

Christ Church Chronicle

Produced by the congregation of Christ Church Episcopal in Sheridan, MT

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COME, HOLY SPIRIT, AND TAKE AWAY OUR INHIBITIONS!

Fr. Bruce McNab

Nicky Gumbel, international leader of the Alpha Course, tells a story about an American woman who attended a Sunday service at a very traditional, rather dreary English village church—where neither the priest nor the people in the congregation were expressing any *feeling* at all. It was a really “cold” service. Suddenly, right in the middle of the rector’s sermon, the American woman shouted out, “*Hallelujah! Praise God!*”

One of the ushers (they call them “sidesmen” in Britain) came straight over to her and said, “Madam, you must not shout during the service.”

She replied, “Why not? I’ve got the Spirit!”

And the man answered, “Well, you certainly didn’t get it *here!*”

Pentecost (May 19 this year) is the great festival of the Holy Spirit. Anxiety about what the Holy Spirit does may come from uncertainty about who the Holy Spirit really *is*. And I say “who” rather than “what,” because the Bible makes it clear that the Holy Spirit is not a “thing,” not an “it.” The Book of Acts calls the Holy Spirit “*the Spirit of Jesus.*” Therefore, when we experience the presence of the Holy Spirit, we’re feeling the life-giving, life-changing power of our Lord himself.

When the Holy Spirit comes upon a church, exciting things will happen, and they’re not usually things we expect. When the Spirit-filled people of God *lose their inhibitions*, unpredictable events are sure to follow—like Francis of Assisi giving up all his wealth to become the leader of a barefoot band of preachers in the 12th century, or the evangelical

movement in 18th century England led by John Wesley.

Doesn’t the world need a Spirit-filled, uninhibited, unafraid Church today? Remember that before Pentecost, the disciples who had met the Risen Christ and knew beyond a doubt that he was alive were still withdrawn and afraid. They knew the truth, but they had no power. They had neither the energy nor the courage to *do something significant* with the truth they knew. That could describe most churches we know.

I believe one of the reasons otherwise good, believing, loyal Church people are sometimes afraid to pray for God to send his Spirit upon their congregation is because *when the Spirit comes, unpredictable things happen*. We might feel embarrassed. We might lose control. And most of us want to stay in control and keep ourselves under control.

If the Spirit were to come and “do his thing” here in Sheridan, it *might* arouse controversy, even criticism. But, of course, it also might convert 3,000 people, just as in Jerusalem on the first Pentecost.

How inhibited are we? Will we mean it when on Pentecost we pray, “*Come, Holy Spirit!*”? If we *mean* it, if we pray and wait with trust in the promise of Jesus, then his Spirit will descend upon this church as on the little band of believers on the first Pentecost. And we will never be the same again.

Come, Holy Spirit, and fill us. We need you. Come, Holy Spirit, and renew us. We want you. Come, Holy Spirit, and take charge of our church and of our lives. We will obey you. Come, and do your work in us. Inspire us, equip us, and send us out to tell the story of what you have done!



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Senior Warden's Report

Frank Ford

What with the spring comings and goings among the members; the need to plan for our busy summer; and the many new initiatives being considered for Christ Church and its mission, it has been a busy month for your Vestry. We all know how each spring we tend to rush the return to warm weather, but we do want to plan carefully for the summer growing season so a new Landscaping Committee has been formed to work with the Junior Warden. Its chairman, Beverly Ford, is actively recruiting members as the process of drawing up and implementing a 3-5 year plan for the plantings and maintenance of our church yard begins. All you gardeners and would-be landscape architects are urged to make your thoughts known and to join in the effort to beautify our church.

Among the first concrete steps to be taken in our landscaping effort will occur on 5 May when, with Rev. Jean McLean presiding, we will celebrate Rogation Sunday with a special planting of two new maple trees just south of the Church and the Parish Hall. Be sure to be on hand to take part in this long-term mission of stewardship.

