

The AGAPE News

January 2008

Vol. 3, No. 1



Starting in January we will add a second Sunday service at 8:30 am.

The Session voted to offer the service for six months to gauge whether such a service would be helpful to the congregation.



January 2008

6 – Recognition of outgoing officers and Ordination and Installation of New Officers.

11 Officer Training

12 Leadership Training Event

March 2008

28-29 Social Activism Workshops

New sermon series:

“God for Grownups”

Almost all of us were taught immature images of God when we were young. The idea of a loving parent or a stern boss may help us understand the world when we are young, but life can be terribly disappointing when we when we don't get the help or direction such images seem to promise. How do we explain life's heartbreaks that a loving parent would never inflict on us? This coming month we will explore what mature images of God might be.

On December 30 we will begin a sermon series on the Psalms:

Psalm 80: “No Band-Aid: How God Heals”

Psalm 72 “No Star: How God Guides”

Psalm 29 “No Ventriloquism: How God Speaks”

Psalm 40 “Not Carved in Stone: What Can We Trust?”

Psalm 27 “No Hiding Place: Finding God in Real Life”

Love,



Prayer chain members pray by request for others in times of crisis or emergency: accidents, surgery, death, etc. The request for prayers is passed down the Prayer Chain list. If you wish to be a member of the prayer chain, or if you wish to ask for prayers, call **Margaret Tolbert** (836-0211) or the church office (251-0698). On Jim Rigby's days off (Fridays and Saturdays) **Gerald Gafford** (698-2108) and **Babs Miller** (577-4801) are available to take pastoral care calls.



**Notes from Your Congregational Nurse
Donna Rutherford, RN**

As we recover from the holiday season, many of us include weight loss and increasing our physical strength as part of our resolution for the New Year.

On the Health Ministry bulletin board this month are articles about diet, portion control, the importance of fiber, and how many daily servings of fruits and vegetables is enough each day. Read about short vigorous workouts that can help to boost aerobic fitness.

- If you are suffering from seasonal allergies and need some guidance, Harvard Medical School has a series of articles on *Sinusitis* that might help you with diagnosis, treatment.
- **Confusion at the Vitamin Counter** – over 40% of Americans take vitamins, find out about the risk of too little or too much.
- **Hard to Cure Infections Growing**, from Harvard Health Publications general info about MRSA
- **Medicare** info on the Web – go to <http://www.medicare.gov/> If you are approaching 65 or if you are already there, this site has important info that will be helpful in planning your future health care.

“**Diabetes Forecast**” a healthy living magazine from the American Diabetes Association is in the Bookstore Room library area for your help in dealing with diabetes. Please return copies when you have read them.

Caitlin Reilly, Registered Hatha Yoga Teacher will continue her very popular class on Wednesdays at 7 pm starting January 2. Bring a mat and wear comfortable clothes. For info contact Caitlin at caitlinrs@yahoo.com.



**Hatha Yoga
after
the Holidays**



A First Responders Class for victims of Domestic Violence will be facilitated by Karen Wilson, Director of Education from SafePlace beginning Saturday, Jan. 19, 2008. Please contact Donna Rutherford if you are interested in becoming a support person for Domestic Violence.

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Theology in
Everyday Life

Theology in Everyday Life will meet on Mondays, Jan. 7 and 21. The meetings start at 7:15 pm and ends at 8:30 pm. The meetings are held in the first room on the left in the hallway leading to the children's wing. The discussion topic on Jan.7 will be "God, Prayer and Human Suffering," Handouts are in the basket on the shelf in the church lobby in front of the church office. Pick one up and join the discussion. All are welcome.



Spiritual Activism
Study Group

In January, the Spiritual Activist Study Group will begin doing one lesson a week of a free online 21 lesson enabling transformation course of study of particular interest to spiritual activists. The course is described in a series of web pages beginning at www.TransformationTeam.net. Even if you cannot regularly meet with the group on 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month, you can do the course. Email oliver@OWMarkley.org for information on how to register.



St. Andrew's Shawl Ministry distributes "comforting hugs" (shawls) to our congregants who are sick, caring for someone cronicly ill, death in their family or, happily, welcoming a new baby. Knitters, crocheters and sewers are needed to help with this ongoing project. We also need contributions of yarn and/or fleece fabric by the yard or cash contributions to buy them. The shawls are made at home but we meet monthly to chat, trade patterns, pick up materials or just make contact (which is not necessary). The meetings are every 2nd Thursday at 7 pm. See you there.



