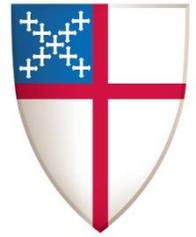




St. John's Episcopal Church and Day School

Alamogordo, New Mexico

Our Mission is to proclaim the Good News of the Gospel
and to seek and serve Christ in all people



2023 – January Newsletter

Greetings during Christmastide!

It feels so good to say that after the expectation of Advent. As I write this near the close of 2022, I am more grateful than ever to be your rector. We have managed to do some amazing work in 2022 that I look forward to revisiting during our annual meeting, which is scheduled for January 22 between the services.

I often find myself caught off guard by the observance of Christmas as a season. I grew up in a home with very little Christian tradition; and in this case that means that we observed Christmas and Easter as days rather than seasons. Christmas then became the chief celebration of the year in our household; as it was the only feast whose celebration spanned more than one day.

So I've asked myself why we observe such occasions for a time rather than a day; and I've arrived at a few conclusions about the Christmas season. The first is that there is something about the season which opens up my perspective to the fact that this is a Holy time across many (virtually all I know of) cultures. A multitude of peoples recognize this as a time of transition, either cosmically as we transition away from the the winter solstice, agriculturally as we anticipate the growing season to come, financially as we enter a new fiscal cycle, or in our larger culture as we move from one year to another.

Now that I see this time as one of larger celebration, the way that we celebrate in our own unique tradition is part of what we call the praxis (or practice) of our religion and it becomes an important part of our discipline of the season. Lent and Advent are times of penitence and expectation, that is their discipline. Christmas and Easter are times of transition and celebration; and they are no less a part of the discipline/practice of our faith. Whereas in Lent we choose the cross to see resurrection light more clearly; in our joyful seasons we recognize that part of the practice of our faith is that our celebrations give us the memories and goodwill that get us through when we need them most.

As we observe this season together, may the Holy Spirit continue to inspire us to grow so that love and joy take root deep in our heart this Christmastide. Blessings from...

Your Brother in Christ,

The Rev. Michael Peter Drinkwater

Life of a seed, Revisited, for a season of important waiting

by Nancy Gregory, Senior Warden

As I write this article, we're still in the church season of Advent and I've been hearing from a few friends and relatives about some feelings they are having about waiting and trying to be patient. Waiting for test results, waiting for news of a loved one's illness, waiting for an important event on the calendar to roll around, things like that. Pretty consequential. It feels like a season of anticipation, preparation and waiting. I started to connect what they were telling me with our church calendar and this time of needing to wait, patiently, and how difficult that can be. That led me to thinking about an article I had written a few months ago for our newsletter, about how very slowly seeds seem to grow. And how hard it is to wait for them to show signs of growth. Desert plants seem to be very, very slow growing.

I took another walk around my backyard just like before, looking especially at my four Red Yucca plants, that I had grown from seed, and nurtured and cared for with as much love as I could muster. That whole process started several years ago. It seemed like forever, waiting on the seeds to germinate in small pots on my windowsill and then waiting on the resulting plants that I had planted on the edges of my backyard to start sending up flower stalks. The plants needed time to store up energy. Sending up one of those flower stalks really puts lots of stress on the plant. The plant pushes in that direction though because that flower stalk was all about the plant's renewal, regeneration, and propagation. It's core reason for existence.

Low and behold, one of the Red Yuccas had done just that! There it was! A bright red, strong healthy flower stalk! What joy I felt! The cycle of life repeated right before my eyes. A tangible example of the reassurance of God's love. What a gift! New life comes again and again, if we can only wait, pray, and do our part of caring for the plants of the Earth. I sat on the stone bench in my backyard and spent several moments in a silent prayer of gratitude and hope. I felt a sense of harmony and beauty.

Many of us probably do home gardening for the sense of beauty and enjoyment that it gives us. Did you know that the Bishop has called for people from around the diocese to come forward and volunteer to form a committee to develop ideas on how this diocese can respond to the climate crisis. One way we can respond is to choose plants that are Native to this area as they probably require less water, a precious resource. Maybe even choosing plants that provide food for birds and insects, insuring the continuation of the species of the planet. These Native plants can provide just as much beauty and harmony in our lives as nonnative plants. I know I'm going to really enjoy my backyard more now with my lovely Red Yucca plants!

Thank You from All Saints Episcopal Church in El Paso

December 14, 2022
St. John of the Cross

Dear Friends at St. John's,

Thank you for your incredible generosity in your gift of \$1,195 to our discretionary fund at All Saints Episcopal Church, 3500 McRae, El Paso, TX 79925! Thank you for the delightful send-off from the beautiful, beloved community of St. John's. And thank you especially for your love, support, companionship and formation for ministry over the past three years: I have been both blessed and very well-prepared, thanks to you, the saints of St. John's, and to your gifted rector and my incredible mentor, Fr. Michael Drinkwater!

I have delayed writing an update with my deep gratitude because at every twist and turn of the deployment process, I believed I would be able to share news of deployment shortly. (To borrow from the Grateful Dead, "What a long strange trip it has been" to get to this point ...) ... I began serving at All Saints in El Paso literally the day after my ordination, and was interviewed and offered a position within the first two weeks of that service. But we were not able to formalize that call contractually until last week.

