

Important Dates

- 3 - Communion
- 6 - Epiphany
- 10 - Baptism of the Lord
- 16 - Taize
- 24 - Annual Congregational Meeting and Pot-Luck Lunch

January Volunteers

Liturgists

- 3 - Curt Kochner
- 10 - Patti Johnson
- 17 - Dave Kimball
- 24 - Cynthia Kessler
- 31 - Wood Family
- Feb. 7 - Jim Tarr

Ushers

- 3 - Diana & Warren Rogers
- 10 - Jan Croff and Mary Dick
- 17 - Chris Chauvin and Gail Kimball
- 24 - Bob & Mary Wood
- 31 - Olive Edwards and Vilma Bartel
- Feb. 7 - Jeanne Castberg and Larry Apple

The Church Year

As we begin a new calendar year, we are reminded that the church's year already started at the beginning of Advent when we anticipate God's entrance in our world. Think about that - everything begins when we look for God. Here is a poem by Ann Weems called "The Church Year". It is from her book, "Kneeling in Bethlehem".

*The church is Advent.
The unwrapping of
God's greatest gift is
near.*

*Advent – coming.
God will take away the tinsel
And decorate our human hearts in
hope
So that Christians can sit laughing in
the rain,
Knowing that the Lord is going to
Shine in upon their being.
For no matter how long the darkness,
God will send the Light.
In spite of cursing and violence and
the massacring
Of human dignity,
We will dance in the streets of Bethle-
hem,
For He will be born!*

*The church is Epiphany.
We are the Magi, searching,
Resplendent in this world's accouter-
ments
Of knowledge and wealth and*

achievement.

*But we search for something more.
And – of all unlikely places-
In a stable
The Deity appears.
The birthing of our Lord*

*Bursts in upon our or-
dinary lives
Like fireworks in the
snow.
Only God would send
a little baby King,
And we are on our
knees,
Where we are within
reach of our full per-
sonhood.*



*The church is Good Friday.
Darkness burnt into blackness,
Abysmal absence of anything good.
We acknowledge that death is real
And we tremble for a world that
would kill its God.
Our feet stand in quicksand;
Our voices echo sterile silence.
We huddle together to meet the dark
and the death,
Forgetting that somewhere
A seed is sprouting,
Somewhere
A child is growing.
All we see is Christ crucified.*

*The church is Easter.
Out of Death: Life.
Out of darkness:*

(Continued on page 2)

Financial Report November 2009

	<u>Nov. 2009</u>	<u>2009 YTD</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
<u>Income</u>	\$ 12,443	\$ 114,670	\$ 97,329	\$ 17,341
<u>Expenses</u>	\$ 12,202	\$ 107,119	\$104,814	\$ 2,305
<u>Net</u>	\$ 241	\$ 7,551	(\$ 7,485)	\$ 15,036



Prayer and Messages from the Heart

Fred Woodson's Family

Fran Poulos in the loss of her husband Nick

Larry Apple and his dad in the loss of Larry's mother, Anna

Your news concerning St. Andrew and the congregation is always welcome. Regular mail or drop off at the office. E-mail to: office@standrewbillings.org

Deadline for the February issue of the Net is Monday, January 18. You are encouraged to submit your news before the deadline.
Thanks,
Susan Dickson, editor



*A lush green world
Flowers in the ice
Sunrays in the storm
Mustard seeds galore.
Our souls enter a spiritual springtime,
Our bodies given over to leaping and dancing,
Our very beings saturated in hosannas.
Our shouting crashes in upon this world:
The Lord lives!
We live!
Resurrection resounds throughout our community.*

*The church is Pentecost.
The Holy Spirit is poured out upon us
And sends us out together
Aflame with new life,
Inheritors of the wealth of God:
Life abundant.
We are liberated from the prisons of pettiness,
Jealousy, and greed,
Liberated to be the church.*

*We are freed to free others.
We are affirmed to affirm others.
We are loved to love others.
We are family;
We are community.
We are the church triumphant-
You, me, anyone who would come unto the Lord –
Renewed, redirected, empowered
To change things and lives
Together in love and wholeness.*

*We are the Lord's church,
The church of justice and mercy,
The people sent to open prisons,
To heal the sick
To clothe the naked
To feed the hungry
To reconcile
To be alleluias when there is no music.
The mantle is upon our shoulders.
Joy is apparent in our living.
We have been commissioned to be the church
Of Jesus Christ.*

Are you ready for a new year? Are you ready to be the church ...again?

