

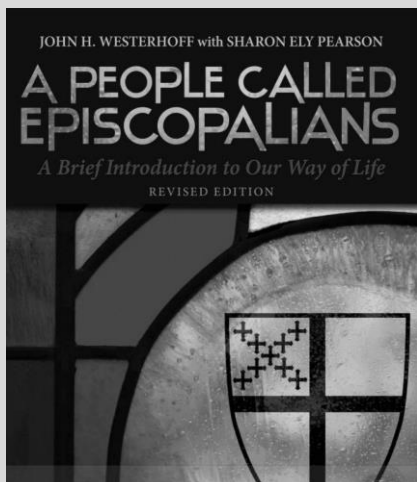
PARACLETE

DECEMBER 2023

HOLY SPIRIT | EPISCOPAL CHURCH

130 South 6th Street East • Missoula, MT 59801 • 406.542.2167 • E-mail: office@holyspiritmissoula.org • Website: www.holyspiritmissoula.org

A publication of Holy Spirit Episcopal Church



Learn about the Episcopal Church: The Inquirer's Class

Are you interested in learning more about the history of our church, our style of worship, our polity (how we function together across the diocese and around the world)? Do you have an Inquiring Mind? This class is for you whether you are new to us or have been around for a while but always wanted to know why things happen the way they do around here. Deacon Anita Rognas will be joined by Bob and Lani Brewer to host five sessions on Sundays after the 10:15 service, starting on January 7th and ending on Sunday February 4th. The group will read and discuss John Westerhoff's book, *A People Called Episcopalians*. Please call the church office to sign up for this class, (406) 542-2167 or email us at office@holyspiritmissoula.org.

Please join us

Bishop Marty's Annual Visitation takes place on December 3

The Rt. Rev. Marty Stebbins, the 10th Bishop of Montana, will make her visitation to Holy Spirit Parish on Sunday, December 3. Please mark the date on your calendars!

As chief pastor and teacher of the diocese, Bishop Marty will preside and preach at both services that Sunday. Her presence connects us to Episcopalians beyond our walls, in Montana, in the Episcopal Church, in the Anglican Communion, and back through the Church's history. While most of us will only see her on Sunday, she will be working hard to learn more about Holy Spirit Episcopal Church by meeting with

the Vestry and clergy, hearing and responding to their concerns and questions.

As is the custom in our diocese, an offering for the Bishop's Discretionary Fund will be taken at the service that day. Your checks should be paid to the order of "The Episcopal Diocese of Montana," designating on the memo line 'Discretionary Fund.' Or you can use our giving platform Pushpay to make your donation. Simply choose Bishop's Discretionary Fund from the list of funds available. It is from the Discretionary Fund that pastoral needs are met. Please be generous.



HOLY SPIRIT | EPISCOPAL CHURCH

invites you to join us in welcoming

The Rt. Rev. Marty Stebbins
Bishop of Montana
Sunday, December 3, 2023

The bishop will make her annual visitation to Holy Spirit on December 3. We hope you will plan to join us at either service that Sunday and at the special Coffee Hour following the 10:15 a.m. service!

OUR STAFF

Clergy:

The Rev. Terri Ann Grotzinger,
Rector

revterri@holyspiritmissoula.org

The Rev. Gretchen Strohmaier,
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NEWSLETTER

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From the Acting Rector

Welcome Rev. Terri back from her sabbatical!

Rev. Terri will be with us on Sunday December 3rd. Plan to join us that day to welcome her back and to see Bishop Marty Stebbins. Bishop Marty will be here for her annual visit. So, it will be quite a celebratory day complete with a reception after both services.

As part of the festivities, special flags will adorn the church, and they will remain up during the season of Advent. Perhaps you'll remember the bright and beautiful art piece that we created together over the summer? Barbara Morrison had our collaborative art transferred to fabric, and Diane Rasmuson has made the fabric into flags. In addition to setting a celebratory tone, they remind us of our own time of sabbatical and all that we have learned.

We look forward to hearing Terri's sabbatical stories and learning about what this time away has revealed to her. We have our own stories to share about how we have learned and grown over these past six months. All this fits quite well into the season of Advent. We are reminded as we embark on a new church year and a new liturgical season that God is doing something new right here at Holy Spirit. We've been engaged in reflection about our ministry, and we've been challenged in many new ways. Together we'll celebrate the opportunities we've had and stay watchful for the unfolding of the Holy Spirit, trusting that this sabbatical time will give birth to many new things here at Holy Spirit.

Much grace and deep peace,

— REV. GRETCHEN+
ACTING RECTOR

Everything at Holy Spirit
is brought to you by you.

Stewardship 2024

There's still time to make an Annual Gift

If Stewardship season passed you by with a gust of autumn wind, there's still time to join in with an annual gift to support Holy Spirit.

