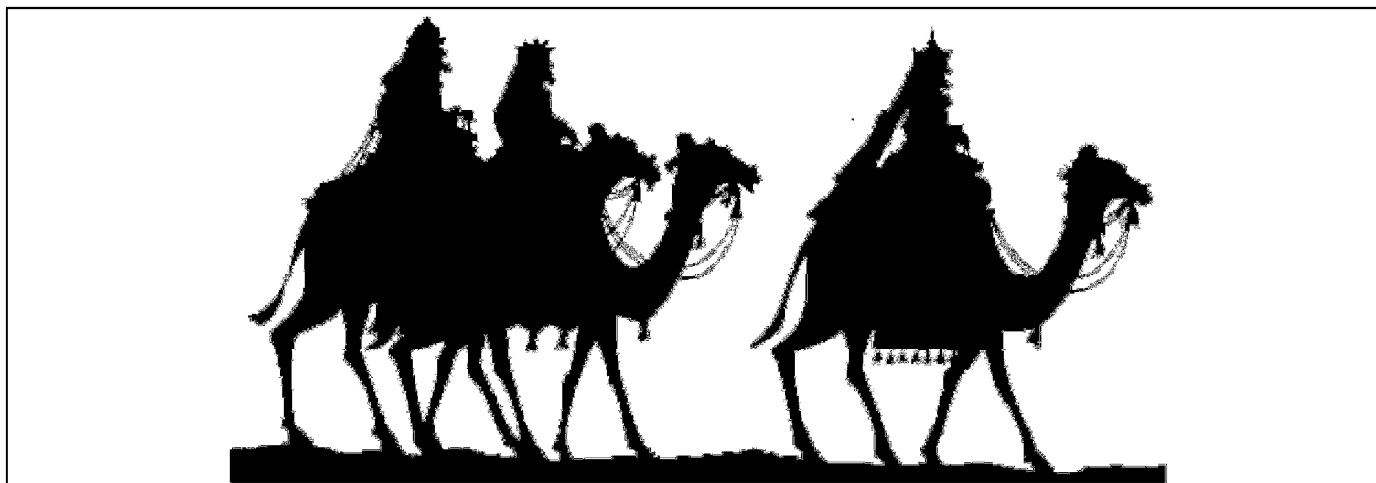


The Eagle's Wings



January 2012 A monthly newsletter of St. John's Episcopal Church, 628 Main St., Stamford, CT 06901 Vol. 5 No. 1

Journey to Christ



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My own recent pilgrimage to Palestine reminded me of the journey of the Wise Men. They searched for the Christ child, traveling from foreign lands through desert and along trade routes by camel and donkey. They endured hardships, and finally found Christ in the remote town of Bethlehem.

The story of the Wise Men's journey and search for Christ inspires us. We are called to continue our spiritual journey, seek Christ, and invite Christ into our lives and hearts. And in our search for Christ, we will face challenges. Personal challenges can pull us away from our search for Christ: making a living, family and friends, burnout, fear of failure. We can be overwhelmed by seemingly insoluble problems of society and the world. Insidious

destructive voices belittle all that is joyous and life-giving. The Wise Men teach us to be persistent.

The Wise Men expected to find a wealthy earthly king to deliver the world from political oppressors, to solve the world's problems with the knowledge. Instead they found the King of Kings and Lord of Lords a vulnerable child in a modest cave-home in a remote village. They accepted Jesus as they found Him, and listened to the dreams that warned to "return by another way." They teach us to be open to God's unexpected ways of fulfilling promises.

Bethlehem was not at all what I expected. It is a seemingly unremarkable town about an hour by bus from Jerusalem. The Church of the Nativity, a modern structure, stands over the place

where Christ was born. Christians of all ages, from every part of the world have come here. There is a lot of noise as we wait in a long line snaking down into the lower levels of the church, and wait to file past a cave in the rock. A silver and gold casing affixed to the lower portion of the rock frames the spot. Over the spot is an altar encased in a protective Plexiglas covering.

