

JANUARY'S NEWSLETTER



Vicar's desk notes:

A year ago, we had just met. We had celebrated Advent and Christmas together. Another important milestone happened. On Saturday, December 30th, 2017, I was ordained into the Holy Order of the Priesthood by our Bishop Owensby. This was the goal that I had been seeking since I started my seminary experience at Princeton Theological Seminary where I received my Master of Divinity degree and my Anglican Studies Diploma from General Theological Seminary. I did not know that it would take as long as it did, nor did I know that I would be ordained halfway across the country from where I began. I absolutely believe that God does not allow us to know everything we will go through when we begin doing work on His behalf. He knows that we may not have the nerve to even begin.

ABOUT US

St. Michael's
Episcopal Church
500 Edgewood Dr.
Pineville, LA 71360

The Most Reverend Michael
Bruce Curry- Presiding
Bishop

The Right Reverend Doctor
Jacob W. Owensby Bishop
Rev. Wayne Fletcher,
M.Div., Vicar

Rev. Belle Rollins, Deacon
Worship Time: Holy
Eucharist Sunday- 10:00AM

MISSION COUNCIL

Steve Rogge, Warden
Deacon Belle Rollins
Treasurer- Paula Lieberman
Dana Homer
Kay Ferguson
Jamie Raborn
Stuart Spurlin
Brian Warner

Now that I am at St. Michael's, it feels like home. Like home, everything is not exactly the way I wish it were, but I also learn to thank God for every little sign of progress. I hope you do too.

As we move from the Christmas season to the season of Epiphany, the gospel readings will talk us through the early years of Jesus' life. We see Him showing the maturity well beyond His years. We will be learning from the Gospels according to Matthew, Luke, and John.

There will be several things going on at St. Michael's. We will be slowly taking down the Christmas decorations in phases. This will begin on Sunday January 13th with removing the lights from the outside railing and the outdoor Nativity scene. Also, on the 13th, we will have a visit from Joy Owensby to discuss how we can do Christian Formation at St. Michael's. We will meet with her at 12 Noon after Mass. Only those interested in being an active leader in Christian Formation are invited to attend. On Sunday, January 20th, we will have a Mission Council meeting after Mass to understand how we have done with Stewardship. We will also continue to remove Christmas decorations from the church. We will have our Annual Congregational Mtg. immediately after Mass on Sunday, January 27th to let the congregation know where we are and where we hope to go in 2019. During that meeting we will also elect Mission Council members which will include the election of a new Warden for the next year.

Brothers and Sisters of St. Michael's, I hope you understand we are in a critical year for our church. We have much work to do and will need the support (financial and otherwise) of everyone. We have a beautiful church that we need to take care of. We also have a wonderful congregation that we have to take care of and grow. These will be our major objectives of the year. We need to take care of what we have and build for the future. We will also need to enhance our visibility in

our community, so we will be able to attract others to join our faith community.

You will hear me talk about words Come, Learn, and Transform. We will come together as a church family on Sundays and other days. We will learn more about the bible and each other on Sundays and as part of our Christian Formation. We are then to transform ourselves, our church, and our communities by displaying the love of Jesus Christ to all we meet. Presiding Bishop Michael Curry urges us to join the Jesus Movement and become “Crazy Christians” (this was the title of his book). I hope and pray that we will accept his challenge. God bless you and Happy New Year. Blessings, Father Wayne

Reflections: By Deacon Belle

Winter tells son of planting. In our church family we are already there. We are looking toward a season of new growth, and we need to do some planting now. We must start with faith as a grain of mustard seed and nourish all our efforts with love, but there is a practical cost to putting in a new crop. We have earned our money as the fruit of our labors. Now we need to bring it as an offering of love to help make God's crop grow among us. It is our way of giving thanks. It is an important way of living in His Presence.

I grew up in a small town in LaSalle Parish. I was the middle child of three children born to a family of Southern Baptists. My grandfather was the pastor at the church that we attended. Therefore, as you can probably imagine, my experience with church was not quite the same as that at St. Michael's today. Never the less, I learned about God, Jesus, and the books of the Bible and going to church was fun.

However, as I grew older, church became less about fun and more about measuring up and fitting in with the others. I began to feel that I just did not fit in and found myself going to church off and on, as I entered my teens. I was baptized in my early twenties, but I stopped going to church at all not long afterward. I still believed in God, I just did not feel like church was "for me". I was too different and did not fit in.

My life took a lot of twists and turns over the succeeding years. I struggled with addiction and low self-esteem. My spirit was broken, and I felt beyond repair. I always longed for God and the church but never felt worthy. I would look at different church websites and think about going for worship services but then would decide that it would not work out.

Then, in the summer of 2012, a friend invited me to visit the Episcopal Church that he attended. My feelings about church had not changed. However, he kept asking and I finally agreed to go in an effort to get him to stop asking and to leave me alone. The experience changed my life. The worship service was quite different from what I had known in the faith tradition of my youth and I did not understand most of what was happening. However, it felt good. Then, after services were finished, my friend introduced me to the priest. The man welcomed me and told me that he was glad that I had decided to come. I went back the next Sunday and the Sunday after that. Before long, I was preparing for confirmation and becoming an Episcopalian.

