

# *The St. Andrew's Xpress*

December 2008



A Letter from Rev. Alan B. MacKillop  
Priest-in-Charge

Dear People of Saint Andrew's,

What does December mean to you? I know Christmas comes to everyone's mind because there it is, perched on that climb to stress at the end of the month. Perhaps this year, with the economy in the worst shape since the great Depression, we can actually think about gift giving in less extravagant and commercial terms. As we hear the story of Joseph and Mary being without a place to stay and landing up in a stable where Jesus would be born, we can think more compassionately about the many people without homes this year because their houses have gone into foreclosure. Jesus, Mary and Joseph had to flee to Egypt as refugees from violence, reminding us of the strangers in our land who come for economic and reasons of violence, and who do much of the menial work in our land. This will be a difficult holiday time for far more of us than in recent memory.

But December means new beginnings. The season of Advent, which begins the church's new year, is a time which focuses at first not on Jesus' birth but his second coming and the hope of the final victory over sin, evil and injustice in a new heaven and earth promised then. John the Baptist comes center stage in two Sundays in Advent, speaking of the need for repentance to prepare for the Lord but also of hope, which is the conviction that things can and will change. We need hope in double and triple doses this year. John spoke to a very

oppressed people and they flocked out to hear him. Taking the theme of the recent election, let us hope for change and say, "Yes, we can" with God's help to bring about a better world for ourselves and others. The earth itself, suffering and endangered by the carbon emissions that keeps building up, needs the salvation that God promises not only to Christians, to humans, but to the whole created order with all the endangered species whose wellbeing is intertwined with ours.

On the first Sunday in Advent, 30 November, we will also celebrate our Patron Saint Andrew whose feast day it is. Andrew, the brother of Peter, brought his brother to meet Jesus, a supremely crucial act of witnessing to a member of his family. Peter would eventually supersede Andrew in rank but met Jesus because Andrew dared to share his excitement in meeting Jesus. We each need to be imparted with that same commitment and enthusiasm.

Finally, of course, Christmas will come, and we will celebrate God breaking into our history by coming to us in human form, a little baby to an ordinary working family who grew to live, preach, teach, heal, love, challenge and finally die on a cross and rise again and all history turns on his life. If we don't have as much materially available for our Christmas celebrations this year, we can be reminded that God's best gift to us is Jesus, and our best gift is to love one another by his grace.

Faithfully because of Him,

*Fr. Alan*

## *The St. Andrew's Xpress*

A monthly Newsletter serving the  
Central Massachusetts community

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in *The St. Andrew's Xpress*

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**NOTE:** Remember to mark your calendar for the  
January 2009 newsletter deadline:

**Monday, December 15, 2008**



## **Holiday Service Schedule**

### **Wednesday, December 24, 2008**

Christmas Eve and Celebration of the Nativity of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ

#### **5:00 pm:** Family Eucharist with Carols

A child from the Sunday School will place the figure of the infant Jesus into the Christmas Crèche

#### **9:30 pm:** Half-hour of special Christmas instrumental music and carols

**10:00 pm:** Midnight Mass with glorious choral music, organ and the Christmas Message

### **Wednesday, December 31, 2008**

New Year's Celebration

The Emerging Church class will present a special contemporary worship service to welcome the New Year with freestyle praise to the God of new beginnings, followed by a pot luck supper.

The class on The Emerging Church now meets on Wednesday at 7:15 pm in the Peabody Room, a more intimate space with better lighting. Study continues with the book, "Transforming Congregational Culture," by Anthony Robinson, which is available at the church office. Everyone is welcome to attend this class, even on a now-and-then basis. We want to look at how we can speak to a 21<sup>st</sup> Century world that often does not know the language of the church but is seeking spiritual meaning.