But as we approach, the talking ceases. And one by one, pilgrims kneel, wordlessly. In this moment of sacred time and space, I see as God sees. I see the utter beauty and joy of God's free gift of love. And like so many before me, I bow and lay my hands and my lips on this spot. Like the Wise men, I am changed by this encounter, and I "go home by another way." Amen.

Mother Kathleen+

Parish News

St. John's Annual Reports

All Heads of Committees and Activities must turn their annual reports to the parish office by Monday, January 9, 2012 in order to prepare for the annual meeting that has been scheduled for Sunday, January 22, 2012 following the 10:15 a.m. service. Please email your report to: info@stjohns-stamford.org or if you cannot send it electronically, you may mail it to Sandie DeFilippis or drop it off at my office. Thank you. Sandie DeFilippis

St. John's Rising: The Next Phase Kitchen, Dining Room and Accessibility

Capital Campaign Canvassers are going out for the next phase of St. John's Rising, the ongoing transformation and renovation of our buildings. So far almost \$175,000 has been raised for the renovation of the kitchen and dining rooms, as well as improving accessibility for those who are disabled. Our target for the capital campaign is \$500,000. If you would like to make a contribution or a 1, 3 or 5 year pledge to this vital project, please speak with Sheelagh Schlegel or Jean Aranha. Checks to the new capital campaign should have a notation, "Capital Campaign Phase 3."

FESTIVAL CHOIR, JANUARY 29

We will be reconvening our "Festival Choir" for Sunday, January 29th. This choir is for anyone who would love a chance to sing but isn't able to join us on a full-time basis. We all had a GREAT time when we started the choir this past fall; all you need is a love of music and the ability to carry a tune!

The rehearsal will be from 7:30-8:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 26th in the Choir Room, with another meeting on Sunday morning the 29th at 9 a.m. to prepare for the service.

Please email Chris Shepard (cshepard@stjohns-stamford.org) if you're interested! Singers of ALL ages, beginning at the age of 10 are invited to sing a spiritual together!

What's in a Name?

Everything is in a name and we need a new one for "that area" in the middle building that is by the stairway, next to the elevator, outside the library and Godly Play room, just by the bulletin boards. Each time anyone asks about this area, St. John's staff goes through any one or all of these descriptions to describe "that area".

So, if you can think of a new name or have any suggestions, please submit them to Father Jim—the sooner the better! Thank you.

Wi-Fi Zone in Middle Building

Free Wi-Fi is now available to all St. John's parishioners in our newly renovated Middle Building. You will find active Wi-Fi zones with internet access in the Eagle's Loft, the library, Baronial Hall, classrooms, 1st floor hallway and the Teen HQ. The network name is **stjohns** and the password is **eaglesloft** (all one word). Special thanks to Bruce Kittredge for setting up this network for our parishioner's use.

Canterbury Green Garage Parking Update: Permanent parking passes available

The owners of Canterbury Green Garage have offered permanent swipe parking passes to any parishioners who would like one. That way you won't need a parking ticket to enter or exit the parking garage, just swipe your card. If you would like your own parking pass please contact our Parish Administrator, Sandie DeFilippis (203-348-2619, ext 10) (sdefilippis@stjohns-stamford.org). Give her your full name, make and year of car and license plate #.

Our Mission / Vision

St. John's is a wonderfully diverse community of faith rooted in the heart of downtown Stamford, where the Holy Spirit is leading us toward a new humanity in Christ. We embrace this vision by welcoming all people to:

- Celebrate God in the beauty of holiness through the richness of Anglican worship and glorious music;
- Strengthen their spiritual journeys through prayer, study and scripture; and
- Serve as instruments of God's peace, justice and love in the world.

Need more
information?
Visit our website!

www.stjohns-stamford.org

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

8:00 A.M.

Holy Eucharist with
Healing – Rite I
With Organ

10:00 A.M.

Children's Program
and Nursery

10:15 A.M.

Holy Eucharist with
Healing – Rite II
with Organ and Choir

11:30 A.M.

Coffee Hour

6:15 P.M.

L'Eglise de L'Epiphanie
Holy Eucharist in French

SATURDAY SERVICE

5:00 P.M.

Holy Eucharist – with healing

WEEKLY SERVICE SCHEDULE

WEDNESDAY 7:00 A.M.

