



St. Andrew's Tidings *Week of Dec. 18*

Evangelism Matters!

Evangelism Matters was a conference in Dallas, Texas in November that I was fortunate to attend. The conference was formed by the Episcopal Evangelism Initiatives Team, a host of pathways designed to INSPIRE, GATHER, EQUIP and SEND Episcopal Evangelists for the Jesus Movement.

At the conference opening, The Rev. Canon Stephanie Spellers said Jesus never intended the love revolution that he started (Love one another as you love yourself) to stop at our doors of the temple or church. His final words to the disciples were, "GO!" As in, "Go and make disciples of all nations...." (Matthew 28). Now we are invited in our role as his followers, helping others to grow loving, liberating, and life-giving relationship with God (evangelism), with each other (reconciliation) and with the earth (stewardship of creation).

Evangelism is about sharing the journey into a deeper relationships with God and with each other. For many of us, Evangelism is an "E" word but it doesn't have to be. It is about the practice of noticing Jesus' activities in our own lives and the lives of others.

It is not necessarily about adding more people within our church but it is a sharing of the love of Christ and the Good News of God's actions in our life. Further good news is that Evangelism is not just for clergy! There was a lot of applause following these two statements.

We were reminded that in the Baptismal Covenant, we agreed to "Proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ." (The Book of Common Prayer p. 305). Also, in I Peter 3:15, "Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you your accounting for the Hope that is in you" (!) Ask yourself where does that hope come from? And share with others your answer.

We can share why we are Christians and why that matters to you. What keeps you coming back day after day and why that matters to you? We can tell what life was before for you and what may have changed and what that means. What is the essential truth for you?

I have found that in small groups that we have had through the years in this church that I could share fairly easily how my life has progressed and continued only because of the love of God as shared and supported by so many in our congregation. But I have trouble saying something about the love of God outside these walls. I know I have missed opportunities to say something in situations that may have made a difference.

We were encouraged to have a short “speech” when the opportunity presents, with the goal to open the door to more, leave them wanting to know more. Practice, the more we share the easier it gets. The author and blogger, Glennon Doyle Melton post are deeply invitational, “People who need help often look a lot like people who don’t need help.” “The only meaningful thing we can offer one another is love.” And finally, “Quit waiting to get picked. Quit waiting for someone to give you permission: Quit waiting for someone to say you are officially qualified and pick yourself.”

After a very full day and a half of this conference I think I finally got that we are the people to get out there and help others grow into the Loving, Liberating, and Life Giving relationship with God as our Presiding Bishop so eloquently states.

Our Presiding Bishop Michael Curry spoke to us two times, he has an amazing and tremendous energy. He said, among other things, that we are The Episcopal Branch of the Jesus Movement.

Thank you Bishop Curry and all the people who came together to create this conference. Thanks to all of you that made my attendance possible and that prayed for us. Please check out the web site to discover more at www.episcopalchurch.org/evangelism. I hope to have more opportunities to share with all of you some additional encouragement and education I learned.

Love and peace, Anne Staley



Dear Children of God,

I can't believe Advent is almost over and Christmas is upon us. During Advent we spend this holy time of waiting for the biggest surprise ever that comes to us is the human form of Jesus. Perhaps we should spend the waning days meditating in silence upon his birth and what that means to all of us as Christians. This has been the Baptists' cry to these four weeks, to turn around, open our hearts and listen for that still small voice of God in our lives. You have no idea how special it is for me to spend this Advent and Christmas time you-the beloved of St. Andrew's. There is truly something special in this place and I believe it is the presence of the Holy Spirit. I want to take a moment, and pray for you, and wish for you a Blessed Christmas. In the words of that beloved Christian prophet, Howard Thurman:

I will light candles this Christmas
Candles of joy, despite all sadness,
Candles of hope where despair keeps watch.
Candles of courage where fear is ever present,
Candles of peace for tempest-tossed days,
Candles of grace to ease heavy burdens.
Candles of love to inspire all my living,
Candles that will burn all the year long.

I wish for all of you and your families a blessed Christmas and the happiest of New Years. Peace, *Margaret+*



Everyone is invited to meet at the church at 4 p.m. Saturday to go caroling in the neighborhood. Bring Christmas cards that read: Merry Christmas from St. Andrew's Episcopal Church.