Grace and peace,
Brent

HAIL O EVER-BLESSED MORN



HAIL REDEMPTION'S HAPPY DAWN

December 15, 2009 Session Notes

by Curt Kochner, Clerk of Session

-Our 2010 Annual Meeting will be held on January 24, following worship and a potluck meal.

-Pastor Long reported that Nick Poulos died. The funeral will be held on December 20, at St. Andrew.

-We have received a "Thank You" note for our 2009 contribution of \$456 to the Christmas Joy Offering.

-The Session discussed the impact of the November "Sabbath Month" during which a number of meetings were not held and church members were encouraged to take time for rest, reflection and renewal.

-The Session reviewed the proposed 2010 budget. The budget for 2010 was approved and anticipates Income of \$111,600 and Expenses of \$121,374 for a budgeted net loss for the year in the amount of \$9,774.

-Due to a special bequest during 2009, we expect to end the year with a budget surplus of approximately \$14,000.

-We expect to end 2009 with a total active membership of 82. This is two less than the membership at the end of 2008, and reflects two deaths in our congregation during 2009.

-We will look at our current Active Membership roster and determine if there are any members that should be contacted and possibly moved to Inactive status. St. Andrew will pay \$41 per capita this year for all active members.

-The Session approved a motion to recommend a By-law amendment at the Annual Meeting on January 24. We currently have 12 elders serving on the Session with four elders elected each year to serve a term of three years each. The Session recommends that we begin electing three elders each year starting in 2011. This would reduce the size of

the Session from 12 elders to 9 over a period of three years beginning next year.

COMMUNITY REPORTS:

EDUCATION: Jim Tarr has been teaching an adult Sunday school class on the Old Testament. Susan Thomas presented an adult class this fall on Philippians and an Advent Series in December. Priscilla Bell will present an adult Sunday school class Bible 101 on January 10, 17 24 and 31. The youth presented two mystery dinners with the proceeds going to the Interfaith Hospitality Network and to purchase Christmas gifts for a family through Family Services. Youth Sunday will be on February 14.

FACILITIES: Funds have been set aside to purchase a new computer for Pastor Long. The trim around the outside of the church has been given one coat of paint.

WORSHIP: Many thanks to everyone for bringing winter coats, gloves, hats and blankets to donate to Family Services. A full car load of items was delivered to Family Services on one of the coldest days of December. Thanks to those who contributed to purchasing 24 poinsettias to decorate the sanctuary.

NOMINATING: The Nominating Committee will offer the following slate of officers at the Annual Meeting on January 24, 2010:

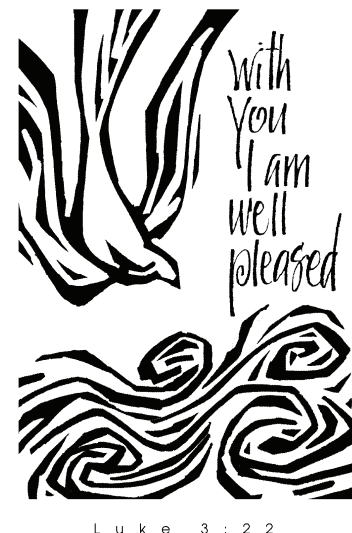
Elders

Class of 2012 - Curt Kochner, Bob Wood, Don Johnson, Sandy Welch
Class of 2011 - Diana Rogers

Deacons

Class of 2012 - Susan Thomas, Patti Johnson, Jan Spicer
Class of 2011 - Olive Edwards
Class of 2010 - Mary Dick

The next stated meeting of the St. Andrew Session will be held on January 19, at 6:15 p.m.



L u k e 3 : 2 2

MISSION STATEMENT

We are Building a
Servant Community
Seeking to be
Christ's Hands
and Heart

Abolishing the

Bible 101



January Birthdays

- 6 - Willie Henrickson
- 8 - Harriet Whearty
- 10 - Diana Rogers
- 13 - Jeane Bryant
- 16 - Lora Whearty
- 19 - Phyllis Prindle
- 26 - Clayton Croff

Jan. Anniversaries

- 10 - Keith & Artie Markegard

Rescue Mission
Sandwich Makers—
every Wednesday at
9:00am

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Food Bank Sunday

First Sunday of each  
month: Bring your  
canned goods to  
church



by Betty Whiting

The Montana Abolition Coalition, Billings chapter, invites each of you to our next meeting, Thursday, January 28, at 3 p.m. at Stella's Cafe at 2525 1st Avenue North, Billings.