Yearly gifts support our worship, music, staff salaries and programs, plus social outreach and the operation and care of our church buildings. Nearly everything that happens at

Holy Spirit is possible because of the generosity of our congregation.

To make a gift, you'll find pledge cards in the pews, or call the office at 406-542-2167.

Heartfelt thanks to everyone who has made the commitment to financially support our church community for 2024.

— THE STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Advent booklets available

You'll find copies of Richard Rohr's book, *Preparing for Christmas: Daily Meditations for Advent*, available in the parish hall. Please take a book. The suggested donation is \$10. This book offers daily meditations, prayers, Scripture readings, and questions for reflection

for each day of Advent. Rohr challenges his readers to anticipate not just a baby in a manger, but an adult Cosmic Christ who calls us to empty ourselves, lose ourselves and to surrender. This book is a great complement to Rev. Steve Oreskovich's class. Enjoy!

Get your Advent wreath supplies

Greens, ribbon, candles and more will be available in the parish hall on the first Sunday of Advent, December 3rd. You are welcome to take supplies home and build your own Advent

wreath to use as a tool this season to help you *sink down* into this time of spiritual preparation. The suggested donation for supplies is \$10.



Here's our schedule of services for Christmas Eve

The fourth Sunday of Advent falls on Sunday December 24th, Christmas Eve. We will have one service, Morning Prayer with music, at 9:30 am that day, followed by three options for Christmas Eve services later in the day.

- **At 4:00 pm** we will offer an intergenerational service with Christmas carols and a kid-friendly retelling of the Christmas story. Children will be welcomed up front to participate in putting up a
- **At 6:30 pm** we will welcome folks outside for a short service in the courtyard complete with a fire pit, outdoor heaters, some acapella singing and an option for Communion.
- **At 10:00 pm** we will offer our traditional Christmas Eve service with full choir and Communion.

Christmas creche as the story is told. This will be followed by Communion.

No Lessons and Carols service this year

We wanted to update you on a change for this year's Advent season. Unfortunately, due to the late start of Advent, we won't be able to have our cherished service of Lessons and Carols on December 24. Typically, Lessons and Carols takes place on the evening of Advent IV which this year is December 24, and there was no way to make that happen. We know it's disappointing, but we've marked December 22, 2024, in our calendars for its grand return! We can't wait to celebrate with you then and make it an unforgettable evening. Thank you for your understanding.



Remember a loved one with Christmas flowers

Are you interested in having flowers for the Christmas altar or during the Sundays in Advent? To arrange for flowers, please call the church office at (406) 542-2167 by noon on Monday, December 4. Although there are no flowers on the altar during the season of Advent, your special prayers and memorials are still read and will be listed again in the service leaflet at the Christmas Eve services. Again this year, we are not asking for contributions for the Christmas flowers since you all have been so generous over the year with your flower donations.





Want to help?

If nurturing families and connecting younger kids with Holy Spirit is important to you, be thinking about how you might help. Family Worship is looking for a few ongoing or occasional volunteers who could help staff activities or bring snacks, or who just enjoy being with pre-school and grade school-aged youngsters. Look for more information on upcoming opportunities early in 2024.



A reminder about Rev. Gretchen's schedule

Just a reminder about Gretchen's schedule. She divides her time between Holy Spirit and St. Paul's in Hamilton, serving half time at both parishes. Monday and Tuesday she devotes to St. Paul's. Wednesday and Thursday she does Holy Spirit work. Friday and Saturday are her days off, and on Sundays she rotates between the two churches. Typically, Rev. Gretchen preaches one Sunday a month at Holy Spirit.

Family Worship grows Children/Church connection

Join in to celebrate Advent on Sunday, December 10, at 4:30 p.m.

Spread the news – there's a welcoming and creative time for younger kids and their families to experience the Advent season coming on Sunday, December 10, at 4:30.

This upcoming event is the latest in a growing ministry designed to engage kids with a simple church service, plus opportunities for play, learning and prayer with their families.

"What we're doing welcomes their curiosity and questioning in a safe, non-judgmental, loving environment," said Jody Thomasson, who is helping steer the Family Worship ministry. "I love it because we're demonstrating that we value these children and are nurturing them in what is a truly spiritual time, and families see this."

Said Jody, "We're also finding, and it is a surprise to me, incredible depth and vulnerability in the kids and their questions as they try to make sense of God and church. It's an incredibly spiritual time."

At the December Advent service, kids will come together for a welcome, lesson and Eucharist, and then explore four activity stations. These include making crafts from recycled Christmas cards, learning a little about birds and creating a pinecone/peanut butter bird feeder, decorating sugar cookies and taking a break for a hearty snack. Then everyone comes back together for Christmas carols and prayer.

One notable aspect of Family Worship, said Jody, is that it also seems to be providing space to build community among the families who attend. "While the children are

focusing on hands-on activities, adults can talk with each other. Today, with work and all they have to do, these families lead really busy lives. This is a ministry for them, too."



