

The Diocese of Springfield

E-NEWSLETTER

February 2025 -The Week of IV Epiphany



Presentation of Jesus at the Temple and the Baptism of Christ, Public Domain

Remembering Father Metcalf

Stillwater Amateur Radio Association, Inc.

On December 22, 1944, Fr. Metcalf, a U.S. Army chaplain in WWII, received a call from his commanding officer General George Patton. General Patton wanted a prayer for good weather; and wanted it fast. Weather in Western Europe had been terrible since September. Patton's troops were plagued by rain, mud, cold temperatures, snow, and thick clouds. American warplanes were unable to provide support to the Allies as the Germans reinforced their positions. Written by Metcalf and another chaplain, the prayer was delivered by Gen. Patton, a devout Christian. Known as the Weather Prayer, it was distributed to all soldiers in the Third Army.



Fr. George Metcalf,
Stillwater Amateur Radio Association

UPCOMING:

- 2/02 - The Feast of Saint Brigid of Kildare
- 2/02 - The Presentation of our Lord
- 2/03 - The Feast of Saint Anskar
- 2/05 - The Feast of Saint Agatha of Sicily
- 2/06 - The Feast of the Martyrs of Japan
- 2/10 - The Feast of Saint Scholastica of Nursia
- 2/24 - The Feast of Saint Matthias the Apostle
- 2/26 - The Feast of Saints Photini



Was it Divine Intervention, Mother Nature, or a miracle when the skies cleared the next day and the Allies were able to stop the German advance?! Patton, his ~250,00 troops and Allies fighting in Belgium's Ardennes Forest, certainly believed the Weather Prayer had something to do with it!

About 100 miles from Patton was Bastogne; a Belgian town and famous location for the Battle of the Bulge stalemate. Outnumbered and short on supplies, the American troops were not willing to surrender to the surrounding Germans. But with the moderating weather, American planes provided support and supplies as Patton traveled at breakneck speed to help liberate Bastogne. Military historians believe the Allied success at the Battle of the Bulge was key to their advancing into Germany and ultimately defeating the Nazis.

When Fr. Metcalf returned to Minnesota following the war, he became chaplain for Episcopal students at the University of Minnesota and, later an associate minister at On-the-Hill Episcopal Church on Summit Avenue. Along with other ministry-related work, Fr. Metcalf founded the Oratory of St. Mary's in the area. He and his wife bought about 100 acres of beautiful land in Afton.

As an avid Amateur Radio operator, Fr. Metcalf, was very active in several area radio clubs. Through the Handiham department of the Courage Center he often volunteered to help those with special needs. He especially liked teaching Morse code to beginner Hams.

With the passing of Fr. Metcalf in 1995 and his wife in 2007, the majority of their Afton estate was donated and eventually became part of the Belwin Conservancy. Belwin specializes in outdoor science education and has more than 1,500 acres in the Afton area. The permanently protected land includes woodland, prairie, oak savanna, ponds, streams, and wetlands.



Dave Glas WØOXB. Hams & the Public Invited ... "Remembering Father Metcalf – WØJH " at Belwin Conservancy. Stillwater Amateur Radio Association, Inc. MN, USA.
[Click here](#) to view the original article

Communications with SARA

Buck Malick, president of the Eastern Michigan/Western Wisconsin Stillwater Amateur Radio Association (SARA) contacted Bishop Burgees to express the club's appreciation for his interest in the Fr. Metcalf story. He has extended the invitation for Bishop Burgess to observe this commemoration with the SARA next year by operating as an honorary club member. In interest of amateur radio stations worldwide wanting to make and log the contact, this special event station plans to transmit/operate from the 16,000 acre Belwin Conservancy in Afton, Minnesota from Saturday, January 3rd through Sunday, January 4th. Being licensed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) as a General Class amateur radio operator, Bishop Burgess has operating privileges on all allotted bands and designated frequencies. He is now motivated to increase his Morse code proficiency (sending and receiving) to the expected minimum of 18-20 words per minute.

New Rector at St. John's Decatur

The Rev. Mother Marisa Vogel, who has served the parish of Emmanuel Memorial in Champaign as curate since she first arrived to the Diocese of Springfield in 2022, began as Rector at St. John's Decatur on January 21st, 2025 and celebrated her first Sunday with the parish on Sunday, January 26th. During her time in Champaign, she demonstrated her leadership capabilities by seeing that faithful congregation

through many transitions and has devotedly placed the pastoral concerns of her parishioners as her highest priority. Originally canonically resident within the Diocese of Dallas, Mother Marisa is celebrated throughout the church as among the very best. She presents herself in a manner that speaks well of our Diocese, our Church, and our Communion. As the Psalmist penned, "The Lord has done great things for us, * and we are glad indeed" (Psalm 126:4). St. John's in Decatur has chosen very well and we may now all expect great things from them "indeed."