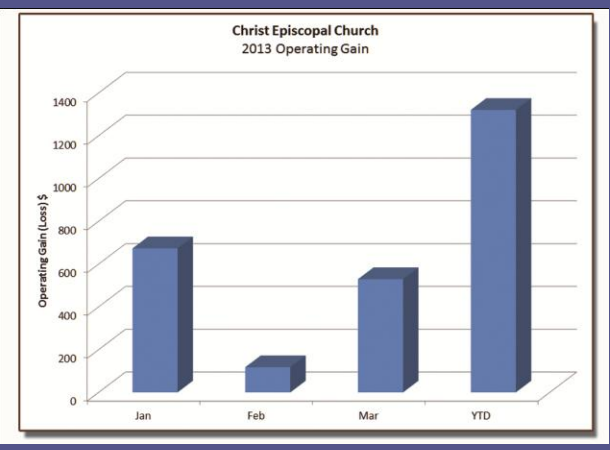
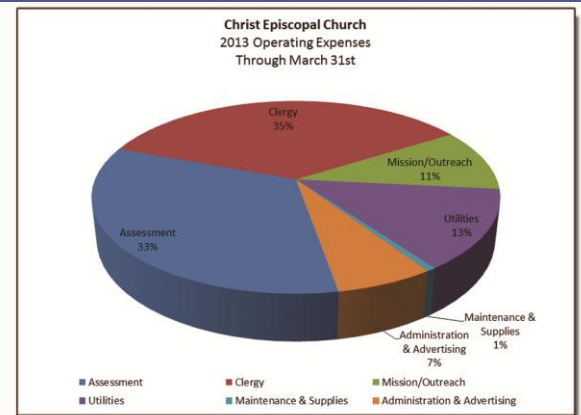
A more mundane but nevertheless important issue under consideration has been the rental of the Parish Hall. Recent events have highlighted the need to more precisely define the procedures and methods we use in providing this ministry to the community so a committee has been appointed under the leadership of Sandy Baril to examine our policies and procedures for Parish Hall use. They are tasked with coming up with a more clearly articulated policy and procedures document covering hall rental for consideration and approval by the Vestry at its May meeting.

Still simmering on the capital improvements burner are the on-going improvements to the kitchen and facilitation of access to and use of the Parish Hall under the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The hope is that we can make large strides in these areas as the summer progresses. Again, anyone with ideas or who wishes to take part in this effort is invited to join in.

You Can Order Fr. Bruce's New Book Now Online. Fr. Bruce McNab's new book, *Finding the Way: Restarting Your Journey with Jesus*, published in March by Wipf & Stock, is now available. You may order a book from the publisher, from Amazon, from Barnes & Noble, or from a number of other online vendors. Essential links for these booksellers are to be found on his website, www.brucemcnabbooks.com, along with other information about his books.

Financial Picture

Debra McNeil



Rogation Sunday

Sandra Baril

Rogation Sunday is the day when the Church has traditionally offered prayer for God's blessing on the fruits of the earth and the labors of those who produce our food. The word "rogation" is from the Latin "rogare," "to ask." Historically, the Rogation Days (the three days before Ascension Day) were a period of fasting and abstinence, beseeching God's blessing on the crops for a bountiful harvest.

Sunday, May 5, Christ Church will observe Rogation Sunday by planting two new maple trees on the church grounds. Wear your gardening clothes and come join in the celebration of "Anglican Earth Day".

Travels with the Deacon

Janice Hansen

As we move through this Easter season, we are living in two worlds: the world of the loss of Jesus' physical presence, and the world of the coming Ascension celebration, and Pentecost. These two great events emboldened the disciples, and can embolden us. Living without someone, someone as remarkable as Jesus must have been painful. In our readings, though, we have seen the disciples achieve greater depth in their faith, great abilities to heal, and, along with Paul, begin to form the church.

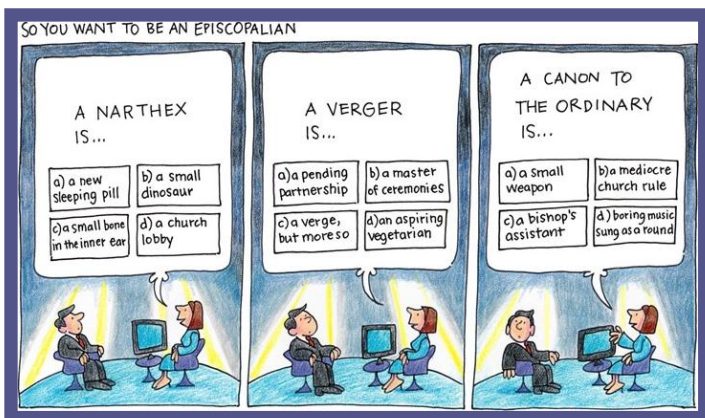
What a heritage they gave us! For their despair of the loss of Jesus, through the resurrection through the growth and development of their discipleship, to the gift of the church, they formed the great faith which we inherit.