Spiritual
Activism
Literature

Several members of the Spiritual Activism Study Group have donated the following books to the library: *The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community* by David Korten, and *Blessed Unrest: How the Largest Movement in the World Came into Being and Why No One Saw it Coming*, by Paul Hawken. These books are be recommended for any interested activists!

The Group is also providing periodicals of interest to St. Andrew's. The collection is in the bookstore room. Please browse, borrow, and contribute.



Insight Meditation

Weekly meditation sessions will be held every Thursday, 7 - 8 pm at the church. Insight Meditation, which is practiced at these sessions, is a centering technique to quiet the mind and emotions by focusing on the breath and the body sensations.

Special instruction for beginners will be provided prior to the session at 6:30 pm (For more information, please pick up an "Insight Meditation" brochure in the foyer.)



The Poiema book study group will meet Sunday, January 20. The study begins with a meal hosted by Poiema about 5:30 p.m. in the McCarty home. The book study will begin at 7:00 p.m. We are studying *Living Buddha, Living Christ* by Thich Nhat Hanh. January's session will focus on Chapters 5 and 6. Deni Davisson will lead the discussion. Join us at 4 pm for worship, 5:30 for the meal or 7 for the study or come for the whole evening.

Epiphany Party



You are all invited to celebrate Epiphany (the visit of the Magi) at a party sponsored by Poiema, A Presbyterian Community, on the evening of January 6. The party will be held at Jean Fox's home, 7215 Geneva Drive, near 290 E and 183 in NE Austin. We will gather at 4:00 p.m. and share a pot luck meal.

Royalty will be chosen, attired in appropriate garments and entertained by the guests. Carols and prayers will close the evening. Friends and

friends of friends are welcome, especially young ones. For more info call Jean at 926-1132 or contact Barbara at 468-4012 or bm272-54@earthlink.net. Directions are posted on the website under "What's Happening". www.poiemacommunity.org.

Directions to Jean's house in Austin: get on the access road to 290 E by exiting or turning east at Berkman. If you come off of 183 take the 290 exit and head toward I-35 (west) and make a u-turn at Berkman. Follow the access road for about a half-mile, passing Northeast Drive. Soon after, turn right on Geneva Drive. Watch for Charlton Street on the left. Jean's house is the sixth house on the left after Charlton. There is a lighted peace sign by the porch. If you miss Geneva, turn at the next right which will be Charlton just past the Gatti's pizza. Turn left on Geneva and it is the sixth house on the left.

Thank You Congregation

The staff of St. Andrew's gratefully thanks you for your loving thoughts and generous gifts this Christmas. It is a truly a blessing to us all to be part of this community.

To all who give of themselves to support St. Andrew's in so many ways we say "thank you" and we look forward to 2008 in anticipation of a wonderful year.



St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church

Loving ♦ Progressive ♦ Presbyterian

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Open Minds Bookstore

(Open the 1st & 3rd Sundays of each month.)

Book Study

Living Buddha, Living Christ - Thich Nhat Han, \$13 The Poema Community is using this book in a book study that meets every 3rd Sunday.

Featured Selections:

The Family Story Bible for Children (Ralph Milton, \$16.50.) contains wonderful storytelling that uses inclusive language.

The Inclusive Bible, translated by the Priests for Equality. It is the first Egalitarian translation of the Bible. This price fluctuates with the introductory promotions; it is currently \$23.50.

Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal and Delight in Our Busy Lives – Wayne Muller, \$14. A wise treatment of stress, this book gives permission to slow down from the busyness of our lives to rest, reflect and appreciate. These short readings are amenable for a bedtime read. Each short reading is followed by suggested simple practices to nourish the soul.

The Desert Mothers - Mary C. Earle, \$12.50 Reverend Earle begins “In the late 1980’s, as I began life as an Episcopal priest, I kept wondering where all the women were.” In her search she discovered the writings of fourth century women who went into the wilderness of the deserts of northern Egypt to pursue a life of deep prayer. Through nine sayings from these Desert Mothers, Mary Earle explores this ancient wisdom and provides guidance to incorporate this wisdom into contemporary spiritual practice.

The Twelve Gifts for Healing – Charlene Costanzo, \$16. If you need a thoughtful gift for someone who is ill or experiencing troubling times, this beautifully illustrated keepsake book is it! The author offers words of encouragement that remind us to reach inside to find peace and strength whenever we face hardships.

