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Advent Soup Potluck

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The Episcopal Church of the Holy Nativity

828 W. Cherry Lane
Meridian, Idaho 83642-1619
(208) 888-4342

Sunday Services 10:00am

Monthly Message

A Letter from Rev. Jennifer Anttonen



It certainly was a busy November at Holy Nativity with the Annual Christmas Bazaar and the Diocesan Convention the following weekend! Thank you to each of you, especially Gladys Clymens Bazaar Chair and Mary Buchanan, Senior Warden, and all who put in so much time and work to make each event a success!

Thank you to the Stewardship Committee: Richard Jones Chair. Ken Reglin, Linda Shearman, Janice Avera, and Nancy Hellstrom. Thank you too to Angelo Samperisi for the rousing skits and all who shared their Stewardship stories. Over \$170,000.00 was Pledged!

Advent begins on December 3 this year and we will begin the readings for Year B. We have a three year cycle of readings; A, B, C. With that cycle we are able to cover reading much of the Bible in a three year period of time. An unusual event this year is Advent 4 is on Christmas Eve. That morning at 10 am we will light the 4th Advent candle and have the Christmas Pageant. We will again be doing, "Touched By A Child" with the addition of a new song by the Choir. It is a wonderful interactive Pageant with the congregation, choir and children. Please let Mary Kay Martin know if your your child can be in the Christmas Pageant as we need to assign parts, costumes and have a rehearsal. Make sure you do not miss this special service! That night we will have a Festival Eucharist at 7pm. There will be no Christmas Day service here, but the Rev. Larry Speir will be holding a Christmas Day Service, for the area at a church and time to be determined. More information will follow. On Sunday, December 31 at 10 am we will have a wonderful service of Lessons and Carols.

On the table in the Narthex and Parish Hall is an Advent Calendar sheet for you to follow each day. The topics for each week are: Worship, Turn,

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Learn, Pray, Bless, Go, Rest. It is a wonderful resource, put out by the National Episcopal Church, that will deepen your experience of Advent. Please pick one up!

May these days ahead deepen our love of God and fill our hearts to overflowing with love, joy and peace.

Joy+,

Jennifer

Advent Potluck

Join us as we celebrate the beginning of Advent with a Soup Potluck meal immediately following the service.

Sunday, December 3rd

Delicious Soups - Rolls - Desserts



**Celebrating the
joys of Christmas together!**

Sign-up sheets are in the Parish Hall



Christmas Eve Services

**We hope you'll plan on joining us
for one or both of the Christmas Eve
services on Sunday, December 24th:**

10AM Christmas Pageant

"Touched by a Child, Touched by a King"

7PM Traditional Christmas Eve Mass

If you have children that would like to take part in this special service, please contact Mary Kay Martin (208) 731-3373 or the Rev. Jennifer Anttonen.

**We will have a dress rehearsal on
Sunday, December 17th immediately
following the morning worship service.**

Or, if you would like to join our choir during this wonderful time, please speak with Heidi Roberts, Musician.

Be sure to invite your family and friends to join us for this special service.



Poinsettias

for Christmas

Poinsettias are such a beautiful touch around the altar for Christmas. Not to mention, it's tradition!

If you would like to have a Poinsettia in remembrance of someone, as a celebration, or as an acknowledgement, please add your name to the list in the Parish Hall. Suggested donation is \$10.00 - *please remember to list "poinsettia" on the memo line of your check or on the outside of the envelope that you place in the offering plate or mail to the church.*

Be Our Guest Christmas Gift Bags

For many years, the Be Our Guest Ministry has handed out Gift Bags filled with nutritious food and assorted goodies to families in need.

Donations for additional items to help make their Christmas extra special are gratefully accepted and added to the gift bags, making someone's Christmas celebration extra special.

If you would be willing to help contribute to this effort, it would be greatly appreciated. Items could include such things as:

- Miniature loaves of bread
- Cookies
- Caramel Corn
- Christmas Candies
- Apples or Oranges
- Hot Cocoa Ingredients



Thank you in advance, for your assistance in this effort.

THE GIVING TREE

CHRISTMAS FAMILY OUTREACH



WHAT and WHY?

