

THE SHAMROCK

DECEMBER 2008



SAINT PATRICK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The Rev. Emily Gibson, Interim Rector

21 Holyoke Street

Brewer, ME 04412-1905

(207) 989-1308

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stpatsbrewer@verizon.net

On the web at www.stpatsbrewer.org

Mary Ann Perry, Organist

St. Patrick's Vestry

Sue Elcik – *Senior Warden*

Peter Perry – *Junior Warden*

Lisa Chambers – *Clerk*

David Blethen – *Treasurer*

Penny Baker

Tom Copeland

Sandra Currier

Jane Harburger

Ralph Phipps

Lillian Rivers

Diocesan Delegates

Harold “Brownie” Brown

Della Gleason

Bev Joy - Alternate

**St. Patrick's Parish mission is to love God
and love each other**



From Our Interim Rector

To the Faithful of St. Patrick's:

Christmas is in the air! For children and shopkeepers, the anticipation has already begun for the rest of us, a bit more circumspection. Christmas tends to make me cranky, not because I don't like the celebration of the season, but because it is forced on us so early. The Christmas season does not begin the day after Halloween, nor does it begin the day after Thanksgiving! It does not begin twelve days before December 25, or even on the 4th Sunday of Advent. It begins after sundown on Christmas Eve, and continues until the 12th night, the Feast of the Epiphany, January 6. Because there's so much rushing of the season, it's hard for most of us to hold out and to hold on to the timing of the church year, but I think it's worth giving it a try. And I don't mean delaying the Christmas shopping or all the other necessary preparations until Christmas Eve. If anything, those tasks, when done mindfully and joyfully in anticipation of the great celebration, are what Christmas is all about. What I'm trying to emphasize here is the fact that Christmas wouldn't be anything without the season of Advent, and with all the focus solely on

Christmas, it tends to get short shrift. Advent, my favorite season of the church year, is all about the preparation and anticipation of Christmas, but it isn't Christmas. It's about realizing our need for God's intervention in the world, and the fact that the intervention comes from one of us, Immanuel, who shows us with his life what it takes to refresh and renew our weary world.

In the Northern Hemisphere, Advent takes us up to the shortest, darkest day of the year to the turning point from darkness to light, a wonderful metaphor about God with us in Christ, and it is that journey from darkness to light that carries a poignancy not found in the other observances, with the exception, perhaps, of the Easter Vigil. And in the culmination of that journey in the Feast of the Incarnation, we realize that the answers we seek are within, in the wellsprings of our souls, inhabited by God, so that it is possible for us to respond in ways "infinitely more than we can ask or imagine," because God has marked us as holy through the gift and power of the Holy Spirit. When we yearn for answers to our struggles, questions, and confusion, Jesus is held out to us ("Behold the man!" as Pilate proclaimed) to show us the way, to find that it is through giving ourselves in love that we will find

what we need for ourselves and for our world.

This crucial discovery is the work of Advent. It is finding ourselves in the heart of the incarnational mystery (“for God so loved the world...”), and responding to God’s claim on us and this world God has made. And there will be no rest until we get it right, until the vision of the Kingdom becomes a reality, the vision proclaimed by John the Baptist, fulfilled in Jesus the Christ, bestowed by the Holy Spirit, and which has compelled and challenged those captivated by its promise ever since. “Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight...every valley shall be lifted up, and the hills made low,” the world turned upside down by the grace of his coming.

THAT’S why I don’t want to rush into Christmas, and pack it away the day after. We must be attentive, focused, and ready once again to greet this wonder, and then discern the ways in which we are called to carry it on in our time and place. While all the trappings of Christmas, the parties, dinners, and exchanges of gifts are lovely in their own right, and carry a hint of the banquet that is God’s reign, they can’t pretend to be the hope and promise for which we wait and work.

My hope and wish for St. Patrick’s in Brewer is that we might share a blessed Advent, a beautiful Christmas, and a new year full of God’s purpose and power, the power of the incarnation, “God with us.”