I am overjoyed to share that, as of 12/1/2022, I am priest-in-charge of All Saints Episcopal Church in El Paso. It is a vibrant community, a bit smaller than St. John's in both total membership and average Sunday attendance, though with a lively liturgy and incredible congregational diversity, including children and youth. We are poised for growth in ministry, and this is already occurring in our outreach and presence in the community: Like St. John's, we are supporting Rio Grande Borderland Ministries materially, and are also able to serve on the cooking rota for the asylum-seekers served by our diocesan Center for Borderland Ministries at St. Christopher's Episcopal Church here in El Paso. We have a Daughters of the King chapter with ten (10) active members (!), who serve as Eucharistic Visitors, offer healing prayers weekly after the Eucharist, and provide groceries for food-insecure families in our neighborhood. Your generosity will help support these and other ministries in our community, as well as individuals and families in need. Thank you!

I am thankful and excited to get to serve this beautiful community. And I thank God and I thank you for your part in equipping me for service in this community and in this little part of the Episcopal branch of the Jesus Movement.

Thank you for the great gift that you have been in my discernment and formation for ordained ministry, and thank you for the great gift that you are as a Beloved Christian Community in Alamogordo and Otero County!

Soli Deo Gloria, with love and gratitude,

David-Luke BSG +

Schedule of Sunday Readings

Date	Old Testament	Psalms	Epistle	Gospel
1-Jan	Numbers 6:22-27	Psalm 8	Philippians 2:5-11	Luke 2:15-21
8-Jan	Isaiah 42:1-9	Psalm 29	Acts 10:34-43	Matthew 3:13-17
15-Jan	Isaiah 49:1-7	Psalm 40:1-12	1 Corinthians 1:1-9	John 1:29-42
22-Jan	Isaiah 9:1-4	Psalm 27:1, 5-13	1 Corinthians 1:10-18	Matthew 4:12-23
29-Jan	Micah 6:1-8	Psalm 15	1 Corinthians 1:18-31	Matthew 5:1-12

Rota

Date	Sunday	Reader - 8:00	Reader - 10:15
1-Jan	Holy Name	John	Yvonne
8-Jan	Baptism of our Lord	Randy	Nancy
15-Jan	Epiphany 2	Joyce	Sharon
22-Jan	Epiphany 3	John	Hannah
29-Jan	Epiphany 4	Joyce	Yvonne

Community Kitchen Schedule	
3-Jan	St. Joseph's
10-Jan	PPW
17-Jan	Christ Community
24-Jan	Retired Teachers
31-Jan	1st Presbyterian

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Important January Meetings

Our January Vestry meeting will be held on zoom at 5pm on January 17. An email will be sent several days ahead of time with the link for those who are interested in attending.

Our 2023 Annual Meeting will take place on Sunday, January 22, between the services. All members are encouraged to attend as we look back at 2022 and make plans for the coming year.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays for January:

Susan (1/6), Caleb (1/8); Ligia (1/10); Noah (1/17); and Annabelle (1/26) Happy birthday to all!

Anniversaries for January:

Deanna and Tom (1/29) and Kathy Ann And Bill (1/31) Happy Anniversary to all!

Blessing Bag Ministry

Blessing Bags contain **travel** size items (i.e. hand sanitizer, small note books, toothbrush, toothpaste, pens, pencils, shampoo, deodorant, granola bars, soap, tuna/cracker packs, underwear, socks etc). We place several of the items in a gallon storage bag and distribute them to those in need. Currently, we are working closely with COPE and local partners in addition to Rio Grande Borderland Ministries.

If you are interested in helping in this ministry, please contact Sharon Kelman at 757 718 9451 or email ke4zia@gmail.com. You may bring any items you purchase to the church and deposit them in the bag that is located in the Narthex any Sunday.

Brotherhood of St. Andrew Bible Seminar

The Brotherhood is a group of men who engage in the study of scripture and service. We currently meet each Saturday morning at 10:00 a.m. for a Bible seminar in the Parish Hall. All men and women from the community with an interest in the study of scripture are invited to attend. This will be restarting the Saturday following labor day.

Caring card ministry

I would like to thank everyone who has donated cards, stamps and stickers to this ministry. We would like to help you celebrate **ALL** occasions. So, if you haven't signed up on our birthday (we just need month and day-**NO YEARS**) and anniversary lists, please do so. If you know of someone who may enjoy receiving one of our cards, please let me know. The sign-up sheets are on the table in the Narthex. If you prefer, you may contact me directly: Sharon Kelman email: ke4zia@gmail.com or 757-718 9451 call or text.

Pet Prayer Chain

Many people in our congregation have pets. We all love our pets. They are part of our family. When they are sick, elderly or lost, it is a comfort to know that our church family is praying for them as well as us. If you have or know of a pet that could benefit from our ministry, please let David-Luke or Nancy know.

Daily Office

Morning Prayer is offered Monday through Friday at 8:00 a.m. Evening Prayer is offered Monday through Friday at 4:00 p.m.

Links to these services can be found on the website.

Formation Hour

Join us on Sundays at 9 for our Bible Study. Been to a lot of bible studies? None? All are welcome.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Do you knit or crochet? Are you interested in doing it as part of an ongoing spiritual practice that gives back to the community? If you are and would like more information, like patterns or prayers, please contact Joyce at joycesummers@mac.com

St. John's Episcopal Church

1114 Indiana Avenue, Alamogordo

Sunday Services: 8:00am Rite I; 10:15am Rite II

Office Phone: 575.437.3891

Email: stjohnsalamo@tularosa.net Website: <http://www.stjohnsalamo.com>