New families have been drawn to Family Worship over the past several months, and Jody hopes the Holy Spirit congregation will see it as a vital way to connect families with the church's larger congregation and traditional services. "Our kids and families need to know how much they are loved by God and how much support they have from this faith community."

Community Ministries

Listening and working across differences

For our November Family Worship activity, we were working with the kids to assemble the Dvarishkis version of a turkey-resembling cookie/candy treat. The sample I made the night before – a fudge-striped cookie for the back



feathers, a small peanut butter cup and soft caramel for the body, a candy corn for the head/beak, and two red hots for the waddle, all held together with white frosting – seemed understandable enough. Yet as we walked through each step, some saw their turkeys with pieces placed upside down, or stuck on the back, or crooked, and with frosting on

every imaginable surface. When we were done, there wasn't one turkey in the gaggle that looked just like the sample or one another's!

The turkey experience gave me fresh perspective on our work in the Missoula Interfaith Collaborative to listen and work across differences. While we may all be studying Holy scriptures and share a belief in a greater power, how we come to understand and live out our faith can look very different. Gathering to share and listen to the faith stories that bring us to the table and move us in our ministries is revealing. And although no story is just like another, we come to understand a little more about how they shape us to see and practice our faith as we do. Listening and working across differences isn't easy, but it is helping us to truly see one another and build the relationships needed for faithful, collaborative work.

If work like this speaks to you, please reach out to me. There is room at the table.

Listening and working alongside you,

– THE VEN. DORCIE KAFKA
DVARISHKIS
dorcied@gmail.com
406-542-2167 church office

Join us for Centering Prayer

All are welcome to a circle of silent prayer. You will be gently led into and out of a 20-minute time of silence with prayer or readings. We gather in the Guild Room at Holy

Spirit on the third Tuesday of each month from 4 to 5 pm. That means we'll meet on Tuesday, December 19 in December. Questions? Contact Willie Hoffer at 541-815-9609.



Enhance your Advent vigil in the quiet of Compline on December 10 at 8 p.m.

Watch therefore for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning – lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. (Mark 13:35)

Enhance your Advent vigil in the quiet candlelight of Compline at 8 p.m. on Sunday, December 10th. The Holy Spirit Compline Choir will begin by chanting an Advent Litany. The meditations for the evening will be drawn from the words of St. Felgild, the 7th century Northumbrian saint ("Calm me, O Lord, as You stilled the storm."). Please join us for this serene and simple observation of Advent.

Please note that there will be no Compline on December 3.

– KEITH KUHN
COMPLINE LEADER

Where have all the bears gone?

Holy Spirit was entrusted this spring with finding new homes for Vicki Fleischer's extensive bear collection (we counted over 1750 bears). I am happy to report mission accomplished. Almost all the bears have been "adopted," many by Vicki's friends who had come to the Holiday Market to purchase one of her bears to "remember her by." As would be expected a good many of the bears did go to young, new owners, but it was surprising that we sold almost as many to adults as we did to children. Most of the higher priced collectible Steiff bears were sold; about half a dozen of the remaining ones were put into storage and will be available for purchase next year. The few bears that were not sold were donated to a variety of places including Watson's Children's Homes, the Meadowlark, patients in the Memory Care Unit, and the Montessori school in the church basement.

In the past whenever Vicki donated her prized possessions to the church, she would say it was time for them (her possessions) to make new memories for the new owners. I think Vicki's bears will be making happy memories for many years to come with their new owners. Tally-Ho Vicki and thank you.

– DIANE RASMUSON



Holiday Market Cookie Sale December 10 following both services

The Holiday Market wraps up with the Bake Sale on December 10

Mark your calendars! You and your sweet tooth won't want to miss this celebration! December 10th is the day for this year's Holiday Cookie Sale, and as usual it will be held after both the 8 a.m. and 10:15 a.m. services.

Our famous cookie table is always a mouth-watering sight to behold – irresistible! You will be able to make up your own assortments. We will also have some plates ready to grab and go.

So... we need your help. Your cookie (and candy) donations for the Sale may be brought to:

- the Church Office on Friday, December 8, before 4 p.m.
- the Parish Hall on Saturday, December 9, between 10 a.m. and 12 noon
- the Parish Hall on Sunday, December 10, before either service

We will also be looking for helpers for both Sunday services. You may call to sign up! Laura Taylor (406) 552-5825 or Diane

Holiday Market 2023

Another wonderful market – garnering over \$12,594.00 in sales, raffle, and auction totals. Sue Lowery and Diane Rasmuson – our sincerest thank yous for organizing this monumental event. And thank you to all the volunteers for the hours you gave to the market's success. We featured Vicki Fleischer's bear collection, but hundreds of other lovely items filled aisles of tables in the Parish Hall – all bestowed by you, our Holy Spirit family. For two days a steady stream of customers discovered just the right thing or two or way more as they shopped and

enjoyed the market. And, on Sunday lucky raffle ticket holders and auction bidders took home their treasures.