## From the Editor

### TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS



The following article, *Christmas – Rituals for Transformation During the 12 Days of Christmas!* was written by Bernadette Dimitrov, author, speaker and host of *Conversations with Mrs. Claus* podcast show, heard around the world in more than 90 countries. She is from Melbourne, Australia. As her web site, [thefamilyyak.com](http://thefamilyyak.com), states, she makes “life and holidays meaningful and spiritual no matter what your beliefs.” In the following article, she reaches across all denominational aisles to the heart and true meaning of the twelve days of Christmas. †

Christmas is the most universally recognized holiday, transcending language, culture and even religious beliefs. It is a time when people and communities come together in peace and with good will for one another. Christmas is also a time for inner transformation. A time to put some personal rituals into place to deeply connect you to the divine and the sacred during the 12 days of Christmas.

It is now time to light up and renew your Christmas spirit. Time to ensure your attitude (which comes from your thoughts) is healthy and that you feel a deep connection to the divine within and around you. Below is a great ritual idea to help you go deeper during the 12 days of Christmas. Rituals to help you over-flow with positive energy and joy at Christmas time and throughout the year. Rituals that can help to get to the core of your feelings, by acknowledging and addressing them. When you are feeling on top of the world everyone else around you will be, too. You will leave the spirit of Christmas where ever you go!

Rituals have been an important practice throughout human history and the benefits are many. An altar in a private space in one's home set up in a quiet, undisturbed place where you

can concentrate your intentions and desires for higher growth and peace, tranquility and joy. It is also a place to reflect on thoughts of gratitude, forgiveness and love. Ultimately it is your sacred place to let go of troubles, give thanks and seek enlightenment or higher consciousness as you connect to the divine within to live and feel more deeply in everyday life.

Start the first day of the 12 days of Christmas by preparing a small altar in your bedroom or other quiet place in your home where you will not be disturbed.

No space? There is always a solution. You can use the ancient and very powerful tool of visualization. Sit in a chair, make yourself comfortable or lie down in your bed, close your eyes and see in your mind's eye your special altar. See it in full details: the colors you love, materials, textures, smells, sounds you hear such as a bird in a tree or a waterfall soft in the background. Either physically or in your mind's eye sit or kneel at your altar. Light a candle, burn some incense, place some flowers; set it up to make you feel good. Place items at this space that will symbolize to you a peaceful, safe and love filled space.

I would also recommend you add to your altar three beautiful long tall candles. One representing your physical world, one representing your inner world and one for your spiritual world or world of higher consciousness. Spend time reflecting on these three areas of your life. For example, each night of the 12 days of Christmas you could focus on different virtues such as starting with gratitude for all that you have in your physical world. You spend moments reflecting on the smallest to the largest things. For example, you could start with the light switch, being grateful for the person who invented it, the person who made it and the person who installed it. Then you move to your inner world and give thanks for the beautiful mind you have, the intelligence, the positive thoughts that you have and the ability to find the gift in a challenge and then let it go. Next move to your spiritual/higher power/higher

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consciousness and give thanks for the awesome power around you and deep within you such as the air you breathe, the sun that gives forth life and food. Give thanks for your connection to the greatness within you that is within everyone, the greatness that connects us all as one. Give thanks for your intuition for this is also part of your higher consciousness and when you focus on it, it will expand. Give thanks as you show acknowledgment. This is a powerful and transformational ritual.

Then for the following night focus on your intentions. Commit to bringing a positive intention to all you meet, to all that you do and to all that you give. Give with no expectation of anything in return. Give with an intention of unconditional love. The next night focus on your choices - the power of each choice you have in each moment. Acknowledge it and be aware of your power of choice and how it affects your life and those around you. Reflect on your choices made and if they support the best in you and others. Then continue the next nights reflecting on acknowledging the people that have passed and speaking with them at your altar about your life and your dreams, then reflect for the following nights on prosperity, love, then community service, family, peace, forgiveness, finding the gift in the challenges presented over the year and then letting them go and finish with prayers and blessings for yourself, those around you and the world as a whole.

Christmas is a great time to renew and connect deeply through reflective rituals. When we transform our inner world we magically transform our outer world! The greatest gift we can give to ourselves and the world is conscious transformation.

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## **Drop and Shop**

By Phil Welton

Our foyer group has come up with the bright idea to provide care for children and teens

on Saturday, December 13<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 pm to 9:30 pm in order to give their parents a chance to have an evening out for Christmas Shopping. We are asking for a \$10 donation per child, and pizza and beverages will be provided. Parents may even drop off their children at the Carol Sing that afternoon, which begins at 4:30 pm.

