



Photograph by R. Williams

St. Michael's Newsletter

From the Rector



The Annunciation, a fresco by Fra Angelico in the Convent of San Marco, Florence, Italy, image from WikiCommons.

“Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.” I mused the other day what it would be like to be greeted with this upon entering a friend or family’s home for Christmas dinner. It is not the usual greeting we make in our day to day lives. Depending on how it was being said, and by whom, I might be bit perplexed and my defenses might rise up a notch. It would be one thing if someone I was close to greeted me as such (even more perplexing?), and quite another if a complete stranger said this, particularly one who had the appearance of an other-worldly being, such as an arch-angel. Yet, despite my questioning, it is ultimately most comforting. I receive as much during worship with that simple exchange, “The Lord be with you...and also with you.”

Of course, this is the greeting Mary received from the Archangel Gabriel. She

was perplexed and pondered in her heart what sort of greeting this was. “Do not be afraid, Mary,” Gabriel reassured her, for you have found favor with God.” (Luke 1:30) The announcement of what was to happen to her became even more wondrous, mysterious, joyful and expectant. All to which she responded, “Here I am, a servant of the Lord: let it be with me according to your word.” Mary is a model for us all.

This season of Advent is a time of wonder, mystery, and joyful expectation, a time to prepare for the “coming of the Lord.” We hear again the message of the Angels, “and in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem, to see the Babe lying in a manger.” (From the Bidding Prayer for Advent Lessons Carols). We come again to the stable and the manger – a lowly, humble and ordinary place – to be swept up in the awe of creation, of new birth, and the light of divine life. Advent and Christmas are seasons to prepare and marvel in the presence of God with us.

There is much to be uncertain and perplexed about these days: our evolving natural environment, political differences and rancor nationally and globally, an uncertain economic climate. Yet, as always, there is much hope, life and comfort. In ordinary and exalted places, may each of us hear and bear the words: “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.”

Please join us for Advent and Christmas worship. The schedule is on page 2.

- Fr. Andrew

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December Calendar

Happy December Birthdays to

**Bryce Russell
Harry McDonough
Jack McDonough
Genevieve Riegle**

From the Music Director

Happy Holidays to everyone! I hope your thanksgiving Day was joyful and full of family and friends. I got an early start on the holidays by playing five concerts with Elizabeth Von Trapp in Pennsylvania last week, and have 12 more to play around the country between now and Christmas. My good friends and colleagues John Skelton and Mark Dirksen will be filling in for me when I must be away, but I look forward to Christmas Eve and Christmas Day with you all.

Sunday, December 4 at 4 pm - Advent Lessons and Carols - please join us for this lovely service with choral music by Mendelssohn, Ralph Vaughan Williams and Paul Manz; organ music by Bach and some beautiful Advent hymns. Mark Dirksen will be at the organ and directin the choir.

May you enjoy the preparation for the coming of the Saviour this Advent season.—*Doug Major*

Songs of Heaven

Songs of Heaven, the long-awaited musical CD of St. Michael's choir and organ was heard for the first time at the Heart of Christmas Fair party on December 2. Copies of the CD will be available beginning December 16th. You can place your order now to insure a copy, or multiple copies! The CDs are \$10 each, and can be mailed for an additional \$4.95. Bring your check or cash to coffee hour or the church office and fill out a form.

And thank you Doug Major and Ian Hunter for pulling this all together!

Advent & Christmas Worship Schedule

Sunday, Dec. 4:	2 Advent
8:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist, Rite I
9:30 a.m.	Church School Chapel
10:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist, Rite II
5:00 p.m.	Advent Lessons & Carols
Sunday, Dec. 11:	3 Advent
8:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist, Rite I
9:30 a.m.	Church School
10:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist, Rite II
Sunday, Dec. 18:	4 Advent
8:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist, Rite I
10:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist, Rite II
Saturday, Dec. 24:	Christmas Eve
5:00 p.m.	Christmas Pageant with Family Eucharist, Rite II
10:45 p.m.	Choral and Organ Music
11:00 p.m.	Festive Eucharist, Rite II
Sunday, Dec. 25:	Christmas Day
10:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist, Rite II
	(No 8:00 a.m. Service)
Sunday, Jan. 1:	New Year's Day:
	Feast of The Holy Name
10:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist, Rite II
	(No 8:00 a.m. Service; No Evensong)