Holy Eucharist – with healing
and light breakfast

THURSDAY 12:10 P.M.

Holy Eucharist –
with healing and music

Children's Christian Education News

God Speak Unraveled

When listening to another person speak, do you tend to nod as if to say "I'm with you"- even when your not, or "I hear you" – even if you don't understand. I've done that.

When I was a teen in youth group to hear the words "Kingdom of God," I would often imagine the words being spoken in a powerful, booming, and commanding voice. I would nod my head in understanding. But to be honest, at 16, the idea of God's kingdom was foreign to me. Images of a bedazzled crown, a long purple robe, and a scepter came to me. Who has a scepter these days?

Stories and Metaphors

On my first day as a youth leader, I was assigned to go through the scriptures for different metaphors. The kids got into an intense conversation which got me thinking.

Jesus was a master storyteller and made good use of his environment when he spoke about God. The people he spoke to planted crops, so when he told a parable about planting and harvesting, it made sense to them. Maybe you grow things in your back yard or a community garden, unfortunately, I don't have a green thumb. On some level I can understand Jesus' examples. I understand how things grow or have trouble growing, but I don't have experience with them.

I had the same problem with other images. Using ballet as an example; I see the positions a ballerina makes; but if I'm not a dancer, I won't know the dedication and hard work it requires. I can understand how to play a sport or an instrument but if I lack experience the metaphor isn't as powerful.

When Jesus says, "*The Kingdom of God is...*" (Mark 4:26-29), Jesus is using a metaphor. He's comparing the kingdom of God with something people understood, something in which they had experience. What metaphors for the kingdom of God would Jesus use today, if he were talking to us? Perhaps...

The Kingdom of God is like YouTube. Ok, metaphors aren't perfect, but would Jesus say the Kingdom of God is similar to a place where you can post videos that bring hope or joy to other people?

I don't know what metaphors Jesus would use today. But I do know that to help our youth understand words like The Kingdom of God and to truly nod in agreement, we need to help our youngest members make comparisons with their own *experiences*.

Take an extra challenge: draw a picture, write a list, or take a picture that would express what God's Kingdom would be like and mail it to: Patricia Chery "*Gods Kingdom would be like*" St Johns Episcopal Church, 628 Main Street, Stamford, CT 06901 or email it to me at pchery@stjohns-stamford.org we would love to post it on the church website or bulletin board. *Patricia Chery, Children's Christian Education Director*

January Scripture



He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

John 1:10-12

PARISH REGISTRY

NEW

Sandy and Scott Sunderland

DIED

Elizabeth Evans
Janet Meeker
Frederick Ramsey



The Eagle's Wings

January 2012

The Eagle's Wings is a monthly publication of St. John's Episcopal Church, Stamford, CT

Contributors:

A. Chaitas, J. Holt, C. Schwartz
S. Stearns & St. John's Staff

Your comments, suggestions and offers to contribute to future issues are encouraged. Please contact Bronice P. Gage at: 203-348-2619 ext 14 or bpikul@stjohns-stamford.org.

The deadline for the next issue is January 16th.

St John's

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Clergy and Staff

Office Hours: Mon. - Thurs.
9:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Friday 9:00 A.M. - Noon

Rector

The Rev. Dr. James R. Wheeler

Assistant to the Rector

The Rev. Kathleen Berkowe

Associate Clergy

The Rev. Elizabeth H. Skaleski,
Deacon

L'Epglise de l'Epiphanie

The Rev. Judith Alexis

Director of Music

Christopher Shepard

Organist

Dr. Sean Jackson

Parish Administrator

Sandie DeFilippis

Children's Ministries

Patricia Chery

Seminarian Intern

Leigh Mackintosh

Communications

Bronice P. Gage

Sexton

Owen Brissett

Volunteer for the Administration

George Howard

New Member Ministry

Phyllis Wilson

In our Community

Christmas Show Thank You



To all the cast, crew, contributors and the many more unnamed volunteers who helped: A Big Thank You to all of you for making this amazing gift to our community possible. Have a Blessed New Year.
- Fr. Jim, Mother Kathleen and Deacon Liz