Each year at Christmastime, our parish reaches out to share Christ's love with one or more local families in need. We work closely with the counseling staff at **Meridian Elementary School** to identify families who need some assistance during the holiday season. This year, the Counselor has recommended two families whom we will have the opportunity to bless. One family has four children, ages 2 – 12 years old; the other family has five children, ages 7 - 12 years old. A special request by one of the families is assistance repairing their van to working condition or assistance finding a reliable 7+ passenger vehicle to enable Mom to find a job outside the home.

Please be praying about this – we have seen God move mountains in the past for other families!

HOW and WHEN?

This year, we will have two options for gifts:

1. Tags representing items for each family member are hanging on the Giving Tree set up in our Narthex. If you would like to shop for one of these items, please select a tag from the Giving Tree, find that Tag number listed on the sheet next to the Giving Tree, and fill in your name & telephone number. ***Please return the wrapped gift with the tag loosely taped to the gift by Sunday, December 17.*** If you purchase a gift card, please give it directly to Mary Buchanan or Carrie Magette for safekeeping until December 17. *(Please remember it is ok if not every tag is selected from the tree.)*
1. If you're not physically able to shop or simply don't have the time but would still like to help one of these families, please consider making a monetary donation to Holy Nativity. ***Please write "Christmas Family" on the memo line of your check and mail to Holy Nativity by Sunday, December 10.*** These funds will then be used to purchase items from the unselected tags on the Giving Tree or from a list of other clothing suggestions the children's parents made.

The gifts will be delivered to the Meridian Elementary School counseling staff before the last day of school on December 22, and they will coordinate a time to give the gifts to the families.



OTHER DETAILS:

There is a special fund at Holy Nativity called **"The 2 Cents a Meal Fund."** This fund was started by Deacon Paula Egbert, who served Holy Nativity from the late 1980s-2011 as our first Deacon. The purpose of this outreach fund is to help buy food during the holidays for area families in need.

Throughout the year, parishioners can participate by placing a jar on their dining room table, or kitchen counter, where they can put two cents in the jar each time they sit down for a meal. Jars are regularly emptied into a large Campbell's Soup can in the Narthex. What a great way to thank God for the blessings He bestows on us and in turn bless someone else! We will use this fund to purchase "grocery only" gift cards to WinCo to assist both families.

We may need some additional help wrapping and sorting gifts on Sunday, December 17. If you would be interested in helping or have any other questions, please contact Carrie Magette at (208) 880-7391 (cell).



Charting our course to obtainable goals

2024 Stewardship Campaign Results

- 58 households
- 86 individuals
- Total pledged: \$170,925.00
- Per Household: \$2946.00

We sincerely thank everyone who submitted a pledge card for the 2024 Stewardship Campaign. We are delighted to see an increase in the total number of pledges as well as the total amount pledged.

It is with heartfelt gratitude that we thank you for your continued support of the mission and ministry of Holy Nativity.

Your generosity will help us to continue to grow together as a community of faith and will help us to lay the foundation to call our next full-time-priest.

We do wish to acknowledge David Heninger who made a very generous \$33,000 donation towards the full-time priest fund. What an enormous blessing!

Now that you have turned in your pledge, pray that you can fulfill that pledge as 2024 unfolds and pray that the leaders of Holy Nativity are, as you have been, faithful stewards of the gifts entrusted to their leadership so that we can continue to be the hands and feet of Christ in our community.

As a side note: If you have not yet filled out a pledge card and wish to do so, additional cards are available in the Narthex. We will happily accept additional pledges. May God Bless.



Episcopal Church of the
Holy Nativity

An Important Way To Serve



The Episcopal Church of the Holy Nativity will elect one new Vestry member, three new Diocesan Convention Delegates, and one Convention Alternate at the Annual Meeting scheduled for January 28, 2024. The new Vestry member will serve a three-year term beginning February 1, 2024.

WHAT IS THE VESTRY?

The Vestry is the lay governing body of Holy Nativity. It helps define the mission of the congregation, selects the rector of the Church, ensures effective organization, and manages the Church's resources and finances. Next year's Vestry will play an integral role in developing future initiatives and strategic plans for hiring a full-time priest.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A VESTRY MEMBER

A Vestry member serves a three-year term, serves as a liaison to at least one other Church committee or ministry group, attends Church and Church events on a regular basis, and supports the annual stewardship campaign through pledging and raising funds. Candidates must be able to fulfill all of the requirements of the office.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A DIOCESAN CONVENTION DELEGATE

A Diocesan Convention Delegate attends church regularly, supports the annual stewardship campaign and supports the ministries of Holy Nativity.