Songs of Heaven

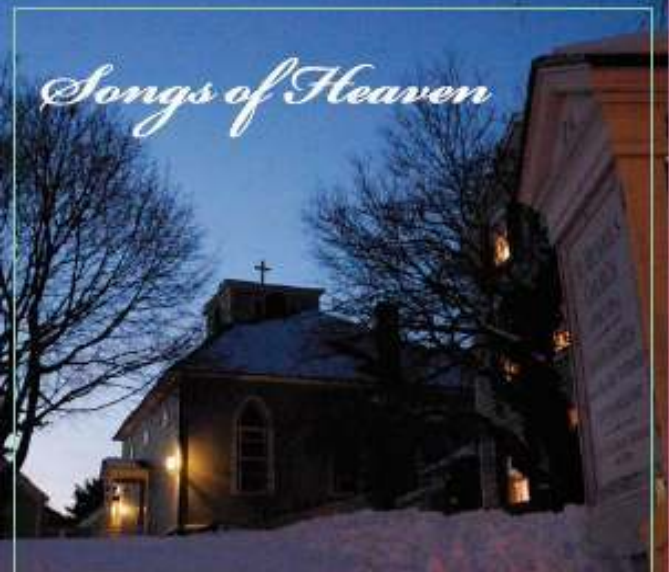
ABOUT THE MUSIC

Music has long been important to the people of Saint Michael's Church in Marblehead. This historic church, founded in 1714, has led the way in New England by being the first to observe Christmas Day as a religious holiday in 1728 (as opposed to a day of carousing and shooting off small arms). It was also the first church where Anglican chanting of the morning canicles took place, in 1767. The "Singing Gallery" was added in 1764, and has housed an organ since then. The current instrument is a Charles B. Fisk organ of 21 stops, made in Gloucester, MA in 1974, and situated in an 1833 Hook organ case. The acoustics in the wood and plaster building are excellent for music of all kinds, especially singing. One only needs to attend a Sunday service to enjoy the enthusiastic singing of the Holy Eucharist and the hymns by the congregation, the choir and our many visitors. The music you hear on this recording is a collection of favorite hymns and anthems of the St. Michael's Choir, and spans four centuries of choral music.

TRACES:

1. All My Hope in God is Founded	Herbert Howells
2. What Shall I Render to My God?	Austin Lovelace
3. Canticum Dominicum	Hans Leo Haaster
4. Hear My Prayer	Pelle Mendelssohn
5. Almighty God, the Fountaine of All Wisdom	Emmet Parrish
6. There We Adore	T. Frederick H. Casslyn
7. The Lord is My Shepherd	Douglas Major
8. Lord, Let Me Know Mine End	Maurice Coates
9. My Song is Love Unknown	John Ireland
10. Litany of the Holy Spirit	Douglas Major
11. Jesus, Joy of Man's Desiring	J.S. Bach
12. Chorus, the Fair Glory of the Holy Angels	Cadette Pleasance

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Choral Music from St. Michael's Church, Marblehead, MA
DR. DOUGLAS MAJOR, ORGANIST AND CHOIRMASTER

Church School & Youth—Aileen Ryder

Church School

Church School meets Sunday mornings at 9:30 am. Students in pre-K-1st grade use Godly Play. Weaving God's Promises is for students in grades 2-5.

The Supper Club

A gathering of Middle School Youth on the 2nd & 4th Tuesdays of the month at 6pm.

High School Youth

Lunch on the last Sunday of the month

Gift Giving

The **Mitten Tree** is an opportunity to share Christmas cheer with local families in need. Choose a mitten from the tree in the Parish Hall and go shopping as a family. Help your child practice generosity during Advent.

Join Kate Renney for **Christmas Dinner shopping for the Marblehead Food Pantry**. A Church School group will buy groceries using a gift certificate to Market Basket. Sign up is in the parish lobby.

December Highlights

Fri. Dec. 2 We're having a Christmas Preview Party for the kids where they will watch a movie and make cards.

Sat. Dec. 3 Join the Parish for lunch at the Christmas Fair and check out crafts and food made by all ages.