Photographers: John Cook, Alison Chaltas, Lisa Cerulli, and Ann Giuli

Reception: Jackie Dixon, Jennifer Ho, Nessa Murray, Carmen Johnson, Enid Ottinger, Martha Whitehead, Ann Giuli

St. Nicholas: Glenn Wecker

Cast Dinner: Roslyn Mainville, Jewell Brain, Sandie DeFillipis, Charles Wade, Olive Grant, Mary Lettman, Carol Wheeler

Food for Rehearsals: Phyllis Wilson, Jennifer Ho, Jayne Prabhudas, Sunny Stearns, Jane Holt, Caroline Smit, Anne Mavor, Dell Kendall, Meredith West, Kiki Cook, Susan Bolognino, John Svagr, Derrick Campbell, Julie Murphy, Richard Biggar, Marion George

Costumes: Michelle Richard, Carolyn Gamanos, Stephanie Dieudonné, Leanna Pettit

Ticket Takers: Jersey Chen, Amanda Pong, Elise Zwart, Nickie Mehan, Sasha Mehan, Nessa Murray, Martha Whitehead, Ann Giuli, Marilyn Tague

Ushers: Chris Weekes, Kelly Chatman, Tim Kilham, Jiannethe Grajales, Jon Saunders, Peggy and Owen Kittle, Sheeleigh Schlagel, Evan Jones, Tara Williams, Malik Rowe, Krantz Medeus, Charles Dixon, Maury and Larry Ottinger, Leslie Ilaw, Lynne Muth

Lighting: John Svagr, Derrick Campbell, Steve Cerulli, George Howard, Bruce Kittredge

Clean Up: Sunny and John Stearns, Betsy and Alan Owens, Fr. Jim, Patrick Shays, Ann Giuli, Julie Murphy, Shideh Khorasheh, Owen Brissett, Guy Perrotta and Jane Ferguson, Leslie Ilaw

And a very Special thanks to: Betsy Owens, our director; Sunny Stearns, our producer and Susan de Morais, program coordinator

In our Community and Beyond

A Thank you from Habitat for Humanity of Coastal Fairfield County

Father Jim received a note to pass along from Caitlin Scanlan, Director of Development from Habitat for Humanity of Coastal Fairfield County to all those who volunteered on the 8 Unit Condo West Main Street Project in Stamford.



New W. Main St. Homeowners

"...Thank you again for all your gifts of time and talent that have made the West Main Street build a reality. We hope you enjoyed the celebration Saturday as we dedicated the first four units. Pictures from the big day have been posted on our Facebook page and below is a public link that you can pass around to your congregation members. Enjoy!"

<http://www.facebook.com/media/set/set=a.292097130825234.73643.114469478588001&type=1&l=d64e3b89f8>

News from the St. John's Foundation

Most of us know St. John's has had a very long and close relationship with St. Luke's LifeWorks, founding the organization as a mission of St. John's in the late 1880s. For those less familiar with this great organization, SLLW's mission is to break the cycle of homelessness by helping people achieve - and maintain - permanent housing and stability in their lives.

As stated on www.stlukeslifeworks.org, "Constantly changing to meet the needs of the community, LifeWorks became an independent non-denominational charity in 1987. Today, services are provided to more than 400 adults and children who face homelessness each year at 10 locations; eight in Stamford, one in Georgetown and one in Fairfield, Connecticut. LifeWorks' current focus is on providing educational opportunities, coaching and mentoring, and housing for families and individuals facing homelessness, recovering from mental illness, or living with HIV/AIDS. The ultimate goal is for the people served by LifeWorks to achieve greater self-sufficiency and a home of their own."