This Coalition of organizations and churches is active in educating ourselves, the public, and legislators about the death penalty. A bill to abolish the death penalty and replace it with life without any possibility of parole passed the Montana Senate in 2007 and failed by a slim margin in the House. The Coalition is seeking support to end the death penalty in Montana in 2010.

Reasons for abolishing the death penalty are:

- \* it is reserved for the poor who cannot pay for strong defense attorneys
- \* there is a risk of executing an innocent person
- \* the process is long as a life is on the line, making it difficult for murder victims' loved ones
- \* many of us believe God has asked us not to kill, especially when there is no risk to ourselves
- \* the process is expensive, more costly than life imprisonment
- \* areas that have the most executions also have the highest murder rates

If you'd like more information, contact Katie McKeown, PO Box 332, Helena, MT 59624, [kciem@mtabolitionco.org](mailto:kciem@mtabolitionco.org), or 406-561-0733 for materials or a presentation.

You can also learn a lot at [www.mtabolitionco.org](http://www.mtabolitionco.org) where you can see pictures of our president, Ziggy Ziegler and secretary, Rev. Vern Klingman. On Jan.31 or Feb.1, Billings will be hosting a speaker who was imprisoned for murder and later found innocent. I, too, will be happy to talk with you about this issue. My phone is 252-5647 and my e-mail is [bettywhiting@bresnan.net](mailto:bettywhiting@bresnan.net).

Rev. Priscilla Bell will be teaching a class for adults and youth in January on Sunday mornings at 9:30, called *Bible 101*. This class is intended as a beginner's study with plenty for accomplished students of the Bible as well. The class will be held upstairs in the meeting room. Classes will begin Sunday, Jan 10th.

- ❖ Jan. 10 -- Getting Acquainted with the Bible: What is the Bible?
- ❖ Jan 17 -- History of the Bible and its Formation: What is included? What is left out? And Why?
- ❖ Jan 24-- How to Choose a Bible and What Extra Tools Might Be Considered?
- ❖ Jan 31-- How to Experience The Bible and its Power

## Thought You'd Want To Know

*Many Universities and Colleges offer Life Income Plans to Alums (Charitable Gift Annuities) to provide them tax-favored income for life. The Alum passes away, and a lump sum can go to their school. Presbyterians are learning that they can use a similar gift annuity program to benefit themselves and ultimately benefit their church.*

# Music Notes



What music do you like for our worship? Is there some purpose to the music we have at St. Andrew? Would you rather worship

in silence?

It may surprise you to know that I read and meditate on the scripture passages for each Sunday, just as Pastor Brent Long does, before I pick out the choir music and instrumental offerings. I am now reading the lessons for Epiphany, Lent, Easter, and Pentecost. Once I have an understanding of the general theme for the season and then the message for each Sunday, I'll start looking through the music we have to see if there is something appropriate with a complementary lesson for choir and instruments. Pastor Long does the same thing as he looks for hymns that fit that Sunday's lesson, something we have in our hymnals, and something the congregation may like and be able to sing.

Pastor Long, the choir, and I have been stretching ourselves in selecting music that is new and alive. We are looking for music that brings us nearer to God with a greater understanding of ourselves, and a commitment to our community. We have a broad range of music in worship at our church. Two weeks ago I played the oldest tune ever written for organ in England in the 1500's. This fall, the choir sang two songs published in 2009, one with African bongos, and one with an Appalachian feeling.

Music is personal. To me, anything that draws me nearer to God is sacred, and most music does that for me. Music is a prayer reaching upward and outward. Many of you have told me how much you like our music program at St. Andrew and sometimes there is a spontaneous outburst of ap-

plause for something that touched you. Our tent is broad enough to include your favorites, so keep sharing with me what music you like best for our worship. At the same time, be prepared to hear and absorb something new.

Every person is welcome to participate in St. Andrew's music program, so call me at 252-5647 if you'd like to join with others, or if you or someone you love has something they would like to share with us. There is no restriction except that the music leads us into a deeper relationship with God and each other.

