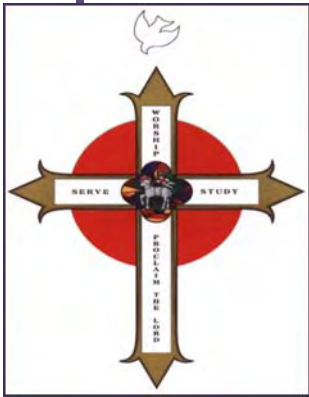


# Cross Ties

December 2009



*Walking in the Way of the Cross  
United and Empowered by the Holy Spirit*



*From Father Craig Lister*

First, let me wish all of you a happy New Year! With the First Sunday of Advent the Church begins a new year re-presenting the glorious story of God's plan for the salvation of the world! We commemorate this in quite a different way than the secular celebration of the New Year. The church looks forward to the Coming of the Lord with quiet and repentant preparation. The season of Advent makes us ready for the Joy that is to come. It is such a short season, packed with meaning. Don't miss it; don't let it become simply "Pre-Christmas" for you.

Speaking of Christmas, I wanted to let you know about a slight change in the schedule this year. The late service on Christmas Eve will be at 10:00pm instead of 11:00pm as in the past. This just seems like a more reasonable and perhaps 'family-friendly' time while preserving the quiet beauty of our evening celebration. We'll get everyone home an hour earlier! The Children's Christmas service will be at its usual time of 4:00pm on Christmas Eve, and on Christmas Day there will a service of Holy Eucharist at 10:00am.

You may be wondering why the "Midnight Mass" as it has often been called does not begin at midnight. I have heard folks opine that at least if you begin at 11, you will still be at church at 12! This is a good opportunity to take a look at how the church forms its calendar. The starting point of this

is the fact that the Church uses the traditional Jewish practice of determining when a 'day' begins. In that custom the day begins not at midnight, but rather at sunset of what we would regard as the previous day! In Jerusalem a priest would go out on a balcony of the Temple holding a white and a black thread. When he could no longer distinguish between the two, at that instant, the new day began.



This is the reason why the Church has those "Eve" services around the great feast days. Technically, once sundown has arrived, it is already Christmas, Easter, or whatever. This is also the reason why it is perfectly permissible for a Christian to

satisfy his Sunday obligation by attending church on Saturday evening (if such a service is offered). We might be pushing that a bit by having a service begin at 4:00pm, but that is the underlying principal.

I also wanted to let you know that there will be a weekday Eucharist in Advent. It will be held each Wednesday at 11:30am. I am hoping that our working folks might be able to join us at that time for this brief (30 minute) liturgy, and then go to lunch. Perhaps, if there is enough interest, a group of us could go to lunch together after Communion. Wouldn't that be a nice way for you to mark out the holy season of Advent!

Father Craig Lister

## Letting Go

For the April 2009 CrossTies I wrote the following:

*St Thomas is large enough (has enough active members) to make this transition, (from a Pastoral Church to a Program Centered Church). But, this is a slow change process. We as Church members have to believe in our heart that this change to a Program Centered church is best for all of us. If we hesitate or "waffle" on our commitment / dedication to this change, then we will fail. If we fail, the Church will remain "stuck" with the same "small" Church problems we presently have and the creation of any momentum for growth will be halted. Fr. Craig helped his present (now past) Church through the transition from a Pastor Centered Church to a Program Church. What a great asset he will be to our Church. Knowing that he has the experience we need to help us move forward is very comforting.*

*So, here we are. "A Fork in the Road" staring at us, asking us, which way do we turn? Do we take the road that will return us to the same place we came from? Or, do we take the road that will prepare us for growth? The choice is ours to make. Without some sacrifice and cooperation on the part of ALL parishioners we will not make it "down the Road".*

Please remember that I wrote this 70 days before Fr. Craig was to arrive at St. Thomas. Now that Fr. Craig has "arrived" and his leadership is firmly in place I believe it is time for all of us to "Let Go" of our old ideas about St. Thomas and embrace the new energy, the new leadership and the new ideas that are alive at St Thomas NOW!

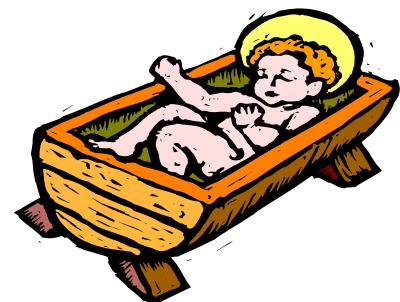
I know that "Letting Go" is not an easy thing to do. Personally, I find it very difficult to "let go" of many things. "My ideas" are always better than yours. I can plan projects and do things better than you can. And simply, I just can't give up my control of "everything". Does this sound familiar? Or, am I the only parishioner at St Thomas that thinks this way. I think not. "Letting Go" requires us to take a giant leap of faith.