St. John's continues to support SLLW in a wide range of ways including serving dinner one night a month to shelter residents, to Father Jim serving on their board, to very generous donations from the St. John's Community Foundation, to leasing SLLW our Woodland Avenue property for \$1 per year to use as women's shelter. All parishioners should feel great about our outreach through SLLW. Two particularly interesting pieces of news:

In 2011 St. John's Foundation's grant helped fund a very needed Youth Center within their Franklin Street property. The Center will fill an essential void. The new Youth Center will address the unique problems homeless children face such as isolation from the larger community, emotional instability, physical instability, broken families, abuse, low self-esteem etc. – all of which cause people to turn to escape mechanisms such as drugs, crime, and unhealthy relationships. The Center will provide a safe, structured place for children to do homework, receive essential tutoring, talk about pressures related to being homeless, address issues such as dating, and learn how to avoid the pitfalls that lead to intergenerational homelessness and poverty. The Youth Center will be a place where children also receive healthy snacks, learn about art and music, and participate in physical activities. In short, it will provide a structured area in which to develop and grow at the same pace as children who are not homeless.



New just this week, the Optimus Clinic at St. Luke LifeWorks' Woodland campus has officially opened. The clinic, located in the Women's Housing Program in the South End of Stamford, will be available to all St. Luke's LifeWorks' clients around Woodland Campus and, eventually, to the local community in the South End. Our strategic partnership with Optimus Health Care ensures that participants at our South End campus have access to behavioral health care, psychiatric care and medical care that is integrated with the social services they receive from us. Optimus and St. Luke's LifeWorks will partner on joint intakes, management and discharge plans, meaning that the medical, psychiatric, employment and housing plans are integrated and reinforce one another. Optimus is looking to duplicate this innovative model at other sites.



We hope more members of the St. John's family will get involved in supporting St. Luke's LifeWorks with gifts of time, talent and treasure. Thanks to those who make this all possible. *Submitted by: Alison Chaltas & Carole Schwartz*

Save the Date!

Sunday, January 1 ~ New Year's Day ~ 10:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist and Dutch Brunch

Join us for the New Year's Day Holy Eucharist and a "Dutch-treat" brunch at a local restaurant immediately following the service. All are welcome! See Fr. Jim for more details.

Sunday, January 8 ~ Patronal Feast of L'Eglise de l'Epiphanie Service and Reception ~ 6:00 p.m.

In 1991, St. John's members and vestry welcomed their Haitian Episcopal brothers and sisters, l'Eglise de l'Epiphanie, a newly formed Haitian mission of the Diocese of Connecticut to worship in St. John's wonderful sanctuary. In addition, St. John's provided them with office space to better serve the Haitian community at large. It is in this spirit of our Christian life together that l'Epiphanie invites the St. John's community to join us for our Patronal Feast of the Epiphanie of Our Lord Jesus at 6:00 p.m. in St. John's sanctuary. The Right Reverend Ian T. Douglas, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut will celebrate and preach. Your prayers and presence are requested. Following the service, there will be a reception in the parish hall, all are welcome. For more information, call the Reverend Judith Alexis at 203-964-1517 or email her at eglise.epiphanie@yahoo.com. Please bring a donation of canned goods for our neighbors at St Luke's LifeWorks.

Monday, January 9 ~ Heads of Committees Report Due Date for Annual Meeting

Thursday Morning Bible Study, ~ Exploration of *A Grief Observed*, by C.S. Lewis ~ 10:30 a.m.

Led by Fr. Wheeler , beginning January 12 through February 9.

Have you ever experienced a significant loss? In the most personal book C.S. Lewis observes the pain and challenge to his faith he experienced in the loss of his wife Joy to cancer. Participants will explore C.S. Lewis' short and poignant work, make comparisons to an earlier philosophical work, *The Problem of Pain*, share our own experiences of loss and turn to the scriptures to see how different people in the Bible dealt with their grief and loss.

The Thursday morning study group is open to both women and men. A 12:10 p.m. Eucharist with organ and healing prayers and a brown bag lunch follow for anyone who is available to join in. The Thursday morning study group has seen a wide variety of people move in and out of the group over the years but has always had a strong tradition of study, fun and great fellowship. This new study in the New Year would be a great time to check out this day-time study group. Copies of *A Grief Observed* are available from Fr. Jim for \$10.00.

Sunday Mornings ~ Adult Formation, Scripture Study ~ 9:00 - 9:45 a.m.