I am traveling right now in Acadian Louisiana, the place I lived, went to school and worked many years ago. The heritage here is palpable: not only in the Cajun food and music, but in the depth of this unique culture. One slogan I saw was: Cajuns "live their culture!" I thought what a good way of stating it -- and that we Christians, thanks to the early actions of the disciples which we're reflecting upon in this season, can "live our culture!" A culture of compassion, love, faithfulness... the kind of "culture" Jesus taught us to carry out in the world!

Wishing y'all a meaningful and joyful Ascension Sunday, and Pentecost! From the bayous of Louisiana!

Humor Corner

Rev. Jay Sidebotham



Coffee Hour Recipe

JJ Snyder

Late Summer Berry Torte

This dense, thin, fruit-filled cake showcases luscious end-of-summer fruits: raspberries, blueberries, Italian prune plums, blackberries... Take your pick, or mix and match.

And, when summer fades into fall, and it's time to think about Thanksgiving desserts, this recipe can be turned into a luscious cranberry cake.

- 1/2 cup butter
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon Buttery Sweet Dough Flavor or 1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon Fiori di Sicilia, optional
- 1 cup King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour
- 2 cups berries or 12 Italian prune plums, halved
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar mixed with 1 teaspoon cinnamon, to sprinkle on top

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Lightly grease an 8" or 9" square pan, or 9" or 10" round pan.

- 2) Beat together the butter, sugar, baking powder, and salt till smooth.
- 3) Add the eggs, beating till thoroughly combined. The mixture may look somewhat coagulated; that's OK. Stir in the vanilla and optional flavor.
- 4) Add the flour, mixing to make a smooth, stiff batter.
- 5) Spread the batter in the pan. In the larger-sized pans, the batter will be spread fairly thin; that's OK.
- 6) Spread the berries or plums on top. If you use plums, place them with their skins up. Sprinkle with the cinnamon-sugar.
- 7) Bake the cake for about 35 to 40 minutes, till a cake tester inserted into the center comes out clean, and the cake showing around the berries is a light golden brown. Remove it from the oven, and serve warm, or at room temperature.
- 8) Yield: one cake, about 10 servings.



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INVITE people into our midst
INCLUDE people in the life of the church
INFORM people about past events that shape our present,
and current events that shape our future
PROCLAIM the gospel in thought, word and deed
REJOICE in a new life found in Christ Jesus.

Mission Statement

To be formed as the body of Christ, seeking to love and serve one another and those in need.

Vision Statement

To be Christ's continued presence in the Ruby Valley by welcoming those who seek Christ, offering varied forms of services, reflecting our diversity while maintaining our Episcopal identity.

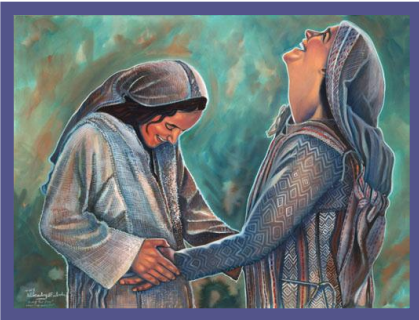
Service Leaders for May and June

Upcoming Service Leaders for May / June

5 May: Eucharist -- Rev Jean McClean
12 May: Eucharist -- Rev Bruce McNab
19 May: Eucharist -- Rev Canon Chris Roberts
26 May: Morning Prayer -- Sandra Baril
2 June: Eucharist -- Rev Bruce McNab
9 June: Morning Prayer -- Sandra Baril
16 June: Eucharist -- Rev Bruce McNab

Upcoming Lectors for May / June

5 May: Alice Forwood
12 May: Judy Aaker
19 May: Bill Callaway
26 May: Frank Ford
2 June: Jerry Aaker



The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin
Mary – May 31