A team of adults, stemming from our foyer group, is agreeing to begin this, and if the event proves to be popular, we will plan to host such evenings with our young people and those of the surrounding communities on an ongoing and regular basis.

So "spread the word" about this to everyone who might be interested - this is not just for St. Andrew's youth! We will worry about serving 50 - 100 or more kids who may arrive on our doorstep. Everyone in our group is very excited at the potential that these evenings with the younger generation of the surrounding towns can have in bringing new people to our parish.

Leslie Harrower, Nicola Barlow, Sue Hildreth, Steve Titus, Marianne and I are looking forward to the 13<sup>th</sup>! Questions? Call Leslie at 978-772-2621 or email her at: [plharrower@aol.com](mailto:plharrower@aol.com)

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## **Help Needed**



Twice a month St. Andrew's has agreed to make a simple meal (and no dessert) for the 16-18 kids of the Young Life Christian Teens, who meet on Thursday evenings for Bible study. I have a couple of volunteers but would greatly appreciate more help with this job. You can call me at 978-448-8951 or send me an email at [ndb159@hotmail.com](mailto:ndb159@hotmail.com). Thanks! Nicola Barlow

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## A Fond Farewell

Jean E. Cummings

September 25, 1925 – October 26, 2008

By Louise Rogers, Historian



Junior Choir, back row, left to right: Jean Cummings, far left; Arthur E. Walmsley, later to become the Bishop of Connecticut, third from left; Mary Medeiros' brother, George Koronis, fourth from right; Mary Medeiros, far right. Front row, left to right: Dexter Titus, Steve Titus' uncle; Jean's brother, Robert.

On October 26<sup>th</sup> St. Andrew's lost one of its most devoted saints, Jean E. Cummings. She was a member of the Junior Choir during Rev. Dr. Hugh Latimer Willson's tenure. He served St. Andrew's from 1939 – 1947.

The photo was taken in front of St. Andrew's Church. The building behind most of the choir is the North Middlesex Savings Bank, where Jean worked for many years as a teller. In 1950, Jean was among the first parishioner teachers to teach Sunday School at St. Andrew's when the custom of having the Groton School boys teach (including Franklin Delano Roosevelt) ended. She was Assistant Treasurer of the parish and on the Finance Committee. She was one of Bertha Doran's faithful helpers during the very popular spring and fall Rummage Sales – important fund raisers. As a member of the altar guild for many years, she

prepared the altar for services on Sundays, holy days, healing Services, weddings, funerals, etc. and following the Service made sure things were properly cleared and stored away. Jean made it her mission to send greeting cards to every parishioner during major holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, and especially get-well's. She had a passion for collecting things: stuffed animals, especially if they could be wound up to talk, sing or just move; figurines of all types and books of many genre, but she also enjoyed a good romance novel. Fortunately for St. Andrew's, she also collected our monthly newsletters, Sunday Bulletins, wedding, funeral, and special occasion leaflets since the 1960's, leaving us with much historical information about people, events, and objects that may have been donated or purchased. She sold items at

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the crafts table during our Annual Crafts Fair. Many parishioners, and others, are probably still hanging the beautiful quilted stockings that she made for the Fair. They always sold out. For many years she sang in the Senior Choir but as Fr. Alan MacKillop mentioned in her final Service on October 26<sup>th</sup>, “that was just a rehearsal for her position in the heavenly Senior Choir” conducted by her and our friend, Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We will miss Jean but are also grateful that she is now at peace.



Front row, left to right: Jean Cummings, Marcy Schwarzkopf; back row, left to right: Delores Louttit, Priscilla Andrews.

Thanks to Carolyn Smith for providing the Junior Choir photo.

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## **It Takes a Community ... to Make an Apple Pie**

By Leslie Harrower

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for all their contributions towards a very successful Apple Pie Day! Once all of the money is in, the totals for the day will be approximately \$510 raised and 73 pies made. Whether it was supplying the apples, rolling or making the dough, donating ingredients or money, washing, cutting or peeling apples, cleaning up the day's mess, or keeping me in line, it was the collective effort that made the day a success.