Our Sunday morning Adult Formation will begin again on January 15. No preparation is necessary, Discerning God's Call – How do we listen for God's voice? God calls us to help bring in God's Kingdom! We will explore the reading from the days of Israel's first King, *1 Samuel 3:1-10*. We remember Martin Luther King's response to God's call on his commemoration day January 16. How do we respond to God's call in large and small ways? We meet at 9:00 a.m. in the library.

Sunday, January 22 ~ Annual Parish Annual Meeting 11:30 a.m.

St. John's annual meeting will be held immediately following the 10:15 a.m. service in the Eagle's Loft.

Wednesday, January 25 ~ Presentation on Israel and Potluck with Mother Kathleen ~ 6:30 p.m.

Join us in the Eagle's Loft for a potluck and presentation of Mother Kathleen's recent trip to Israel.

Neighbors Link Needs Saturday Volunteers!

Neighbors Link is the city's newest community resource center. It provides services to educate, empower, and integrate the recent immigrants who live in our community. Neighbors Link is growing and now has opportunities for volunteers on Saturdays. They are in need of tutors who will assist others who are learning how to use computers. There is also a need for people who will take part in small group conversation classes in English. There are also many other opportunities which include child care, community outreach, event planning, and administrative support. Come and be a part of this vibrant and growing community center; it is fun and very rewarding! **Saturday volunteer opportunities will begin January 14!**



Deacon Liz will be going on January 21, and would be happy to fill up her car with volunteers! If you are interested, please speak to her directly or email her at: deaconliz624@gmail.com.

January Parish Calendar and Important Dates

Monday, December 26 - (Parish Office Closed)

Sunday, January 1 – New Year's Day*

Please note: There will be no 8 a.m. Service Today

10:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist Service

11:30 a.m. Dutch Brunch

Monday, January 2 - (Parish Office Closed)

Tuesday, January 3

7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

Wednesday, January 4

6:30 p.m. Quilting Group Meeting

7:00 p.m. Christmas Show Meeting

Thursday, January 5

2:00 p.m. Staff Meeting

7:00 p.m. Pre-Baptismal Class

7:00 p.m. Boy Scout Meeting

Sunday, January 8

10:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist & Baptism

12:00 p.m. Worship Committee Meeting

5:00 p.m. L'Epiphanie Choir Rehearsal

6:00 p.m. L'Epiphanie Patronal Feast Day**

All are invited to celebrate

Monday, January 9 - Head of Committees Deadline to submit reports for Annual Meeting

Tuesday, January 10

7:00 p.m. Vestry

Wednesday, January 11

6:30 p.m. Quilting Group Meeting

Thursday, January 12

10:30 a.m. Thursday Morning Bible Study

2:00 p.m. Staff Meeting

7:00 p.m. Boy Scout Meeting

7:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

Sunday, January 15

9:00 a.m. Adult Formation (Library)

12:30 p.m. Stewardship Committee Lunch

5:00 p.m. L'Epiphanie Choir Rehearsal

Monday, January 16 - Martin Luther King Day

Parish Office Closed

Wednesday, January 18

6:30 p.m. Quilting Group Meeting

Thursday, January 19

10:30 a.m. Thursday Morning Bible Study

2:00 p.m. Staff Meeting

7:00 p.m. Boy Scout Meeting

7:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

Saturday, January 21

Neighbors Link Volunteers needed (see below)

Sunday, January 22

9:00 a.m. Adult Formation (Conference Room)

11:30 a.m. Annual Meeting (Eagle's Loft)

5:00 p.m. L'Epiphanie Choir Rehearsal

Wednesday, January 25

6:30 p.m. Presentation on Israel and Potluck with Mother Kathleen

6:30 p.m. Quilting Group Meeting

Thursday, January 26

10:30 a.m. Thursday Morning Bible Study

2:00 p.m. Staff Meeting

7:00 p.m. Boy Scout Meeting

7:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

Friday, January 27

5:30 p.m. Cooking at St. Luke's

Sunday, January 29

9:00 a.m. Adult Formation (Library)

