" x 11") along with directions. Let Karen Martin know if you are interested.

**The next Quilter's meeting is this Thursday, 1/7.**

### ***Men's Breakfast***

Hey guys! It's back! The Men's Fellowship Breakfast! Join us at **8:30 a.m. on January 16th** at Ascension for some good food and fellowship. See you there!

### ***Coming Soon: Beat the Winter Blahs***

Mark the evening of **January 30, 2016** on your calendars! It's a little bit of Scandinavian tradition right here in Vermont and your opportunity to enjoy some of your favorite dishes or try some foods that you've only heard about. Join us and bring your friends for an evening of great fun and delicious food. You'll be able to dine on Swedish Meatballs, Swedish Potato Sausage, Lutefisk, Pickled Herring, Red Cabbage, Potatoes, Jell-O Salad, fine cheeses, lefse and so much more. **There will be a social hour from 5 to 6 pm with seating and dinner served promptly at 6:00 p.m.**

There is no charge for the meal but you will be given an opportunity to make a donation to Lutheran World Relief. The dinner is also being generously supported Thrivent. Feel free to bring a bottle of your favorite wine. It has been said that most any wine pairs nicely with lutefisk.

If you are willing to help with preparing specific assigned dishes, setting up/decorating, serving or clean up please indicate so on the signup sheet located in the fellowship room. If interested, or if you have question, contact one of the following:

Kris Peterson-Ishaq and Mousa Ishaq at [mkishaa@comcast.net](mailto:mkishaa@comcast.net)

France Leblanc at [france316@hotmail.com](mailto:france316@hotmail.com)

Jake Hansen at [organic343@hotmail.com](mailto:organic343@hotmail.com)

### **Pastor's Piano Policy**

Ascension received a piano, gratis, from a family in Montpelier and paid to have it moved to ALC through funds originally given by Lynne Dapice. Thank you Lynne. We have the joy of the piano for parishioners (including children) who wish to enjoy playing while at church or taking piano lessons; as well as for public performances and regular teaching. Daimon Ferrante, the composer and piano instructor who rents space from ALC to teach, is personally paying for ongoing tuning. He asks that the piano not be moved, as it upsets the tuning (it is not a young piano). Also, when children play, under gentle supervision of their parents or teachers, they are welcome! We are all respectful of others in the building, who may be praying, worshiping, practicing, talking, etc. Closing doors and making sure the sound system (above the piano) is turned on or off depending on whether the sanctuary practice or service needs to be heard in the fellowship hall, will all help. Let the music sound!

### **Church Mouse**

The *Mouse* is available by email on a quarterly basis. But you can tell the office if you prefer to have the *Mouse* mailed to you. There are always extra copies of the *Mouse* on the table in the Fellowship Hall. A sheet next to the copies gives spaces for you to sign your name if you wish the *Mouse* to be mailed to you in future.

## **Additional News and Opportunities**

### **Trinity Institute's 45th National Theological Conference**

"Listen for a Change: Sacred Conversations for Racial Justice"

On January 22-23, 2016, St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral and College Street Congregational Church will be partner sites when a leading group of activists, scholars, authors, artists and experts on racial inequality come together to hold life-giving conversations on the racial issues of our time, including structural racism, mass incarceration, and policy change at Trinity Institute's 45th National Theological Conference, "[Listen for a Change: Sacred Conversations for Racial Justice.](#)" Conference participation is open to anyone interested in a practical, theological perspective on racial equality and is ideal for seminarians, students, and church leaders looking for thought-leadership from experts and activists.

The event is free of charge, but registration is recommended. Registration is at the following

URL: <http://conta.cc/1OvvqID>

For more information, contact: Karen Mikkelsen @ [kmikkel@icloud.com](mailto:kmikkel@icloud.com) or Rev. Ken White

@ [kwhite@collegestreetchurch.org](mailto:kwhite@collegestreetchurch.org)

A Panel of local experts on racism in Chittenden County and in Vermont will speak Friday evening, January 22, at St. Paul's Cathedral, and a film for youth, I'm Not Racist, Am I? will be screened on the same evening at College Street Congregational Church. Both events will begin at 7:00 and end at 8:30. Panel members include: Hal Colston, Director of Neighborkeepers and 2014 Burlington Free Press

Vermonters of the Year; Dr. Sylvia Perry, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychological Science at UVM, and author of many papers on issues related to racism and bias awareness; Wanda Hines, Executive Director of the Joint Urban Ministry Project (JUMP), and community leader. The panel will be moderated by Sally May, Interim Associate Pastor at First Congregational Church, Burlington. There will be time at the end of the panel for audience questions, comments and feedback.

[CLICK HERE FOR THE FULL PRESS RELEASE FOR MORE INFORMATION.](#)

***Tai Chi at Ascension!***

Tai Chi for All Generations, Wednesdays, 4:30-5:30 p.m. with Elizabeth Wirls

Classes are ongoing and everyone is welcome to come as you are, whenever you wish. All generations are welcome! Please note that we have decided to offer these classes on a "pay as you can" basis. That way everyone who is interested will be able to join us! For more information, see the attached brochure and feel free to contact Elizabeth in the church office, 862-8866

[CLICK HERE](#) for full brochure.

Tai Chi will break for the holidays soon. **There will be no classes on December 23rd, 30th, or January 6th.**