Thank you to: Marianne, Phil and Andrew Welton, Blanche Foss, Peggy Bratt, Louise Montcreaf, Louise Rogers, Nicola and Kevin Barlow, Lee Burton, Marge Costa, Al Gregory, Kimberly Hoffman, Jeanne Cassin, Eleanor Dattoli, Barbara LeDeaux, Barbara Kamb, Carolyn Smith, Dick Dabrowski, Erica Scattergood, Sue Hildreth, Judy Veno, Nancy Barringer, and Tom and Claudia Bissett.

In addition to the list of individuals above, I would like to give a special note of thanks to Westward Orchards for donating the apples. I would also like to thank Peggy Braat and Barbara Kamb for ever so gently handing over the reins of this event to me. Without Peggy's direction and the keen shopping prowess of Barbara Kamb, I never would have been able to coordinate this day.

As a reminder, if you were unable to purchase a pie and would like to try a “slice,” don't fret; we have given pies to the St. Andrew's Holiday Fair Kitchen as a delicious end to their famous St. Andrew's Beef Stew lunch!

Lastly, I have been asked several times to include directions on how to bake your frozen pie. Below you will find the directions my mother and I have used in the past:

- thaw pie for 1½ to 2 hours
- preheat oven to 425 degrees
- very lightly, spread butter over “parts” of the top of the pie (not entire pie)
- brush lightly with milk
- make sure has at least 3 one inch cuts on the top of the pie
- place pie in the oven for 15 minutes
- turn oven down to 375 degrees
- continue baking for 50 minutes, if crust starts to burn on one side only, rotate pie
- pie should be lightly browned on top and bubbling

*(You may want to be sure your oven is lined as the pie will drip.)*

**Enjoy!! and THANK YOU!**

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## Search Committee Announced

By Dick Dabrowski  
Senior Warden

Members of St. Andrew's Vestry, who were present at the meeting on October 21st, appointed a Rector Search Committee consisting of the following members: Nancy Barringer (Groton), Jeanne Cassin (Groton), John Ferrillo (Harvard), Manny Lindo (Harvard), Lydia McClure (Groton), Mary Medeiros (Ayer), Faith Salter (Ayer), Carolyn Smith (Groton), Bill Veno (Harvard), and Phil Welton (Ayer).

It should be noted that most of the Search Committee members are parents of children, college-age down to pre-schoolers, reflecting the Vestry's strong commitment to young families at St. Andrew's. The committee will meet soon with Carol Kingston, a consultant from the diocese, to begin the search process. Regular reports of the committee's progress will appear in *The XPress*.

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### Vestry Highlights

A Cluster Proposal was introduced by Marcia Hoecker, Nashoba Valley Missioner. Given that St. Andrew's and St. Mark's are in transition and Trinity will be going into transition if Marcia is unable to stay due to her salary being cut, she wanted to introduce the model of the "cluster" to the Vestry. This would NOT be a merger -each parish would remain independent; this would be a partnership between 2, 3 or 4 churches in which there would be sharing of resources, clergy, ideas and possible ministries. Advantages would include financial and networking with other parishes. This will be discussed by the Vestry members at the next meeting.

Korean Contract: It was decided that Dick would get back to Pastor Kim with the following points: Request that Pastor Kim make a \$50/month contribution to the church for the

next six months and request that his congregation do some work in kind on the property.

Father Alan and Linda met with Thelma Williams to discuss her application for use of the Parish Hall to provide after-school care to children in Ayer. She would be willing to pay for the use as well as for any code compliance issues.

Dick reported that Phil Welton has done a terrific job on the Audit and will be working with Yvette Nasworthy to finish it by the end of the month.

Search Committee Update: Mary was very pleased to announce the following people have accepted: Nancy Barringer, Jeanne Cassin, John Ferrillo, Manny Lindo, Lydia McClure, Faith Salter, Carolyn Smith, Bill Veno and Phil Welton as well as Mary, herself, and the two wardens.