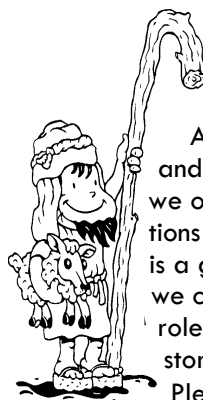
Sun. Dec. 4 Choose a gift to purchase from the Mitten Tree. Pageant Rehearsal 11:30-12:30

Sun. Dec. 11 Pageant Rehearsal 11:30-12:30

Fri. Dec. 23 Pageant Dress Rehearsal & Party 10am-1pm

Sat. Dec. 24 Christmas Pageant at 5:00 pm service, participants meet at 4:30.

Christmas Pageant



Advent is a great season for slowing down and remembering the great gift of Jesus. Yet we often become so busy with holiday preparations that we forget this. The Christmas Pageant is a great opportunity to remember the reason we celebrate Christmas. As the children play roles in sharing the Christmas story with us, the story comes alive for them in a whole new way. Please enjoy our performance December 24.

Church School & Youth Schedule

Date	Special Event	Middle School Youth	Godly Play I	Weaving God's Promises
Friday, December 2	Christmas Fair Preview Party			
Saturday, December 3	Christmas Fair	Volunteer at Fair 9:00-2:00		
Sunday, December 4	Pageant Rehearsal 11:30-12:30		The Holy Family with Melissa Amberick & Elke Backman	The Biblical Story with Octavia Moniz & Sue Cool
Sunday, December 11	Pageant Rehearsal 11:30-12:30		To be announced	To be announced
Tuesday, December 13		Supper Club		
Sunday, December 18			To be announced	To be announced
Saturday, December 23	Pageant Dress Rehearsal & Party 4:00 PM			
Sunday, December 24	Christmas Pageant & Family Eucharist		Meet at 4:30	Meet at 4:30
Sunday December 25 Christmas Day	One Service at 10:00 AM		No class	No Class

Stewards of the Month: Susan Butterworth

Susan Butterworth's grandmother was a member of St. Michael's, but Susan was raised as a Unitarian. In the eighties, however, she joined St. Michael's. She says, "It was the choir and the liturgy that brought me back."

Her St. Michael's memories include her son's baptism and the blessing of her marriage. She remembers her son's Church School years with the Christmas pageant and the Good Friday luncheons of vegetable soup and hot cross buns. She led a book discussion group for a while and she remembers fondly ringing the church bell. "I've done a cajillion receptions over the years," she laughs.

The choir, though, remains a mainstay of her life at St. Michael's. Sitting in the choir gallery, she says her mind naturally reflects on the collects. And, singing with the choir makes her aware of the liturgical year and she has grown to love the songs of each church season. Even after her husband Richard died in 2003, Susan processed that Sunday with the choir. "I had tears on my face, but that was where I had to be," she says.

Susan's spiritual life is broad. In February she took part in an interfaith trip to Israel, an experience she recently shared with St. Catherine's Guild. Growing up in Clifton, she attended temple services with friends as part of her social life. "I like to explore the connection between the Abrahamic religions," she says. Susan also attends Emmanuel in Boston. She likes the music, and the urban



environment is a change she enjoys. And, for a few Christmas Eves, she has sung at Old North.

With a degree from Tufts in French and Political Science, Susan was an accountant for 20 years, but then earned a Master's degree in English from Salem State University. Currently she is an adjunct professor at Salem State University where she also sings in the Women's Chorale. For two years, she taught eighth grade English at the Marblehead Veterans' Memorial Middle School. However, she left in June when she decided to enroll at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge. She will work on a Master's of Arts in Theological Studies, beginning in January. "I love Cambridge and I love to study, research, and write," she says of her new venture. She will continue to write as a freelancer of reference articles and supplemental materials for literature texts. "I am nothing if not eclectic," she says.

One reason she likes Cambridge is that her son Eli and his wife live there. Eli, who has a degree from Montserrat, works at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. He is also working on a graduate degree from Harvard Extension. His field is interactive design.

Susan sums up her experience at church, "St. Michael's has been the most important place in my life. It is my parish family and my spiritual home."