Faithfully yours,
The Rev. Emily S. Gibson

Emily+’s December Schedule at St. Patrick’s

- Dec. 2 and 3, Tuesday and Wednesday, at the parish
- Dec. 5, Friday, Celebration of her 25th anniversary of ordination at a service of Advent Evensong and reception, Trinity Church, Castine, at 5:00 p.m., and dinner at the Manor Inn for those wishing to stay on (dinner is around 7:30 p.m.; please contact Emily for reservations)
- Dec. 7, Sunday, 2nd Advent, presiding at 8:00 and 10:00 a.m., and attending the Shared Ministry Meeting
- Dec. 9 and 10, Tuesday and Wednesday, at the parish
- Dec. 14, Sunday, presiding at 8:00 and 10:00 a.m.
- Dec. 16 and 17, Tuesday and Wednesday, at the parish
- Dec. 21, Sunday, 3rd Advent, presiding at 8:00 and 10:00 a.m.
- Dec. 23, Tuesday, at the parish
- **Dec. 24, Wednesday, 5 p.m.,
Christmas Eve service**

- **Dec. 25, Thursday, 10:00 a.m., Christmas Day service**
- Dec. 27, the 1st Sunday after Christmas, 8:00 a.m. Christmas Lessons and Holy Eucharist; 10:00 a.m., Christmas Lessons and Holy Eucharist and Carols.



From Our Wardens

Dear All at St. Patrick's:

Wow! Thank you God and congratulations to all at St. Patrick's who helped make the Holiday Fair on We had anticipated and budgeted to make \$3000 at our 2008 Holiday Fair and we actually made over \$4000!

Not only was the Fair successful monetarily, we had a tremendous turn out of parishioners who all pitched in to help. It was wonderful to experience the sense of community and family that was emanating from our undercroft. St. Patrick's is alive and full of energy! It is becoming more and more obvious how important St. Patrick's is to members of our congregation. Thank you to all who participated.

We continue to be very grateful to have Emily+ as our Interim Rector. We have had only positive feedback from parishioners and from people in the community who have met her.

She has embraced St. Patrick's and her insights into our parish family have been quite uplifting. We look forward to the coming months as we work together to lead St. Patrick's into the future.

Speaking of Emily+, she will be celebrating the 25th Anniversary of her Ordination soon. We will be having an expanded coffee hour on Sunday, Dec. 7, 2008, after the 10:00 a.m. service to honor this accomplishment and to reinforce to Emily+ how glad we are to have her at St. Pat's. Emily+ has requested that there be no gifts but encourages anyone who is so inclined to make a donation to the Rector's Discretionary Fund at St. Patrick's.

The Vestry met on Nov. 18 and continued its work in determining the path of our interim time with Emily+. The question posed to us this month was, "If we were successful beyond our wildest dreams in accomplishing what needs to happen during the interim time, what would that look like?" There was some good discussion around this question. It was determined that one of the most important outcomes of this interim period is to establish a clear vision of who we are at St. Patrick's. We continue to be committed to maintaining open communication between the Vestry (and any other committee that gets developed in this

process) and the congregation. We recognize that St. Patrick's Shared Ministry program is a vital link to our future and we will continue to promote and support it.

In the next week or so you will be receiving a heartfelt stewardship letter from the Vestry along with a pledge card. We are very committed to St. Patrick's and want to see it grow into the future. In January when we have our Annual Meeting, we will be presenting a 2009 budget to the congregation. Our treasurer, David Blethen, can only use returned pledge cards to develop our budget. Please prayerfully consider your pledge and return your pledge card on our Ingathering Sunday, Dec. 7, 2008. Thank you for your continued support of St. Patrick's. We are an awesome little church family and together we can make this work for us.

Yours in Christ,
Sue Elcik and Pete Perry
Wardens

Sam Crocker
sends us news
that he has
settled in with his son at 34 Inkberry
Road, New Boston, NH 03070. He
thinks about us often and hopes to
visit home in Brewer. He thanks us



again for all the support we have given and continue to give him. He would love to hear from you at his new address.

Pete Perry



Outreach Committee

Helping our neighbors get through the winter months has been our priority this fall. Monetary donations have been made to the Brewer Community Service Council for fuel assistance for residents in Brewer and surrounding towns. We are working to coordinate a monthly meal with other churches on weekends so that there is a meal provided somewhere each weekend.