Chair Lift in Alton

St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Alton was gifted a chair lift from parishioner Donna Fisher, who donated it in memory of her late husband, Al. The chair was appropriately blessed to the glory of God on the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul. The parish also recently received two AEDs from the Greg Holthaus Memorial Fund to be placed in St. Paul's and Trinity Chapel, equipping the church community to be trained and prepared for any incidents that may occur on the properties; an initiative that was

started after the unexpected loss of a volunteer who collapsed from a heart attack while setting up the pet food pantry. Fr. Garron commented, "these amazing gifts that the Church has received have been such a huge blessing. This will help us better serve our community!"





Celebration of New Ministry in Alton

The commemoration of Charles Stuart, King and Martyr was observed before the altar of St. Paul's Church in Alton on Thursday, January 30 while observing the Celebration of a New Ministry by a most reverently offered Rite I Holy Eucharist. Father Garron Daniels was presented by his Vestry to The Right Reverend Brian K. Burgess, DD of Springfield, for Institution as the XXI rector of the Episcopal Parish (St. Paul's Parish and Trinity Chapel) in Alton, Illinois. In addition to the exuberant laity, clergy from the Episcopal Diocese of Springfield, the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri, and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Springfield lent their voices to common prayer and Hymns of high thanksgiving for all that the Christ of God is

doing within this historic parish. The Right Reverend Deon Johnson of Missouri was vested, seated in Choir, and assisted in the celebration of the Holy Mysteries.



The Reverend Dr. Nathan Hayden of St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Ladue, Missouri and clerical member of the Diocese of Missouri's Commission on Ministry stood as Homilist. Father Daniels is a graduate of The University of the South School of Theology in Sewanee, TN (MDiv.) and has already had a tremendous impact on the spiritual health and missional vitality of this East St. Louis parish within the Diocese of Springfield.



Pre-Lenten Clergy Retreat

The 2025 Pre-Lenten Clergy Retreat will be held in Belleville, IL from February 24th through the 26th. Dr. Ryan Burge will be offering three spiritual reflections addressing our location and an ever-changing Christian landscape. More information about Dr. Burge can be found at his website www.graphsaboutreligion.com or on Twitter at [@ryanburge](https://twitter.com/ryanburge). Partial scholarships are available based on communicated

need. If canonically resident priests or deacons find they cannot attend, the courtesy of requesting dispensation from Bishop Burgess is expected by Friday, February 7th.

Project Resource 2025

The Project Resource Stewardship Conference, hosted by The College for Bishops, will take place again this spring from March 9th through April 6th. Project Resource equips parish stewardship teams with strategic training and flexible resources to design and execute annual stewardship campaigns which can be replicated and adapted in future years. Project Resource is dedicated to fostering cultural and systemic advancements around stewardship as a ministry in the Episcopal Church. For further details and registration, please visit <https://project-resource.org/spring2025>.

ECW Lenten Retreat

The Diocese of Springfield Episcopal Church Women will host a Lenten Retreat from March 21st through the 23rd at Toddhall Retreat and Conference Center in Columbia, IL. The keynote speaker will be The Rev. Dr. Gayle Fisher-Stewart, who served as Triennial Chaplain during the General Convention in Louisville, KY

The theme of this year's retreat is Women Growing in Spirit, and Truth. Those planning to attend are encouraged to bring a poem, story, song, or skit to share on Friday evening. For further information or questions, contact retreat co-chairs Carol McCrary at troub71@yahoo.com or Joyce C. Wright at jcwright117@gmail.com.





Province V 2025 Women's Ministries Gathering

The Episcopal Church Women of Province V will be hosting a gathering on Saturday, March 1st from 9:00 to 11:00 AM. The group will discuss growing and evolving with Lisa Bortner, president of the National Episcopal Church Women, and hold a book discussion over *A Full Hearted Life* by Bishop Jake Owensby. Those interested in registering should email kathymank@gmail.com.

Register Now for ECC Summer 2025

The dedicated Episcopal Church Camp of Illinois team is well on the way to planning another wonderful week of camp for the summer of 2025 and now is a great time to take advantage of the early-bird discount. Those interested in sending their children or sponsoring a child for next year can [view the 2025 brochure](#), and [register here](#), and find more information on [our website](#). Church Camp will be at Camp Wartburg in Waterloo, IL June 22 through 28, 2025. Sponsors should complete one form per child.



UTO Fall Ingathering

Eighteen churches and parishes participated in the United Thank Offering Fall Ingathering, collecting a total amount of \$4,213.57.



Please include those in our Diocese who are pursuing Holy Orders in your prayers:

Danny Shuler, Postulant, St. Thomas, Salem
Andrew Mead, Postulant, Trinity, Lincoln
Zach Buscher, Postulant, Trinity, Lincoln
Jeff Wenzel, Postulant, The Cathedral Church of St. Paul the Apostle, Springfield
Len Harris, Postulant, Church of the Redeemer, Cairo

You can visit our website to check out the most up-to-date prayer calendar ([click here](#)) or our diocesan calendar ([click here](#)) with feasts and other events listed for around the Diocese.



The Presentation in the Temple, Public Domain



The Episcopal Church in Central and Southern Illinois