- Marilyn Day

Alma Martin Howie, RN



The parish is saddened to lose lifelong communicant Alma Martin Howie, Howie family matriarch and devoted steward of St. Michael's where she was baptized nearly 90 years ago.

Alma served in many capacities over the decades, including as directress of the Altar Guild and Senior Warden. She had a glorious wake, funeral and interment--all at the church--over Thanksgiving weekend.

For those wishing to honor Alma and her work at the church, the family requests that a donation be made to St. Michael's Church-Alma M. Howie Churchyard Fund, newly established to preserve our historic colonial churchyard for generations to come.

Alma and Bob are now together there where they can enjoy the music and incense from the church for centuries. RIP, faithful servant.

-Robert Howie, Jr.

Stewardship

Stewardship Update

Thank you all who have pledged helping us to draw less from our endowment in 2012. As of November 30 we have received 108 pledges totally over \$194,000—that's more than at this time last year, but less than our goal!

Pledges continue to trickle in. Please submit as soon as possible so the Vestry can plan for 2012.

- *Stewardship Committee: Avery Russell, Jeff Barnett, Harriett Magee, Karl Renney, Larry Robbins.*



Annual Reports Due January 10th

Committee/Commission Chairs—Please turn in your 2011 annual report to Jane Maihos by Tuesday, January 10, 2012. The early date facilitates combining, copying and collation. The annual meeting will be held on Sunday, January 29th, 2012.

Also, please send electronically, preferably single-spaced in Times New Roman 12-point font. This year we hope to combine reports into one document to save paper and enable automatic pagination.



St. Michael's Heart of Christmas Fair Thank you!

The Preview Party was a grand success with food, desserts, cider, punch and a hot Wassail bowl of good cheer warmly stirred and ladled by Tom Weber, and all to the sounds of *Songs of Heaven*, the choirs new CD. While parents sipped and shopped, St. Michael's children watched a movie and made Christmas cards downstairs.

Friday and Saturday Linda Smidt and Connie Denault were swamped with shoppers at the jewelry table. Pam Oppelt's Bake Table was soon picked over with just enough chutney, bread, casseroles and sweets. The pies were gone before the fair began!. Sue Byors, Mary Williams and other provided hats, mittens and scarves for the Craft Table. Rose Clark made exquisite feather earrings and hair clips. Under the watch of Peggy, Aileen, Pat and Carole many other items appeared, and disappeared, for the Rich Uncle Table and Silent Auction, including Elvis! Downstairs the lower Parish Hall was filled with vendors,

Nominating Committee Seeks Suggestions

The Nominating Committee is considering candidates for leadership positions in the church. Each year at the Annual Meeting of the parish, St. Michael's elects two wardens, clerk, treasurer, assistant treasurer, 3 Vestry members and 2 delegates to the Diocesan convention.

If you know of a good candidate, or if you are interested yourself, please contact any member of the Nominating Committee: David Bittermann, Frances Nilsson, Avery Russell and the Rev. Andrew Stoessel.

**The Annual Meeting is scheduled for
Sunday, January 29, 2012.**

a variety of wares and their customers. On Saturday Melissa Amberick served morning coffee and David Winder's crew kept all warm with lunch. Thank you all, including the many we have not named, for making this a fun and successful event.

- *Frances Nilsson & Tom Weber, Co-Chairs*

Wassail and Good Health

Wassail is an old English tradition for drinking and wishing health to others on festive occasions, such as Christmas and Twelfth-night. No proper Yule celebration would ever be complete without a steaming cup of Wassail to warm the chill of night whilst encircling the bonfires.

Wassail, pronounced wossayl or wossal, is the spice holiday drink of Yule against which the custom of wassailing surrounds. To paraphrase, wassail is more of an event than any mere refreshment, and its origins can be traced back hundreds of years. Popular in Eastern Europe and the UK, the term 'wassail' is a contraction of the Gaelic phrase 'Waes Hael' which translates to 'Good Health'. Interestingly enough, traditional wassailing still takes place

today in many areas of the UK and is considered an extremely important ritual for the benefit of the apple harvest as well as to ensure the health of the local economy.