For Christmas we are asking for donations for the teen boys at Charleston Youth Detention Center. Mark Spahr, who teaches culinary arts there, has provided us with this list:

- Hats and gloves for teen boys
- Candies
- Playing cards

- Alberto VO5 shampoo: Sunkiss Raspberry or Strawberries & Cream ONLY. (These are the only two that they have the required safety data sheets for their chemical ingredients.)

Mark plays board games with the students. A list of requested games is located in the Common Room. Please cross off the game you plan to donate so we won't have duplicates. All donations must be at church by Dec. 14.

The **Shawl Ministry** is active and always looking for more knitters and crocheters. Speak to Lisa Chambers for details. The next meeting is Dec. 18.

Watch the Sunday Bulletin and our Web Site for our next **Outreach Committee** meeting. We have moved back to Tuesday evenings.

St Patrick's has a **Service of Prayer and Healing** one Friday evening per month. Our next service will be Dec. 12 at 6:00 p.m. Please join us as we lift up God's people who are in need of prayer. This is an informal gathering with prayers offered silently and aloud. A pot luck supper will follow, which allows further time for fellowship. Talk to Mary Ann Perry or Pat Blethen for more information.

As was mentioned in the Shared Ministry article, the **Food Cupboard** was featured as our first focus ministry to help everyone learn more about it. It was started by Anne Piper and other women of St. Patrick's about 30 years ago under the name "Brewer Ecumenical Food Cupboard." Dawn Curtis said it was located in the Common Room and some of the food was stored in the old confessionals in that area. (St. Pat's used to be St. Joseph's Catholic Church.) It is now "Brewer Christian Food Cupboard" with the mission "to provide supplemented food to our area residents in need." People living in Brewer, Orrington, Holden, Dedham, Eddington, and Clifton can receive assistance once a month. In the past year, the average number of families served each month is 134 with 240 individuals. This is a significant increase from previous years and the economic conditions point to an increase this winter.

Volunteers work during regular Cupboard hours, Wednesday and Friday mornings, 10:00 a.m.– 12:00 noon. Others stock the shelves, transport food, buy food from Good Shepherd Food Bank and area super markets, bakeries, and Penquis for government food and other suppliers. There are over 60 volunteers.

The food cupboard is governed by a Board with one voting representative

from each of the active churches. St. Patrick's, St. Teresa's, St. Joseph's, Brewer United Methodist Church, First Congregational Church of Brewer, North Brewer/Eddington United Methodist Church, and Eddington Community Church. The officers are: President: Cindy McEwen, Vice-President: Paul Jerome, Secretary: Mary Ann Perry, Treasurer: Pat Fish.

How can you help?

- ✓ Continue to pray for this ministry
- ✓ Volunteer Mon. or Fri. mornings
- ✓ Help stock the shelves on 2nd Tues. of each month from 6:00 - 8 pm
- ✓ Donate food items
- ✓ Donate money using your monthly offering envelope for "Food Cupboard"
- ✓ Bring your Shaw's Supermarket receipts to church. The Food Cupboard receives a percentage from each receipt

Volunteers from St. Patrick's:

The congregation for generous donations and providing a home for the food cupboard plus these individuals:

Judy Baker
Pat Blethen

Lisa Chambers
Bill Curtis
Dawn Curtis
Ellen Fisher
Bonnie Heyer
Ruth MacIlroy
Tom Copeland
Mary Ann Perry
Pete Perry

It is becoming increasing more difficult and overwhelming for the leadership to provide the best service with so many volunteers and so many neighbors in need. For this reason, a manager position is now open. Applications are being accepted for 20 hour per week, \$10,000/year salary. For more information, call Cindy McEwen at 989-9623 or send your resume to Cindy at 53 Lorraine Avenue, Brewer, ME 04412.

Speak to me if you want to volunteer or need more information about the food cupboard.

Mary Ann Perry

St. Patrick's Shared Ministry

Parishioners continue to prayerfully ask, "Who is God calling to each ministry?" as all discern the gifts of the Spirit. What are my gifts and the gifts of our members? What are my (our) strengths? How do I (we)

uphold the gifts of all members as they exercise their ministry in the church and in the world?