Treasurer's Report: Dick pointed out that our year-to-date deficit was basically equal to our unpaid pledges and members should be encouraged to fulfill their commitments.

#### Commission Reports:

1. Communications (Erica MacKillop) listed good work being done by Sue Ulsch as editor of the X-Press and the "girls" who get it ready for mailing as well as Carolyn Smith for all her post card mailings. Time and Talent Fair held on Sept. 14<sup>th</sup> reminded everyone of all the work being done in the parish, the Korean sign has been added to our standing lawn sign and a year-long calendar has been set up in the Peabody Room for keeping track of church events. Dick Dabrowski continues to spend much time updating the church's website.

2. Parish Life (Erica Scattergood): the only official function was the extended coffee hour served to the joint service on September 9<sup>th</sup> (Parish Meeting). Members of the Foyer Groups met at the Haynes-Scattergood's home on Oct. 12 and new groups have been formed and will meet on their own over the next three months.

#### 3. Facilities (Alan Rogers and Linda

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Kaferle): Peter Andrews has been working with Alan and Louise (who are generously sponsoring the work) to update the western vestibule of the church; many thanks to Manny Lindo for replacing window trim boards of the Rectory; and Clean-up Day support is needed. Prior to the bottom dropping out of the economy, Al Colburn gave an extremely generous quote to paint the rectory exterior. We're hoping that the spring will bring a healthier economy that will allow us to take him up on it – Thanks, Al

4. Fundraiser Results: John Ferrillo Concert and Grotonfest: No figures available at the meeting; Harvard Flea Market raised \$225 from selling baked goods. Coffee Hour Donations: After some discussion it was decided that a basket be put out for people to make donations.

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## The Scoop on Convention

By Jeanne Cassin

Claudette Hunt, Father Alan and I attended the annual Diocesan Convention in Hyannis on Friday and Saturday, November 7 and 8. It was a spirit-filled two days. Bishop Shaw's meditations focused on the Holy Spirit and its role in drawing us into the deepest truth, and delegates shared with the Convention at large and each other the ways in which the Holy Spirit had worked in their lives.

A special guest at the Convention was the Archbishop of Jerusalem, a diocese that includes Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine and Israel. He gave a moving address on the work the church is doing in his Diocese in education, healthcare, affordable housing and economic development. He emphasized the Diocese's mission to help needy people of any race or religion, to build bridges among the various peoples in the Diocese and to act as a moderating influence in this area fraught with

violence, frustration and poverty. He also invited partnerships between his Diocese and ours. The Diocese is planning a mission pilgrimage to Palestine/Israel next June and is seeking participants. For more information, see <http://www.missiongoal.org/content/pilgrimage-palestineisrael-2009>.

Friday evening there was a benefit dinner and auction to benefit the Diocese of Jerusalem, and by the end of the evening the Diocese had raised \$16,000. On Saturday we passed a number of resolutions, including a resolution affirming actions of the 75<sup>th</sup> General Convention on slavery and reconciliation, a resolution on Christian formation/education regarding the spirituality, history and practice of nonviolence in the Christian tradition and a resolution confirming the support of the Diocese of Massachusetts for the work of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. During the day we held Morning Prayer and early Evening Prayer services and celebrated the Holy Eucharist. The Convention was a special time of worship, fellowship and conversation with our Bishops, other clergy and lay delegates from all over the Diocese.

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## Outreach News

The Outreach Budget for 2008:

Young Life	\$2500
Loaves & Fishes	\$1500
Habitat for Humanity	\$1500
Our Prison Neighbors \$	\$250
Esperanza Academy	\$500
Episcopal Relief and Development	\$500
Refugee & Immigration	\$150
Episcopal City Mission	\$200
Massachusetts Council of Churches	<u>\$100</u>
Total:	<u>\$7200</u>

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## **Update on Three Worthy Outreach Projects**

### **\* Loaves and Fishes \***

During the holidays, the pantry hosts many special distributions to clients of food and gifts for children and adults. More than ever, we need contributions of money, food, toys, books, gifts, gift cards (\$20-25), wrapping paper and decorations.