Recipe for Wassail:

1 cup sugar	3 lemon slices
1 4" cinnamon stick	1/4 cup water

Heat/stir 3-5 minutes until sugar dissolves. Do not boil.
Remove fruit. Add:

6 cups red wine (one 1.5 liter jug)
2 cups unsweetened pineapple juice
2 cups orange juice
1 cup dry sherry (1/3 bottle)

Serve hot. Wassail!

December Dates

Christmas Poinsettias & Memorial List



Names are needed by December 18th.

Poinsettias adorn the church through the Christmas season until Epiphany. If you wish to have a poinsettia in memory of, or in thanksgiving for, a beloved one or for other blessings, please submit name(s) by Sunday, Dec. 18th. The poinsettias are displayed in the church at Christmas until Epiphany. The list of names is included in the Christmas Eve and Day bulletins. The suggested donation for a poinsettia is \$20.00 per listed name. Poinsettias are not included as part of perpetuity remembrance.

**St. Catherine's Guild
Annual Christmas Party
December 8, 7:00 PM**

**Parish Aid Society
Tuesday, December 13
at Noon**

For Those in Need

The Mitten Tree



The Mitten Tree, located in the Parish Hall, is an opportunity to give to a child in need. Each Mitten-Star pair provides the gender and age of the child. Take the mitten of the pair and leave the star to decorate the tree. Return the gift unwrapped in a holiday gift bag with the mitten attached. Please bring gifts by Sunday, December 18.

- Aileen Ryder and Diane Christian

Marblehead Food Pantry Christmas Dinner Shopping



St. Michaels is helping the Marblehead Food Pantry with its annual Christmas Dinner shopping. Four teams from St. Michael's will shop for food for the Christmas Holiday for the Marblehead Food Pantry and drop the food off at the Pantry on Dec. 19, 2011 between 9am and 3pm. The funds for shopping will be provided by the Pantry. There is no requirement to make monetary or food donations. Rather, it is a gift of labor and an opportunity for fellowship amongst the teams. Please see the sign-up poster in the parish hall for more details. *This is what Christmas giving is all about!*

- Peggy Bittermann, Outreach Co-Chair

St. Michael's Episcopal Church Marblehead, Massachusetts

Our Mission is to seek transformation in God's grace by worshipping God in prayer, song, and study; loving and serving our neighbor in and outside our parish Community; and being good stewards of God's creation.

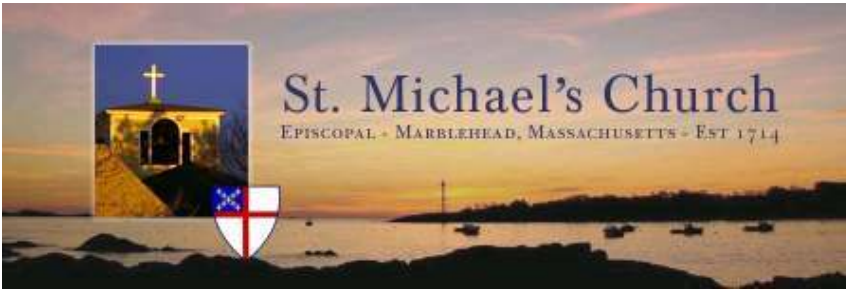
Our Vision is to be a Mission-driven Episcopal congregation that by 2014 will be widely recognized as a vibrant, open, and inviting community, known for liturgically-centered worship and music, for lifelong learning, for pastoral presence and service to communities near and far, for good stewardship of our resources, and for celebration of our legacy as an historic church.



The Thrift Shop Needs Coats!

Do you have a gently worn coat that no longer fits or you no longer wear? Consider donating it to the Thrift Shop. This is the season where many are looking for a coat, hat, scarves and mittens.

Thrift Shop winter hours are Tuesday—Saturday, 1 pm—4 pm.



ST. MICHAEL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
26 Pleasant Street
Marblehead, MA 01945-3432

Phone: 781/631-0657
Fax: 781/639-2866
E-mail: office@stmichaels1714.org
Web: www.stmichaels1714.org



Schedule for Christmas Eve / Day

Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24

5:00 p.m. Family Eucharist &
Christmas Pageant
10:45 p.m. Organ and Choral Music
11:00 p.m. Festal Eucharist, Rite II

Christmas Day, Sunday, December 25

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II

Christmas in the New Year

Feast of The Holy Name of Jesus Christ Sunday, January 1st

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II

There will be no Evensong in January.