IF YOU WISH TO HAVE YOUR NAME ADDED TO THE SLATE OF CANDIDATES

If you are interested in running for a position on the Vestry, or Diocesan Convention Delegate, please submit your application by providing your name and contact information as well as a paragraph stating why you wish to become a member of the Vestry or Convention Delegate.

▶ **Email your information
no later than Friday, December 22, 2023
to Mary Buchanan, Senior Warden
mkbdesigninc@gmail.com**

Names of individuals wishing to be considered, along with their paragraph stating why they wish to become a member of the Vestry or Convention Delegate, will be included in the January newsletter for review and consideration by the Parish prior to the Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 28, 2024.





56th Annual Idaho Episcopal DIOCESAN CONVENTION

The 56th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Idaho was held at Holy Nativity on November 10th and 11th. A huge screen for the various PowerPoint presentations was erected behind the altar and then surrounded by gorgeous fall-themed floral bouquets. The music was amazing with nearly 200 people singing in our sanctuary.

Delicious meals were catered by very efficient workers and our Parish Hall was set to serve 210 people. Meetings were held in various rooms, so that our campus was active in just about every square inch. It was a wonderful convention, we received many compliments and the Bishop concluded with a wonderful talk entitled "You Are The Potter, We Are The Clay".

Our special thanks to Matt Wheeler and Richard Bowring who spent untold hours, days, weeks, working to update our audio system for this event. We greatly appreciated their time and effort to pull everything together. We also wish to acknowledge and thank **our Delegates** (pictured above from left to right: **Bob Burnz, Janice Avera and Judy Pierce**) who represented Holy Nativity. And we are also grateful for **Marc Fox, Sr.**, who is a professional photographer. Not only did he take photos of the event, but he and our Delegates also stayed after to help put everything back in place.

Once the crowds had cleared, **Clare Barrett and Tammie Bradley** rushed over to clean up all the items that had been used for communion and then got things ready for the next morning. We are so very blessed to have all these amazing people in our parish. We have so much to be thankful for.



Holiday Bazaar Success!

Our very special thanks to Gladys Clymens and Sandra Koerner who worked so hard to make our "Tis The Season" Holiday Bazaar a wonderful success. We made a record **\$3,224.40**.

We also wish to express our sincere appreciation to Marian Hendrix, Sue Pahlas, Linda Morris, Janine Helms and Darlene Stattner who worked so hard to organize and prepare the wonderful food that was served. They had loads of delicious pies and cookies that were donated and Donna Lofton busily running the cash register each day. We are truly blessed and so very grateful for all they did.

We also want to acknowledge all those who helped with set-up, clean-up or helped in any way. This is a big event! As the saying goes "it takes a village" and this is definitely one of those cases where many hands make all the difference.



Gladys Clymens (left) Sandra Koerner (right)

Are We Warm & Welcoming?

Building a culture of hospitality and welcome is key.



It's an exciting day when we have new members join Holy Nativity; not just because of church growth, but because we are inviting new members into the life of the church and the body of Christ!

So how do we make a good first impression on new church attendees and members?

Our newcomer ministry is ready and waiting with a gift bag for newcomers. It contains information about Holy Nativity for them to read plus a delicious loaf of homebaked bread. That's a great start! But we can't stop there. We want to make new people feel welcome if they are going to call Holy Nativity their church home. **Our whole church** needs to be dedicated to welcoming people.

It's up to all of us to extend a warm welcome, to say "hello" introduce ourselves and **make it clear we're glad they're here**. Even saying something as simple as "hi, I don't think we've met yet" can go a long way to making new members feel welcome and wanted on a Sunday morning.

Invite them to join us for Coffee Hour.

Sitting with wonderful friends at coffee hour is enjoyable. Let's make sure we invite new people to join us at our table, chat with them and make them feel welcome from the moment they step foot in the door until the moment they leave with gift bag in hand. It's up to each of us to show them how wonderful Holy Nativity truly is.