"Letting Go" requires sacrifice. "Letting Go" lets us put our faith and trust in God and not ourselves. We need to "Let Go" so we can put and keep our faith and trust in our Church leaders. We need to "Let Go" of our old Pastoral Church and embrace our new Program Centered Church. We need to "Let Go" so St Thomas can gracefully and prayerfully "make it down the road". We need to "Let Go" so we can help St Thomas grow "in Spirit" and "in people". This is my Hope for St Thomas for 2010 and beyond.

It has been an honor for me to serve on the Vestry and to be your Sr. Warden for 2009. I sincerely "Thank You" for all of your support.

May we all have a very Merry Christmas.

With Peace & Respect,  
Steve Yuskevich



## Library Update

We asked for some Jan Karon books and within days they showed up in the library! Thank you so much for the donation. In fact, we have received several "new" books. Look for Mere Christianity and The Screwtape Letters, both by C.S. Lewis, to be on the shelves soon. We are looking for someone, or several people, who would like to write reviews for the newsletter on some books that are available in this library. Nothing long like a book report, just a short "You gotta read this!" type of thing.

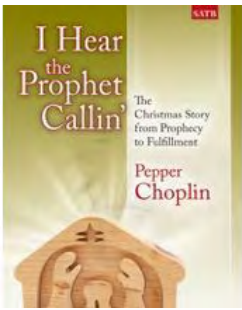
Enjoy the library!  
Your librarians

## Rewards for Being a Stephen Minister

I am so blessed! As Referrals Coordinator for Stephen Ministry I have witnessed firsthand God's transforming grace. I've had the opportunity to talk with those who are going through difficult times. Most of the time, they just need a Christian friend to lean on and to listen to them. I have watched from a distance as these individuals are ministered to and I have witnessed God's healing love as they walk through their crisis. But that is only part of the transformation process. I have also gotten to know some loving and caring members of our church as they have taken Stephen Ministry training. I have watched them grow and have experienced the depth of their compassion and caring as they have ministered to their care receivers. If you would like to become part of Stephen Ministry, there will be a new training class beginning in January. If you would like to receive more information, please call me at 776-3319. If through prayer and discernment you feel God is calling you to this ministry, please say yes.

Elizabeth Zeph

## Advent Musical Offering



Join the choir on **Sunday, December 13** at the **10:00** worship service for this year's Advent musical offering, **I Hear The Prophet Callin'** by Pepper Choplin. It is a refreshingly different, original work that resonates with traditional folk qualities. This Appalachian-style musical is unique, yet very comfortable and compatible with a traditional service. Worshippers will enjoy seeing and hearing the live orchestral instruments. Celebrate the tradition and simplicity of Advent in a fresh, new way as we anticipate our Savior's birth as told through scripture, instruments, and voices.

## Children's Choir

Begin your December with a joyful morning of music. Dr. Daniel Hester will bring his chorus from J. Glenn Edwards School to perform at St. Thomas' on Monday, December 7, at 11 a.m. Everyone is invited and encouraged to bring a friend. These well-trained and well-prepared children always present inspiring songs that lift your spirits and warm your heart. Don't forget; mark your calendar now!! *The Women of the Church will meet at 10am to fill "treat bags" for the children.*



## HAPPY DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS!!!

Charlene Jeffries	1	Steve Schmidt	14	Harriett Tice	26
Harris Wilkinson	1	Elisabeth Wilkinson	14	Krissy Houston	28
Cam Cameron	2	Brian Gille	18	Andrew Jurcoane	28
Bill Bradford IV	3	Sydney Somoza	19	J. J. Cuff Jr.	29
Kaitlyn Houston	5	Katherine Puckett	20	Sophia Johnson	29
Jospeh Payne	7	Taylor Stallings	20	Warren Schaeffer	29
Charlotte Hohenstein	8	Rusty Hodges Jr.	21	Matthew Quinn	30
Jean Weise	10	Drew Crumpton Jr	24	Marian Calhoun	31
Holly Bennetts	14	Donna Jones	24		

## *Women of the Church Minutes*

St. The October meeting of the Women of the Church was held on Monday,  
31 November 2, at 11 a.m., following a chicken pie-making session that began at 9  
a.m. The WOC president, Marie Hann, welcomed the 16 ladies present.