Continuing Selections for Adults:

Three Cups of Tea by Greg Mortenson and David Relin \$15; *Eat, Pray, Love* by Elisabeth Gilbert, 413; *Spiritual Literacy, Reading the Sacred in Everyday Life* by Frederic and Mary Brussat, forward by Thomas Moore, \$15; *Addicted to War* by Joel Andreas \$5; *Reverence: Renewing a Forgotten Virtue* by Paul Woodruff, \$12; *Welcome to the Wisdom of the World* - Joan Chittister. \$20.00 hardcover, *Finding Jesus, Discovering Self* - Caren Goldman and William Dols, \$17.

Children's Page

If you have questions or would like to be involved in any of the programs listed, please contact our Children's Christian Education Coordinator, Tammy Iyer, at 251-0698 or email to Tamara.Iyer@gmail.com.



We are excited to announce that our Progressive Children's Church officially begins on January 6. Children's Church is where every child is valued and encouraged to safely explore their own experiences of God

All children ages 4 to 10 are invited to participate in their own worship service. They will have their own rituals, songs, activities and small groups. Children's Church curriculum will be based on the same scripture references used in Jim's sermon.

A big thank you to all the children, youth, and adults volunteers who helped with the Christmas Pageant. Great job!



Godly Play

Godly Play is here beginning January 6, during the Sunday School hour! We deeply appreciate all the hard work and time that has been given to bring Godly Play to St. Andrew's.

Godly Play is what Jerome Berryman calls his interpretation of Montessori's approach to religious education. This approach uses an open classroom with selected, developmentally appropriate story materials. The ultimate goal of Godly Play is to teach children the art of using the language of our Christian tradition so that they may encounter God in a personal way and begin to find direction for their own lives.

Rather than giving pat answers or teaching doctrine, Godly Play seeks to support the child's own spiritual quest and enable the child to develop a faith that is continually growing. Central to this way of teaching is the assumption that children do have encounters with the mystery of the presence of God. What they do not have is the language to communicate about their experiences.

There will be two Godly Play classrooms, one for elementary age and one for preschool. We want to welcome all children to join us.



Keven and Kelly Coggin were blessed with the unexpected arrival of Camden Edward Coggin on November 1. He arrived 3 weeks early and still managed to weigh in at 8 pounds 5 ounces and 20 inches long. They also recieved an early Christmas gift with Camden's SMA test results coming back and confirming he is SMA free. Visit their family page, www.coggination.com, to see pictures of him. Grandparents Beth and Paul Davis might also be carrying pictures with them.

December Session Summary

Because we are such a dynamic church, your session has many things to discuss and explore at our monthly meetings. We are trying to develop a ten year plan for the church. In order to do this we will need your input too. So another Town Hall meeting is scheduled for early February to continue our conversation about where we see our church heading over the next ten years.

Our stewardship discussion centered around how we all can be better stewards of our time, our money and our talents. We will be asking our church secretary what needs to be in place to facilitate getting out quarterly statements so we can all track our pledges with greater accuracy in 2008. We also want to continue to invite all the members and friends of St. Andrew's to join us on AGAPE Team night the second Tuesday of each month. These meetings allow everyone an opportunity to help plan and share their specific interests and talents with the whole church.

Your session also wants to take this opportunity to welcome new members received in the last quarter of the year: Bill and Molly Hornbuckle (Bill is the composer of the beautiful Advent music we have heard this season) and Randy and Danielle Cauley. Randy and Danielle have four young children who we also welcome to our "family": Gabriel, Camila, Claire and Mary Rose.

Starting in January, we will add a second service to our Sunday morning schedule. This service will begin at 8:30 am and last about 45 minutes. Please let us know if you will have need for child care during that service. We will have child care initially and will revisit the need after a trial period. This will provide all the football fans (except Jim) the opportunity to see the opening kick-off of the first play-off game each Sunday.

Submitted by Babs Miller, Clerk of Session

AGAPE Ministry Team Meetings – 2nd Tuesday, January 8 at 7 p.m.

Join one of the **AGAPE** teams and see how the work of the church is done. All are welcome.

A - Artist Individually we each need to find the source of our own creativity whether it is singing, cooking or just appreciating the beauty in nature. When we come together, this need is met by worship, our music program, spiritual development, resting and playing.

G - Guardian Each of us must learn how to care for the roots of our community. At the community level we talk about leadership development, taking care of our building and grounds, sharing our resources and using them wisely.

A - Ambassador Each of us has a responsibility to take the message of love out into the world in our own way. Our Mission and Social Justice issues fall under this category.

P - Pastor We take God's love to the church community-by welcoming all; identifying and meeting personal concerns in times of need; and educating and fostering community. To empower our physical, emotional and mental well-being and prevent unnecessary suffering, we offer educational information programs, and groups

E - Educator We invite our members to establish a lifelong habit of learning and sharing that learning with others, particularly our youth.