With warm regards,
Mary Buchanan, Senior Warden



OCTOBER 2023 TREASURER'S REPORT

Cash Balance		\$96,066.11
Accounts Payable / Bills		676.66
Balance After Payment		\$95,389.45

FUND BALANCES

Operating Reserve	\$9,287.71	
Be Our Guest	\$4,636.45	
Caring Closet Fund	\$2,162.83	
Children's Ministry	\$645.08	
2 Cents A Meal	\$2,284.96	
Building Fund	(\$2,449.76)	
Memorial Fund	\$2,835.84	
Paradise Point	\$3,941.08	
Youth Mission	\$1,373.00	
Kitchen Improvements	\$8,808.56	
Kitchen: New Dishwasher	300.00	
Music Fund	\$95.00	
Altar Guild Donation	\$1,090.73	
Landscaping	\$1,050.00	
Sound System	\$2,300.00	
Discretionary Fund	\$4,196.73	
Full Time Priest Fund	\$135,471.19	
Nampa & Meridian Irrigation	200.00	
Thanksgiving Baskets	350.00	
Total		\$178,579.40

MONTHLY RECURRING EXPENSES

New Commercial Loan	\$2,251.00	
Priest	\$1,760.68	
Total		\$4,011.68



December Birthdays

- Tom Mayes12/4
- Heather McVay12/4
- Matt Wheeler12/5
- Chris Benson12/6
- Carolyn Winters12/7
- Bob Burnz12/9
- Jackie Dwight12/11
- Ellie McMillan12/14
- Rabekah Conger12/15
- Clare Barrett12/16
- Greg Dwight12/16
- Janet Willoughby12/16
- Nancy Ross12/18
- Josh Sterbis12/18
- Debbie Domka12/19
- Chinwendu Agwanacha12/20
- Mary Alice Sanders12/22
- Sandra Koerner12/25
- Larissa Blount12/29



December Anniversaries

- Steve and Diana Bush12/5
- Orve and Marian Hendrix12/14
- Clay and Sondra Lisle12/19
- James and Gail Roberts12/21

Fall Yard Clean-up • Nov. 11th

With great appreciation for all they did!



Lilian Dwight



Phil Street - he's a pro at this



Jerry Lofton busy at work.



Jon Anson loading his trailer...with a little help.



Leaves Everywhere!

We appreciate the help with the Fall Clean-up effort. Load after load of leaves were raked up and hauled away.

Thank you!



Girl Scouts - it was a brisk morning!

Vestry Meeting Minutes

November 16, 2023 | 7:00PM | Rectory

Guests: Janet Hasson, Ron Gambassi, representatives from the Idaho Episcopal Foundation.

Meeting called to order at 7:00pm. Mary read the Prayer for Vestries.

Minutes of October meeting: approved by e-mail.

IEF presentation: Janet Hasson began her presentation by presenting a check to Mary, representing the grant that she applied for to replace the dishwasher in the parish hall kitchen. Janet and Ron gave a thorough and interesting overview of what Idaho Episcopal Foundation is and what they do. There are three areas of investments: Planned Giving, End of Life Planning and Parish Funds. Twenty of 27 parishes have funded accounts with IEF. Depending on the type of plan, funds are readily available. The IEF Endowment for grants to parishes is not funded by parish funds. This fund was set up years ago by an individual and only the interest is used for grants. Brochures and other information were left with the Senior Warden.

Financial: Mike reported that the current checking account totals \$95,389.45 after current bills. Total funds are \$273,968.85. Mike was asked if it would be advantageous to move the \$50,000 CD to an account with IEF. Mike felt that it is better at this time to leave the CD in place. Interest earned last month was \$50.

Mike reported that last year it cost \$137,000 (less clergy costs) to run Holy Nativity. The Priest Package is priced at \$111,000.

Priest report: Rev. Larry Speir asked if he could use our sanctuary for a Christmas Day service. The vestry thought that it would be nice to allow, but after coming out of Convention mode we decided to decline the use of the church. Jennifer was eager to have a Candles and Carols service with a potluck on the 17th, but Heidi was not able to play that evening. An Advent potluck on the 3rd of December will be held. We incurred some expenses during the Convention: tech supplies, extra utilities.



These will be billed to the Dioceses when the figures are available. Vestry members were reminded to watch out for visitors and make sure they are invited to Coffee Hour and visit with them or introduce them to other members.

Senior Warden: We have a Priest candidate scheduled to visit on the 7th of December. Mary will meet with him and drive him around our area. He is set to visit two other Idaho communities during this time.