**THE GREENING OF THE CHURCH
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21ST -10 A.M.
EVEN IF YOU FEEL YOU CANT HALP
DECORATE, PLEASE COME AND HELP
SORT OUT DECORATIONS ETC.**

You don't have to be a decorator. Come and

have fun!!



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Christmas at St. Andrew's



Since Christmas falls on Sunday, your vestry has voted that there will be one service on that week-end, Christmas Eve at 5 p.m. Prior to that, there will be a gala Christmas reception in Byrne Hall before the service. We want to make sure that all who would like to attend will be able to, so we are renting a van to pick up those who might not like to drive. If you want to take advantage of the van, begin now to make reservations by calling the church Soon at 763-7636.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Will resume after the first of the year.

SATURDAY, DEC. 24:
THE CHRISTMAS SERVICE
4 P.M. GALA RECEPTION
5 P.M. FESTAL HOLY EUCHARIST

**Call the Church NOW if you would like a ride in the
van**

CHRISTMAS NEEDS AT BASIC

Basic, with whom we partnered for World AIDS Day, is in need of toiletries for their clients for Christmas. Stop by your grocery or drug store and grab a hand full of those trial size tooth paste, mouth wash, shampoo, shaving cream/lotion etc. and bring to church on Sunday to put in the red basket. Thanks!



OSL

The Order of St. Luke is reforming and will initially meet on Sunday, Jan. 5 after the service in the parish hall. We are welcoming new members if you are interested, please join us.

ALTERNATIVE GIFT MARKET

Thank you to everyone who shopped at the ERD Alternative Gift Market. We will be sending \$5,120.00 to purchase farm animals, trees, gardens, mosquito nets, medicines, health worker services and literacy instructions. Our gift will be matched by another donor so the total benefit of your gifts will be \$10,420. Please continue to support Episcopal Relief and Development in your prayers.



Prayers to Go

Prayers to Go is up and running on the Hospice floor at Bay Med. If you want to participate, and have not attended training, or have not finished training, see Tom Brewer.

SOCKS, HATS & GLOVES

Each Christmas as a part of our Supper at Grace Ministry we collect new socks for men, women and children. For those living in cars or unheated shelter, cold feet are a major discomfort. Last year we also received gently used stocking caps, gloves and jackets which were received by our supper guests with much gratitude.

Thursday, December 15th is St. Andrew's turn to serve Supper at Grace. If you can help us warm up our guests with new socks and/or gently used caps or jackets, please bring them to Byrne Hall Sunday either in the morning or for Lessons and Carols in the afternoon and place them on the table by the bulletin board.

Thursday, December 15th will be a very busy day preparing to serve supper, pack lunches and wrap socks for that evening. Men's, women's and children's socks are needed.

We will begin preparation at 9:00 AM in Byrne Hall. Any help is greatly needed and appreciated. Choice of jobs available: wrappers, sandwich makers, and food prep! For more details, please contact Teri Floore or Diane Tate.



COFFEE

If you are making coffee at anytime other than Sunday morning, please turn off the coffee maker and wash the coffee pots. Thank you

(Names are left on the prayer list for 3 weeks, unless specified for a longer time)

Please keep the following in your prayers: Bob, Virginia, Mike, Warren, Ed, Nell, Sandra, Margaret & Bill, Dr. Benton, Lou, Paul, Debra, Dawn, George, Paul, Donna, Robbie, John, Bob, Patricia, Jeremy, Gene, Kathy, Pam, Judy, Ransom, Janice, Mike, Elizabeth, Marcella, Ryan, Hank, Mason, Dawn, Rick, Terry, Sue, Michael, John, Lauren, Liam, Dee, Sandra, Mason, Sandy, Josh, Marcella, Elizabeth, Donna, Bobbie, Ken, Meagan, Rick, James, Eric, Crystal, Ally, Rita, Cynthia, Brian, Ray, Carol, Charlie

We pray for our men and women in the Armed Forces at home and abroad:

David, Jason, Billy, Colin, Todd, Jordan, Jeremiah, Richard, Ivan, James