St. Michael's Church

Officers: *David Bittermann*, Senior Warden; *Frances Nilsson*, Junior Warden; *Sarah Bates*, Treasurer; *Larry Robbins*, Assistant Treasurer; *Walter Haug*, Clerk.

Vestry: *Jenny Armini*, *Stephen Clay*, *Susan Cool*, *Ian Hunter*, *Harriett Magee*, *Joe Oliveira*, *Avery Russell*, *Tom Weber*, *Victor Wild*.

Delegates for Convention: *Jan Barnett*, *Denise Shea*. **Deanery Delegates:** *Jan Barnett*, *Frances Nilsson*, *Denise Shea*

Staff: *The Rev. Andrew J. Stoessel*, Rector; *Dr. Douglas Major*, Music Director; *Aileen Ryder*, Church School Director, *Jane Maihos*, Parish Administrator.

Saint Michael's Church

December 2011

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

					1) 5:00 pm Heart of Christmas Fair Set-up 7:30 pm Adult Choir	2) 4:30 pm Vendors Set up Heart of Christmas Fair Preview Party 6 pm – 9 pm 6-8 pm Children's event	3) Heart of Christmas Fair 9:00 am – 2:00 pm 7:30 pm Christmas Concert Dr. Douglas Major Methuen, MA
4) 2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT 8:00 am Holy Eucharist, Rite I 9:30 am Children's Chapel 10:00 am Holy Eucharist, Rite II 11:30 am Pageant Rehearsal 5:00 pm Lessons and Carols Mark Dirkson, Organist	5)	6) 5:00 pm St. Michael's Team at My Brothers' Table, Lynn 6:00 pm North Shore Deanery at St. Peter's, Beverly	7) 9:30 am Holy Eucharist 10:30 am Bible Study 11:45 am Staff Meeting 7:30 pm Warden 8:00 pm AA Meeting	8) 7:00 pm St. Catherine Guild Party 7:30 pm Adult Choir	9)	10) 11:00 am St. Michael's Team, Lifebridge, Salem	
11) 3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT 8:00 am Holy Eucharist, Rite I 9:30 am Church School 10:00 am Holy Eucharist, Rite II John Skelton, Organist 11:30 am Pageant Rehearsal	12)	13) 12:00 pm Parish Aid 6:00 pm Middle School Supper Club 7:30 pm Vestry	14) 9:30 am Holy Eucharist 10:30 am Bible Study 11:45 am Staff Meeting 8:00 pm AA Meeting	15) 7:30 pm Adult Choir	16)	17)	
18) 4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT 8:00 am Holy Eucharist, Rite I 9:30 am Church School 10:00 am Holy Eucharist, Rite II John Skelton, Organist 5:00 pm Celebration of New Ministry, Rev. Clyde Elledge at St. Andrew's, Marblehead	19)	20) NO Supper Club Tonight	21) 9:30 am Holy Eucharist 10:30 am Bible Study 11:45 am Staff Meeting 7:30 pm Adult Choir 8:00 pm AA Meeting	22) 11:00 Assemble Christmas Bulletins	23) 4:00 pm Pageant Rehearsal	24) CHRISTMAS EVE 5:00 pm Family Eucharist and Christmas Pageant 10:45 pm Choral & Organ Music 11:00 pm Festal Eucharist	
25) CHRISTMAS DAY 10:00 am One Service Holy Eucharist, Rite II	26) <i>Office Closed</i>	27)	28) 9:30 am Holy Eucharist No Bible Study 11:45 am Staff Meeting 8:00 pm AA Meeting	29)	30)	31) NEW YEAR'S EVE	
1) FEAST OF THE HOLY NAME OF JESUS 10:00 am One Service Holy Eucharist, Rite II	2) <i>Office Closed</i>	3)	4) 9:30 am Holy Eucharist 10:30 am Bible Study 11:45 am Staff Meeting 8:00 pm AA Meeting	5) 6:30 pm St. Catherine 7:30 pm Adult Choir	6) FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY	7)	