On the other hand, if you would like to attend a church with no music, let me introduce you to my dear husband, Paul, who doesn't like most church music, which led him to the fellowship of the Friends, where they worship in silence. Still, he loved an organist enough to marry her!

## Food and

Small group dinners are again on the menu for this winter/spring. Sign-ups will begin in January and dinners should be held in February, March, and April.

Please call or email Mary Apple if you'd like be a host/hostess (either in your home or at a restaurant) by January 10. She'll then prepare the sign-up sheets. Remember, everyone is invited to participate. You don't need to volunteer to be a host or hostess to participate. The dinners are great fun and are a chance to get to know others better. Mary's contact information is: 896-5258 (w) or 256-2230 (h) or [mapple@bresnan.net](mailto:mapple@bresnan.net).



### In January

**Facilities**  
5th at 7

**Education**  
6th at 5:30

**Session**  
19th at 6:15

**Deacons**  
25th at 7

**Worship**  
26th at 6:30

**Fellowship**  
27th at 5:30



# Maturity

by Jeanne Castberg

She knew it was just a matter of time until it happened:  
That sure-fire way to know when you reach "senior citizen" status.

And yet, it surprised her.  
Twice in one day, by two young men, she was referred to as "Ma'am."  
These kind and helpful young men Had been taught to respect their elders.

Now, I ask you...how did they know she had reached "senior" status?  
Her hair isn't gray, she still drives, feels young, and considers herself active.

Was it the items in her grocery basket? Or the fact she took time to visit with other shoppers?  
She wasn't insulted by the "Ma'am" but it did make her wonder if she's kidding herself.

When she arrived home, she made a dash for the bathroom where she took a good, long look at herself in the mirror.  
"Pretty good, considering all things. I don't look as old as some of my friends."

I guess the young men were just being polite.  
It's nothing to worry about. Just because I'm mature doesn't mean I'm old!  
But, maybe I'll try another store and see if the same thing happens-- and I'll wear different shoes!!"

# Editor's Corner

by Susan Dickson

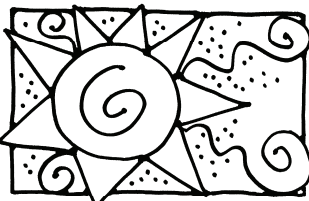
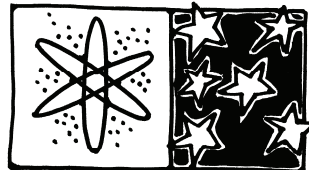
For those readers of the *NET* who are seeking a simpler and more thoughtful style of life, I am continuing to share some ideas that I have found in a special little book written by Elaine St. James called *Inner Simplicity*.

In this *NET* I am going to describe St. James' thoughts on our society's problem with being overly judgmental. She believes that in our culture we are "bred from birth to believe in our own superiority." We go through our lives thinking it's only natural to compare ourselves with other peoples' homes, dress, and such things as how hygienic they are. We are constantly making judgments-- many of which we're not even consciously aware.

St. James' response is to understand that we are *all* here for some purpose, even if we don't all realize it, and even "if we don't know what that purpose is yet."

The first step in overcoming this narrow mindset is simply awareness, followed by slowly letting go of these pervasive judgments, and then getting back to discovering a more gracious and compassionate reason for being born at this particular time and place.

ALL·YE·WORKS  
OF·THE·LORD



BLESS·the·LORD

**standrewbill-  
ings.org**

Calendar updates

## Help!

Sonya Skaggs desperately needs jars and bottles. She has an overly abundant crop of honey, and it must be removed from the large vat into smaller containers. If you have questions for Sonya, her phone number is 633-2622. Thank you!



180 24th Street West  
Billings, MT 59102



Address Service Requested

**Annual  
Congregational Meeting  
and Pot-Luck Lunch**

***January 24, 2010***

Review of 2009  
Accomplishments  
2010 Budget Presentation  
Election of Elders, Deacons,  
and Nominating Committee  
Pastor's Terms of Call  
Proposed change to By-Laws  
regarding the size of classes of  
elders  
Looking forward to 2010

**Taizé**

A Service of Worship  
In Prayer, Silence,  
Scripture and Song

*January 16th*

*Third Saturday of each  
month at 6:30pm*