On December 22, there will be a special Christmas food distribution. Volunteers are needed to receive donations and set up the distribution on Dec. 17. Donations needed for this distribution include: turkeys, hams, chickens, potatoes, carrots, onions, stuffing mix, canned gravy and all the fixin's.

The need for non-perishable food and money continues as well. Remember us and those we serve!

### **\*Our Prison Neighbors\***

The director of Our Prison Neighbors has begun to find ways for the prisoners to speak for themselves, including having inmate representation on the board. A program called Smart Money is being adapted and taught, which has units on banking services, credit checking accounts, budgeting, saving, consumer rights and borrowing.

Among the men inside are many talented artists and aspiring artists, who are creating lovely and/or dramatic envelopes, greeting cards and portraits of family members drawn from photos. The Federal Medical Center at Devens also has an art class taught by an inmate.

**PLEASE HELP OUR PRISON NEIGHBORS  
SUPPORT THEIR BEST EFFORTS!**

## **\*Episcopal Relief & Development\***

“Healing a Hurting World,” is their new tagline. For example, in Myanmar a clean water system was constructed in Paletwa, six parishes in the Diocese of Sittwe established rice mills and continuing help given to partners, which offer schooling for children and vocational training for adolescents and adults in Tongou and Hpa'an. Thirty-two homes destroyed by fire were rebuilt.

On their own, each program may seem small. But together, they are giving hope to whole communities, promising a better, more secure future in all the ways that count—with clean water, education, food, shelter and economic opportunity.

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## **Holiday Wisdom**



What is Christmas? It is tenderness for the past, courage for the present, hope for the future. It is a fervent wish that every cup may overflow with blessings rich and eternal, and that every path may lead to peace. – Agnes M. Pharo


Christmas is not a time nor a season, but a state of mind. To cherish peace and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas. – Calvin Coolidge

I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all year round. – Charles Dickens

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*St. Andrew's Episcopal Church*

**December 2008**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
7th Advent II 14th Advent III 21st Advent IV 28th Christmas I	1.	2.	3. 12:00 noon HE with Healing Prayer 7:15 pm Emerging Church Class 6:30 pm Boy Scout Leaders	4. 7:00 pm Choir Practice and AA	5.	6.
7. 8:00 am HEI 10:00 am HEII 1:00 pm Bethel Korean Service	8. 9:30 am Bible Study	9.	10. 12:00 noon HE with Healing Prayer 7:15 pm Emerging Church Class 6:30 pm Boy Scouts	11. 7:00 pm Choir Practice and AA	12. 9:00 am – 3:00 pm <b>In A Manger</b> Set-up 7:30 pm Lessons/Carols Groton School	13. 10:00 am – 4:00 pm <b>In A Manger</b> Community Carol Sing to follow
14. 8:00 am HEI 10:00 am HEII 1:00 pm Bethel Korean Service <b>In A Manger</b> available for viewing in the Parish Hall after both services	15. 9:30 am Bible Study  <b>Xpress Deadline</b>	16.  7:15 pm Vestry Meeting	17. 12:00 noon HE with Healing Prayer 7:15 pm Emerging Church Class	18. 7:00 pm Choir Practice and AA	19.	20.
21. 8:00 am HEI 10:00 am HEII 1:00 pm Bethel Korean Service	22. 9:30 am Bible Study	23.	24. 5:00 pm Family Eucharist 9:30 pm Music 10:00 pm Midnight Mass	25. <b>Christmas Day</b> 	26.	27.
28. 8:00 am HEI 10:00 am HEII 1:00 pm Bethel Korean Service	29. 9:30 am Bible Study	30.	31. 12:00 noon HE with Healing Prayer 7:15 pm Emerging Church Class			

*St. Andrew's Episcopal Church*

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**Expressing Faith, Community, and Love**

- The St. Andrew's Xpress is a monthly newsletter for the St. Andrew's parish family and friends. Comments, suggestions, and photographs are welcome. If you no longer wish to receive the newsletter, please check the box.*