In the years that followed, I began to sense a call to ordained ministry and started to talk to priests about ordination. I did not understand how God could use someone like me in his church. How could someone who did not fit in and was always an outsider possibly minister to God's people?

Today, I am a postulant. That means that I am in the process that eventually leads to being ordained. I feel especially blessed to be among the people of St. Michael's as I progress towards being ordained to the diaconate. The spirit of love and kindness in our congregation is unmistakable. I give thanks to God for each of you.

I will close with the following from the Book of Common Prayer:

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the effectual working of your providence, carry out in tranquility the plan of salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen. (BCP 280)

BUILDING AND GROUNDS REPORT January 2019

Steve Rogge

We think that we have the parish hall roof completely fixed now. The gaping hole in the ceiling has been skillfully patched, and fans and light fixture re-installed by Igloo Roofing. There remains to be repaired some open seams near the double doors to the hall, also caused by leaks, that we failed to notice before.

We have applied for a \$5000 MAP grant from the Diocese for further trim painting. We plan to do the trim on the whole front end of the church, and the high half of the back end. That will take care of all the high scaffold work needed on the building. We are hopeful of receiving the grant soon.

John and Phyllis Ramares paid to have some leaning or dead trees cut down, but the contract didn't include removing all the downed trunks and branches. Setting it up that way was still costly and allowed for all the dangerous trees to be downed. If there's anyone with a chainsaw and some time who'd be willing to help, we can move at least the most visible pieces to the street for pickup.

Thoughts from the Choir Loft for January

The choir continues to grow and develop. We may not be the largest choir in the area, but we certainly make up for that in our love for each other and our devotion. Our greatest joy is bringing you our best and continuing to fill the sanctuary with God's messages in song.

A new year is always an exciting time! A clean slate to fill in with new possibilities and experiences. How will you fill this new year?

I, personally gave up on making New Year's resolutions because I have found out that they don't always bear fruit. This year maybe I will make a few, just for the heck of it, and see how well I carry them out.

1. Give up control to God. I'll be the first to admit that I like being in control but when I give up that control His plan always works best.
2. Determine to do my best at whatever I undertake.
3. Be kinder to my family. We sometimes lose sight of the fact that our family is our most precious possession and we don't let them know how precious they are to us.
4. Have more fun and spread more joy.
5. Don't worry so much about what's going to happen tomorrow and live more in the day. Trust that God will take care of everything.
6. Take time to see how blessed I am and be thankful. I am so blessed! I wake up in a warm bed, a good home, with good health, food to eat, a great family, a job I love and a God who loves me.

Well, it all looks pretty good, doesn't it? Now to the real work-making it all come true and, with God's help, I will do my best.

God bless you all and look for your blessings in this coming new year!!

In Christ,

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 01 FRED BECKERDITE
- 04 SAMANTHA DUNDAS
BARBARA TUMA
- 05 MATT GREEN
MALCOLM
LEATHERMAN
- 09 GALE MYER
- 11 MARC CHAMPAGNE
- 13 EVA WORSHAM
- 16 CALLIE GEORGE
- 19 PAULA LIEBERMAN
- 22 CATHERINE WRIGHT
- 24 CHRISTINE DUPUIS-
FERNANDEZ
- 25 MIKE OWENS
- 27 LACEE BROWN
LIZ CONLIN
- 28 STUART SPURLIN
- 29 BRIAN CORLEY
LAURA COOPER
- 30 JIM HOMER
- 31 JACKIE ARNOLD



Announcements

1. Please pray for continued healing for Jeannie Basco, Brian Corley, George Barrileaux, Irene Noel, Ann and Billy Wells, Betty Rose, Mary Young, Charlene McKneely, Frank Stevens
2. If you know anyone needing prayers, visitations or home communion, please call the church or email Fr. Wayne. The church will add them to our intercessory prayer list or make arrangements to visit.
3. Anyone who would like to add to or have any ideas for the newsletter please call Father Wayne.
4. If you would like to put flowers on the altar for any special occasion, the cost is \$50 a Sunday. Please see Laura Cooper, Michael Parham or Patti Noel to mark your date. Please mark check in memo for "Flower Fund."
5. The food pantry is always in need of food: beans and rice, macaroni and cheese, oatmeal or grits, spaghetti and sauce, tuna, cereal, soup, Vienna sausage, jelly, evaporated milk, canned fruit and vegetables, and peanut butter. We are thankful for the hard work and generosity of Patti and David Noel. We are also very thankful for the generosity of Super 1 Supermarket.
6. The women Half-Way House could use donations of diapers, newborn clothing and essential items needed for newborns. Many of the women need clothing. Please bring donated items to the church and leave them with either Fr. Wayne or Patti Noel.
7. **Pledge letters have been mailed if you did not get one there are extras on the table in the parish hall entrance hall. Also, please see Patti Noel to make sure you are in our system.**
8. Jan 13th after service we will begin removing the Christmas lights from the railing and the outdoor nativity scene. We need volunteers to take part.
9. Christian Formation – Joy Owensby will meet with those willing to take an active part in bringing Christian Formation to St. Michael's. We will meet after Mass.
10. Mission Council Mtg. on Sunday, January 20th after Mass.
11. Semi-Annual Congregational Mtg. on Sunday, January 27th after Mass.