En Peggy Nelson presented a devotion by Max Lucado on kindness to others and  
self. The Minutes of the last meeting were not read, but President Hann amended  
the report of monies contributed to the Building Fund by the WOC. The sum of  
\$1,499 had been reported, but the correct sum was \$1,400.

www Frances Floyd, Program Chairman, introduced Mark Lane, proprietor of Steele  
Street Cafe. He presented a talk covering his Christian beliefs and shared  
information about his recent health problems. While recuperating he felt that was  
“opened” to seeking and following the Lord’s will for his vocational life. He  
spoke with great conviction on the reasons for coming to Sanford and opening a  
food business, in spite of his making a major change in vocations and the  
prevailing, less-than-ideal financial considerations of the time.

Pan An overview of Food Fair plans was presented by Barbara Yuskevich. These  
Dr. J included:

1. Chairperson for Advertising in bulletin and newsletter
- N 2. Chairperson for Advertising in newspaper
3. Dates of newspaper advertisements
4. Items to be included at Food Fair Sale
5. Prices for items to be sold at the Food Fair
6. Cashiers for Food Fair Sale
7. Telephone Committee Members
8. Shoppers for chicken pies items and other materials
9. Calendar of pie-making sessions
10. Inserts for bulletins (requesting item donations for the Food Fair)
- J 11. Rules for Food Fair (No pre-sales)
12. Television appearance of Joann Thaxton and Jo Ann Bowman promoting  
the Food Fair

Si Joann Thaxton suggested a novel approach to selling *Angelic Morsels and  
Devilish Delights*, the St. Thomas’ cookbook. When cookbooks are purchased  
she will be available to wrap them for Christmas (without charge) and provide  
containers for mailing...a one-stop Christmas gift opportunity.

It was moved by Jo Ann Bowman and seconded by Peggy Nelson that the  
treasurer write a \$100.00 check for the Chorus at Edwards School and a \$64.00  
check for a single scholarship at the Boys and Girls Club.

C Program Chairman Floyd announced the December and January programs. The  
December meeting of the Women of the Church will be held on Monday,  
December 7, at 11:00 a.m. and will feature the J. Glenn Edwards Chorus under  
the direction of Dr. Daniel Hester. All church members are invited and are  
encouraged to bring friends with them to enjoy this concert of seasonal music.  
The January 4th meeting of WOC will be held at the Boys and Girls Club.

*Treasurer's Report*

**FINANCES TO OCTOBER 31,  
2009**

	<b>2009 Budget</b>	<b>Current Year To Date</b>	<b>Prior Year To Date</b>
Revenues	<b>\$307,922</b>	<b>\$222,169</b>	<b>\$221,972</b>
Caring for our Clergy	<b>128,429</b>	<b>96,999</b>	<b>86,993</b>
Caring for Our Facilities	<b>43,573</b>	<b>33,924</b>	<b>34,001</b>
Making It All Work	<b>47,413</b>	<b>37,933</b>	<b>26,136</b>
Making a Celebration	<b>29,973</b>	<b>23,369</b>	<b>26,344</b>
Making a Difference In the Word	<b>13,800</b>	<b>4,332</b>	<b>2,863</b>
Making Disciples	<b>13,323</b>	<b>3,056</b>	<b>3,712</b>
Caring for the Larger Church	<b>23,000</b>	<b>13,476</b>	<b>13,330</b>
Caring for Each Other	<b>6,400</b>	<b>3,191</b>	<b>3,634</b>
Totals	<b>307,922</b>	<b>223,230</b>	<b>207,533</b>

The last several weeks, no months, we've been talking about our relationship with our wealth and God. We've talked about serving money and God and how it just doesn't work. We all understand the issues. I recently completed a New Testament Bible study under the very capable facilitation of Jo Ann Bowman but more importantly, with a group of spiritually hungry participants who were willing to share their faith to the glory of God. I recommend these group studies.

One of our readings included the last chapter in Matthew, chapter 28. It is the chapter of the resurrection, the guards reporting to the chief priests and the great commission. This may be one of the shortest chapters of Matthew but I could not get verse 11 through 15 out of my mind. The Guards' Report;

**11 While the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened. 12 When the chief priests had met with the elders and devised a plan, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money, 13 telling them, "You are to say, 'His disciples came during the night and stole him away while we were asleep.' 14 If this report gets to the governor, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." 15 So the soldiers took the money and did as they were instructed. And this story has been widely circulated among the Jews to this very day.**

Think about what happened. The chief priests put money, lots of money, into the guard's hands; and what for the love of money will the wicked not do. The chief priests loved their money as well as most of us do and were surely reluctant to want to part with it. But in this case, even after witnessing the resurrection, the guards were still willing to be accomplices with the chief priests in a denial against God's promise to the world. Here was a large sum of money given for the advancement of that which they knew to be a lie. Do you ever begrudge your giving for the advancement of that which you know to be the truth? Let us never starve a good cause, especially when we see a bad one so liberally supported. Your giving to St. Thomas' ensures that the truth will continue to be offered to all who seek God's grace.