Kathy Polzin won the Death by Chocolate basket, *The Quilt Maker's Gift*, and a Pickleball lesson. Pickleball lessons were also won by Jesse Jaeger, Mary Lou Strand and Marti Eckerson. Alice and Dick Dailey won the Wine Basket. Frank and Bev Sherman took home the Barb Morrison cards and the Handbag. Katie Nederhoed won the Pet Basket. Joyce Watson the Beary-Berry Basket. Robin Childers the Puttin' on

Continued on Page 7

Social Concerns Committee

Another year of development for the Rio Grande Borderland Ministries

Uzbeks, Haitians, Senegalese, Venezuelans, Ecuadorians—these are just a few of the nationalities sheltered by the Rio Grande Borderlands Ministry in El Paso, TX in 2023. All of them fleeing complex humanitarian emergencies. More than 1,000 asylum seekers have been lovingly cared for at the small RGBM shelter housed at St. Christopher's Episcopal Church since it opened in March of 2022. Ana Reza, RGBM Bridge Chaplain, says, "Having a small shelter allows us the beauty of personal encounters with our guests. They all come to us in need of compassion and love."

In addition to maintaining the shelter at St. Christopher's, RGBM staff are building up their pilgrimage offerings. This year the staff hosted groups from Union Theological Seminary, the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast, and the National Cathedral, as well as from other parishes and organizations from across the country. In the Big Bend, RGBM staff continue to provide

pastoral care and spiritual support at the Pecos Shelter for unaccompanied minors, and to forge relationships with villages in rural Mexico. Members of our Holy Spirit community were privileged to participate in one of these efforts when we traveled to Jaboncillos, Mexico in April of 2023 to help with the construction of a rural school.

Our parish partnership with the Rio Grande Borderlands Ministry began two years ago. At their December meeting, the Holy Spirit Vestry voted to engage in a third yearlong covenant with RGBM. The Vestry made a pledge of \$1,000 and agreed to continue to support RGBM in 2024, through offerings of time, education, and prayer. Thank you, Holy Spirit Community, for helping feed, shelter, and care for those in need on both sides of our border with Mexico!

— AUDREY MURRAY
SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE

Holiday Market 2023

Continued from page 6

the Ritz Basket. Katie Steen's ticket won a Day with a Deacon. Glenn Hladek won the Soup Farm gift certificate, and Kate Houlihan won Glenn's Rack of BBQ Ribs delivery. Mary Tromly won the Bear Planter and the auction's wool vest. Katie Steen and Dorcie Dvarishkis will enjoy their gift certificates to the Book Exchange. Clem Work had the winning bid for the Nancy Erickson print. Nora Horton won the

cashmere stole and pin, Lynda McLeod the Steiff bear, Pamela Dix the quilt by Bonnie Tyro, and Liz Keane the dinner at the Boxcar Bistro and tickets to MCT. Raffle ticket sales alone garnered nearly \$1,700.00!

Stay tuned as the Christmas bake sale is coming soon – another perfect opportunity to share in the talents and love and generosity of our Holy Spirit Parish.

— BETSY HOLMQUIST
HOLIDAY MARKET COMMITTEE

Make a METC gift to Holy Spirit

The end of the calendar year is upon us. That means that it is time to consider using the Montana Endowment Tax Credit (METC) to make a special one-time contribution to the Holy Spirit Episcopal Church Fund at Montana Community Foundation (MCF). The Holy Spirit Fund is an endowment designed to provide annual revenue to Holy Spirit in perpetuity. **Every dollar given to the Holy Spirit Fund (\$2,500 minimum) reduces your state income tax by 40% of the amount given.** Questions concerning the METC should be directed to Jim Bennett at (406) 301-3918 or your tax preparer.



2023 Annual Gift Payments

In order for your annual gift payments to appear on your 2023 statement, your payments must be received in the church office or be postmarked by 12/31/2023. Payments received in January not postmarked by December 31, 2023 will be posted to your 2024 annual gift statement, even if the check is dated 2023. Just remember, donations are recorded in the year in which they are received.

HOLY SPIRIT PARISH

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Missoula, MT 59801-4222

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Christmas Services

Sunday, December 24 (Christmas Eve)

9:30 a.m. - Morning Prayer with hymns but no choir

4 p.m. - Christmas Eucharist with a special telling
of the Christmas Story. This service will not be livestreamed.

6:30 p.m. - Outdoor Service for all ages

10 p.m. - Traditional Christmas Choral Eucharist

This service will be livestreamed.

Monday, December 25 (Christmas Day)

No services.