Since the fall Ministry Fair, we began to learn about specific ministries in more detail. The first one shared was the ministry of the Brewer Christian Food Cupboard in early Nov. Mary Ann Perry shared the history of the Food Cupboard, the behind-the-scenes operations and some exciting news about the changes that have taken place and the future of the organization.

Watch the bulletin for the date of the next presentation, which will be about the "Altar Guild." If you have ever wondered what the members of the Altar Guild do, this is your chance to find out. Maybe you are able to do some parts of this ministry but not others. Come, ask questions and see if this ministry might be what God is asking you to consider. This is a quiet, behind-the-scenes ministry, yet it has a significant impact on how smoothly a service runs.

If you would like to learn more about a specific ministry, please mention this to me, MaryAnn Perry, Rev. Emily Gibson or any of the members of St. Pat's Shared Ministry Group. This does not mean that you are volunteering for this ministry, just that you are curious to know more about it.

Come join the **Shared Ministry** group for its next meeting after the 10:00 a.m. service on Dec. 7.

Pat Blethen

HOLIDAY FAIR WRAP UP



A special thank you to everyone for contributing and volunteering on the day of the Holiday Fair. The coordinators of the tables did such an outstanding job. They were Ellen Fisher, Della Gleason, Mark Spahr, MaryAnn Perry, Penny and Jillian Baker, Lisa Chambers, Ruth MacIlroy, Sandra Currier, John and Betty Buckingham. Also, a thank you to Rita Poirier, Emily Gibson and Bev Joy for managing the raffle table. Again, Mike Dolley did a wonderful job with advertising and Deb Carney with creating the posters. Mary Cady spent many hours getting money bags together for the fair and then completing the counting at the end of the day. There were many people behind the scenes such as Tom Copeland and Pete Perry delivering items to the fair. Also, thank you to the many people who contributed through monetary donations and items for the fair. On that day beginning at 7:00 a.m., the aroma of breakfast being cooked by

Mark with background music provided by Mike contributed to an atmosphere that was fun right from the beginning. We made \$4,130.81. What a successful day!

Jane Harburger



Dec. 3 John Buckingham
Dec. 7 Rita Poirier
Dec. 8 Betty Buckingham
Dec. 11 Irene Douglas
Dec. 11 Alan Baker
Dec 14 Peter Buck
Dec. 21 Mike Hardy
Dec. 23 Darien Frederick
Dec. 24 Lloyd Day
Dec. 26 Loreli Jenkins
Dec. 28 Emily Smith

**Visit Bishop Stephen Lane's
new blog,**

"Round Maine with Bishop Lane," at

bishopstephen.wordpress.com

for weekly reports and videos of his
travels across Maine.

**Kansas Cheese Ball
From Mary Cady**

Mix together:

2 packages (8-oz each) cream
cheese - softened

1 stick of butter - softened (do not
substitute margarine)

1 package Hidden Valley Ranch
buttermilk dressing mix, dry

Add

2 cups grated extra sharp cheddar
cheese or a mixture of cheddar,
Jack and Colby (I have just
started using the latter mixture and
love it.)

Mix well with electric mixer.

Chill.

Spray Pam on hands and form into 1, 2
or 3 balls – size is your choice.

Roll into toasted chopped pecan pieces.
(Place pecans in a single layer on cookie
sheet with sides and toast at 325 degrees
until browned – 8 minutes or so –
depends on oven so check often).

Wrap cheese balls in plastic wrap. If
you want to freeze or keep in
refrigerator, also seal in zip lock
sandwich bag. Freezes for up to 6
months.

Or you can just put cheese mixture in a
small crock, container, or whatever and
serve as cheese spread.

DATES TO REMEMBER!

See inside for details on most of these events

Dec. 5 Celebration of Emily+'s 25th Anniversary of
Ordination to the Priesthood

Dec. 7 Shared Ministry Group Meeting

Dec. 9 Stock-the-Shelves of the Food Cupboard

Dec. 12 Prayer and Healing Service and Pot Luck Supper

Dec. 18 Knitting Circle

Dec. 24 Christmas Eve Service 5:00 p.m.

Dec. 25 Christmas Day Service 10:00 a.m.

Dec. 27 Articles are due for the January issue of **THE SHAMROCK**

TBA Outreach Committee Meeting

If you wish to be taken off our mailing list, please notify the church office.
Thank you.