5:00 p.m. L'Epiphanie Choir Rehearsal

Monday, January 30

6:00 p.m. Community Foundation Meeting

Wednesday, February 1

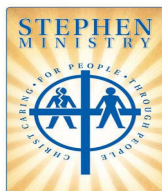
6:30 p.m. Quilting Group Meeting

Thursday, February 2

10:30 a.m. Thursday Morning Bible Study

2:00 p.m. Staff Meeting

7:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal



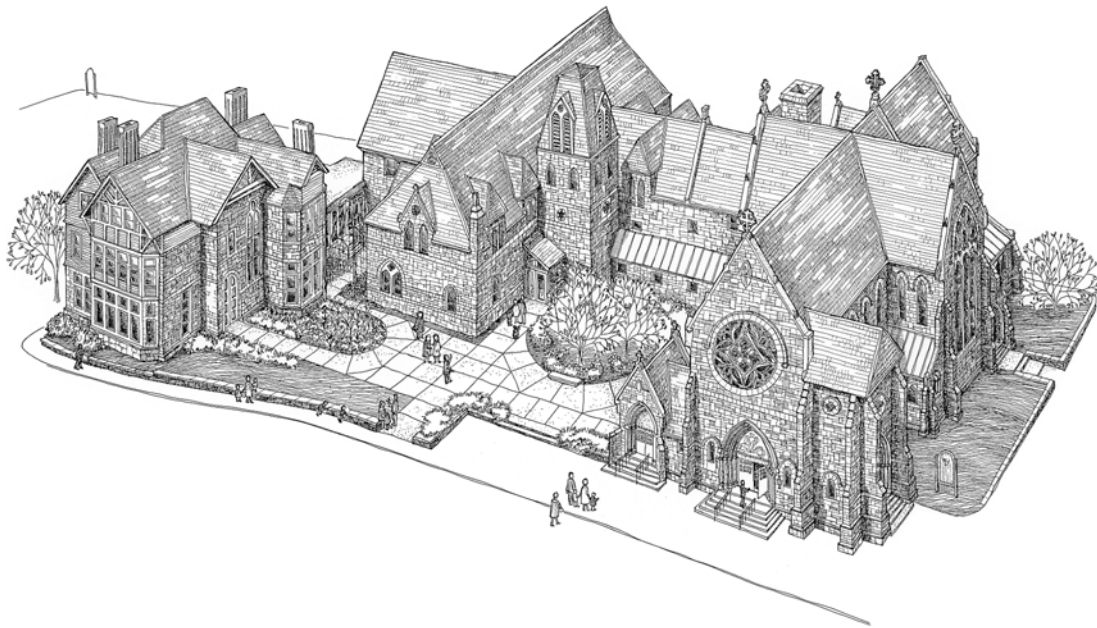
Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministry classes begin in mid-January. The training is essential to get our ministers ready for their journey as a care-giver. If you have an interest in pursuing this ministry, please get your application completed. We are very excited to get started! See Jewell Brain or Mother Kathleen if you have any questions or email Jewell at mjmb55@aol.com.

✪ Join a Home Fellowship Group This Winter ✪

Starting in mid-January you are invited to join some of your fellow parishioners in a small group and enjoy fellowship and a meal together. It doesn't matter if you are single or married, younger, older or in-between - you are invited! The plan is to mix people up, not group people by age or demographic, so let us know if you are available for a few Wednesdays or if Fridays works better, and if you could host the first dinner at your home with everyone contributing a dish. This year we are adding an additional option to sign up to meet in a restaurant or meet at church for those who would prefer these choices. Please sign up by January 10th. The groups will rotate to a different home (or location), and meet together 3 times from mid-Jan to mid-Feb before Lent begins on February 22. Last year we had 4 groups with almost 40 people who enjoyed this fellowship opportunity. Please sign up by January 10th, and Carol Wheeler will organize the groups and let you know where you will meet the first time during the week of January 15th. To sign up:

- Sign the sheet at Coffee Hour in the Dining Room;
- Fill out a sign-up sheet in the Sunday bulletin and give directly to an usher or greeter;
- Email Carol at cmeadwheeler@hotmail.com or call her at: 203-588-9894, especially if you have a question.



ST. JOHN'S PARISH IN STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT 1742 ~ 2012



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