Tebow's eyeblick: Philippians 4:6-7 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup>And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Bob Nelson

## Death: What a Wonderful Way to Explain It

A sick man turned to his doctor as he was preparing to  
 Leave the examination room and said,  
 'Doctor, I am afraid to die.  
 Tell me what lies on the other side.'  
 Very quietly, the doctor said, 'I don't know.'  
 'You don't know? You're, a Christian man,  
 And don't know what's on the other side?'

The doctor was holding the handle of the door;  
 On the other side came a sound of scratching and whining,  
 And as he opened the door, a dog sprang into the room  
 And leaped on him with an eager show of gladness.  
 Turning to the patient, the doctor said,  
 'Did you notice my dog?  
 He's never been in this room before.  
 He didn't know what was inside.  
 He knew nothing except that his master was here,  
 And when the door opened, he sprang in without fear.  
 I know little of what is on the other side of death,  
 But I do know one thing...  
 I know my Master is there and that is enough.'

Contributed by Bob Granger

## A Kept Woman

You see, there were a few times when I  
 thought I would lose my mind,  
 But GOD kept me sane. (Isa. 26: 3)

There were times when I thought I  
 could go no longer,  
 But the LORD kept me moving. (Gen  
 28: 15)

At times, I've wanted to lash out at  
 those whom I felt had done me wrong,  
 But the LORD kept my mouth shut..  
 (Psa. 13)

Sometimes, I think the money just isn't  
 enough,  
 But GOD has helped me to keep the  
 lights on, the water on, the car paid,  
 the  
 house paid, etc. (Matt. 6:25 -34)

When I thought I would fall, HE kept  
 me up.

When I thought I was weak, HE kept  
 me strong! (I Pet. 5:7, Matt. 11:28-30)

I could go on and on and on, but I'm  
 sure you hear me!  
 I'm blessed to be 'kept '

Do you know a 'kept ' woman?  
 If so pass it on to her to let her know  
 she is 'Kept '

I'm "Kept" by the Love and Grace of  
 God!!!  
 "If God brings you to it, He will bring  
 you through it!!"

Contributed by Deborah Noel

## A Word from Happy Hank

The Fall Bible study classes are ending but new classes will start up in January. Keep those ole eyes peeled for announcements of the new classes. In the meantime, keep reading and studying your Bible. One way to do this is to come to the Discussion Class after church most Sunday mornings. You can also read the Daily Lectionary that is listed in the Forward Day by Day and in your Prayer Book. This ole dog forgets too quickly to stop reading that precious book. And would you believe it? It's almost Christmas! Yahoo! I sure love Christmas. Merry Christmas everyone!

Happy Hank

## Annual Meeting



The Annual meeting of the parish will take place on Sunday, December 6th at 10:00 am. On that Sunday there will only be one service held at 9:00 am. The meeting will commence immediately following. The main business of the annual meeting is to elect new members of the vestry and delegates to Diocesan Convention. Nominations for any of these positions should be made prior to the annual meeting. Candidates for vestry must be confirmed communicants in good standing, regular in worship, and pledgers of their time, talent, and treasure to the parish. Nomination forms may be found in the Narthex and Lower Parish Hall.

## Spring Bible Study: *The Gospel According to Matthew*

Coming in January -- A Study of the Gospel According to Matthew. The class will meet on Thursdays, will begin on January 14, and will last about 13 weeks. The exact details have not been set so look for more information on this class in the Sunday bulletins and the January newsletter.

## Spring Bible Study: *The Beatitudes*

An eight week study focusing on *The Beatitudes* provides a daily guide for reading, reflecting, and recording, culminating in a weekly review. The authors encourage the readers to choose to live as though the laws were written on their hearts. Chapter titles include: Blessed Are You; Having Nothing, Possessing Everything; Tears in the Night, Joy in the Morning; Blessed Are the Meek; Righteousness and Mercy; Pure in Heart, and The Peacemakers.

Mark your calendars for the beginning date, Wednesday, January 13th, with March 3rd as the concluding class. All classes will begin at 3:30 and conclude at 5:00 p.m.





## The Great Commission

“Jesus came and said to the disciples, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

*Matthew 28:18-20*

**It is a joy for all Christians to answer God’s call to share their faith, and bring others to know and love the Lord Jesus Christ within the fellowship of the Church. Invite someone to attend a worship service with you this Sunday.**

*Our Mission...*

*“To grow in the knowledge and love of God  
through our worship of Him, our service to Him, and our study of His Word;  
and to bring others to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior  
within the fellowship of the Church.”*

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