Carrie Magette contacted the Meridian Elementary School about our Christmas Family Outreach. They have two families, 4 adults and 9 children. We agreed to adopt these two families for Christmas as has been our custom in previous years.

The Vestry on Duty needs to be sure to lock the front doors of the church after Coffee Hour as well as the Parish Hall. Inside doors need not be locked except for the “turquoise” room in the Parish Hall. Matt and Richard have some electronics stored there. Vance has announced his decision to not seek re-election. Mike Magette has also made it known that he would like to step down from the finance position. He requests that a search begin for his replacement. The Annual Meeting will be scheduled for January 28, 2024.

Fellowship: Sandra reported that the Bazaar was a success. Vendor fees brought in \$1400.00, and the kitchen proceeds were \$700.00. Sandra asked if it would be advantageous to apply for a Costco Membership card, annual cost is \$60, to receive the tax-exempt status we are entitled to. Costco requires a special application for this card. No decision was made. The Advent Dinner, soup and bread, and desserts, will be held again this year on December 3rd. An additional person was added to each Coffee Hour team.

Outreach: Barbara reported that the Be Our Guest team met at Michelle's home to discuss the Christmas Baskets for BOG participants. One member is donating gift cards from Winco for each basket. Expenses are increasing for food as well as the containers used for the meals. Barbara asked that an increase in the BOG budget be considered in the new budget. New people are coming each week. Mike made it clear that Michelle should not be that concerned about staying strictly within her budget as there is money available to buy what is needed.

Jr. Warden: Clay Lisle had arranged for the sprinkler blow-out again this year. The Fall cleanup was done just before the Convention. Anttonen's spearheaded the restriping of the parking lot to facilitate parking during the Convention. The Church's alarm system will be tested, and Phil is arranging for the fire extinguishers to be inspected. The Fire Department came out last year to inspect premises so we probably will not have that done this year.

Vance asked that the cleaning company come out Thursday before Convention and clean the bathrooms. There was a major misunderstanding and the person that was sent thought he was to replenish paper products. Phil had already done this, so cleaning was not done. We were not charged for this. It has been determined that the grout on the floors of the bathrooms cannot be cleaned thoroughly; they need to be regouted or replaced. A bid was received for regrouting, more than \$5,000. We do not have the funds to do this project at this time. Vance will relay our decision to the cleaning company who submitted the bid.

The HVAC system project was discussed. Jon found out that the Capital Reserve Fund will match, dollar for dollar, up to \$10,000.00 for this type of project. Jon will get the paperwork for this grant for Jennifer and Mary to sign. Two options were discussed: 1. Replace air conditioner/condenser and two new gas furnaces. 2. Put in a Heat Pump and to duo-fuel furnaces. There is a \$6,000.00 difference in these options. As money is always an issue, the Vestry voted to go with option #1, in the amount of \$24,000.00, replacing what we have now. Reducing our carbon footprint is just too expensive at this time. The air conditioners for the Sunday School wing are 20 years old and are at the end of their projected span so they may need

to be replaced someday soon. The details of Vestry's decision will be outlined at the Annual Meeting so we can decide how to pay for this repair.

Stewardship: Richard reported that the pledge secretary has received 52 pledges so far in the amount of \$155,000.00. Last year we received 50 pledges in the amount of \$137,000.00. There will be one more stewardship presentation before the pledges are blessed on the 26th.

Next Vestry meeting: We will meet in the home of John and Jennifer Anttonen on December 20, 2023, at which time the budget for 2024 will be discussed.

Adjourned: Meeting adjourned at 9:31pm with the Lord's Prayer

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen

Karen Ryker

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Bishop of Idaho: The Rt. Rev. Jos Tharakan
 Interim Priest: Rev. Jennifer Anttonen
 Assisting Priest: Rev. Alice Farquhar-Mayes
 Church Musician: Heidi Roberts
 Senior Warden: Mary Buchanan
 Junior Warden: Vance Wegner
 Finance Chairman: Mike Magette
 Treasurer: Sue Pahlas
 Office Manager: Cindy Wolfenbarger
 Ministry Schedule: Mary Buchanan
 Sunday School: Carrie Magette
 Altar Guild: Clare Barrett
 Food Bank: Richard Jones
 Fellowship: Sandra Koerner
 Women's Group: Sue Pahlas
 Worship: Rev. Jennifer Anttonen
 Newsletter: Mary Buchanan
 Website: Mary Buchanan