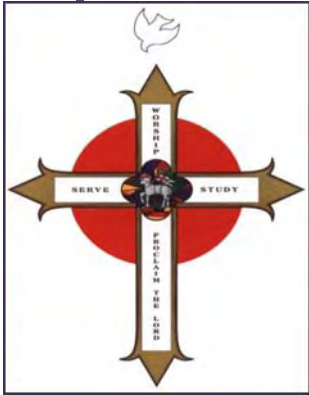


Cross Ties

December 2010



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



From the Rector's Desk

As a child, I can remember being sent to bed on Christmas Eve, the expectation being that I was going to go to sleep. That was the one night of the year that I actually wanted to fall asleep, because I was old enough to know that would make the time go faster and Christmas Day would be here that much sooner. The excitement and expectation was just too great, however, and it seemed to me that I would never drift off! Needless to say, at some point sleep came, giving Santa the time to work his magic!

Maybe it is for this reason that I have always loved the season of Advent. It is the time when God is giving us a message: "Stay awake, and look for Me!" He repeats this to us in the passages of Holy Scripture that we hear read on the Sundays of Advent. It is the theme of the season and we must take it to heart.

Advent is a time of expectation, the assurance that God is planning something wonderful, both in what He has already done in the birth of His Son, and in what he will do at the end of time. One of the Early Church's

shortest and most fervent prayers was simply one word: "*Maranatha.*" It meant, "Come, Lord Jesus!" It is a prayer especially suited for Advent.



"Come, Lord Jesus," we might pray, "into my heart. Ignite in me a new desire to serve you, to love you, and to give myself to you entirely. Come, Lord Jesus, restore God's Creation to its original purity and harmony. Come, Lord Jesus, heed the cries of your children who suffer greatly in this world. Heal their wounds! Come, Lord Jesus, and turn the hearts of those who reject you and those who do not yet know you."

Advent is a season lived mostly in darkness. The days grow shorter and shorter until, near the end, on St Thomas' Day, the trend reverses and the light begins to return. So, let us, as our Prayer book commands, "Cast away the works of darkness and put upon us the armor of Light!" May we all be filled with alertness and joyful expectation of the things of God. "Come, Lord Jesus!"

Father Craig Lister

Prayer for December

O God, you have bound us together in a common life. Help us, in the midst of our struggles for justice and truth, to confront one another without hatred or bitterness and to work together with mutual forbearance and respect.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

December Schedule

Sunday, December 5, 2010 Advent II
8 a.m. HOLY COMMUNION
10 a.m. HOLY COMMUNION
Annual Meeting and Vestry Election following the 10 a.m. Service

Sunday, December 12, 2010 Advent III
8 a.m. HOLY COMMUNION
10 a.m. Advent Lessons and Carols

Wednesday, December 15, 2010
10:30 a.m. St. Theresa's Guild
11:30 a.m. HOLY COMMUNION and Healing Service

Sunday, December 19, 2010 Advent IV
8 a.m. HOLY COMMUNION
10 a.m. HOLY COMMUNION

Friday, December 24, 2010
4:00 Children's Christmas Eve Service with HOLY COMMUNION
9:30 p.m. Christmas Music
10:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service with HOLY COMMUNION

Saturday, December 25, 2010
10 a.m. Christmas Day Service with HOLY COMMUNION

Sunday, December 26, 2010
8 a.m. HOLY COMMUNION
10 a.m. HOLY COMMUNION



Watch for the Jesse Tree

This year St. Thomas' will add something special to the season of Advent: A Jesse Tree. A Jesse Tree is really an Advent Tree anticipating the coming of Christmas. The tree will be situated atop the piano and will be a small tree made of an evergreen branch. Symbolic ornaments will be used that represent a prophecy foretelling the coming of Christ. Other variations will include creating ornaments that represent the ancestors in the lineage of Christ and ornaments or objects that represent Old Testament events from Creation to the Birth of Jesus. The ornaments will be handmade (by Mari Hann and Debbie Noel), as is traditional, and one will be added for each day of the Advent week being observed. Included in the weekly bulletin will be explanations of the symbols added daily, accompanied by brief verses of scripture from the stories represented. The first Sunday in Advent this year begins on Sunday, November 28. The name of the Jesse Tree comes from Isaiah 11:1: "A shoot will spring forth from the stump of Jesse, and a branch of his roots."



Karimu

"Our God is great. Even if we die, He is enough." These words were spoken by a priest and chaplain at Msalato Theological College in Tanzania where artist Jessie Mackay and I (The Rev. Tally Bandy) have gone for the past three years. There was a drought and consequently famine in surrounding villages. George Chibwale's words have not only haunted us but inspired us. The staff and faculty met each afternoon at 5:00 to pray for rain and it didn't come. Still his faith remained steadfast. George's children were starving when he gratefully received a bag of maize to take to them.

Living in Africa for a few months each summer, knowing and loving the people, visiting their homes, singing and dancing with them, worshiping with them, eating with them, laughing and crying with them made the earth shift under our feet. Nothing is as it was. On this kind of journey you return a different person ~ you never come all the way back. This past summer we listened very closely to the African prayers and other than praying for rain (and that was the staff) we heard only prayers of thanksgiving. On one occasion when one of our students brought his wife to our duplex on campus for tea and biscuits, we reached for our cups and were about to take a sip when Daniel said: "Are you not going to thank God for the tea?" A bit embarrassed, we told him that we say grace at mealtimes but never say anything over a cup of tea. With his beatific smile he said: "We thank God for a glass of water."

Along with teaching our regular classes we visited more villages and a hospital this year leaving three bicycles in Ikowa Village for the women to use in going the long distances to get water each morning. In that same village we started a micro-lending project with \$500.00 for the women to buy piglets at \$19.00 each. We have gotten three grants and are constantly looking for more. One grant which has just been renewed is providing English lessons (the official language in Tanzania) for the wives of the priests. The other grant provides food for the students at the college for one-year. We led a two-day workshop in the Rift Valley on pastoral care and the empowerment of women. It is said that the most effective way to fight global poverty is to unleash the potential of women.

Karimu is our non-profit charitable organization formed to give hope and encouragement at the grassroots level in providing universal primary and adult education, health care, access to clean water and adequate food to sustain and improve life among the poor. Would you like to help those who have no voice? No amount is too little.

If you would like to give a Christmas gift to **Karimu** in a loved one's name we will be happy to send a card acknowledging your gift in their honor.

KUWANA na KRISMASI NJEMA ~ MERRY CHRISTMAS.

Junior Warden's Report by Dave Zeph

1. The parish hall has a new roof. After more than 32 years the old roof could not be repaired any longer. The new roof was installed with a 30 year warranty shingle. I know it will last as long as the old roof did.
2. The Bell Tower is still not completely dry after a hard rain-fall. We have ruled out the roof. David Patterson has volunteered to inspect the 45 degree brick apron mortar joints to see if they have degraded . We will keep you posted on the on-going saga of the Bell Tower.

J. Glenn Edwards Chorus

is published monthly by

St. Thomas' Episcopal Church Coming: Monday, December 6, 2010. At 11 a.m. at St.

St. Thomas' Episcopal Church



The Chorus from J. Glenn Edwards Elementary School, directed by Dr. Danny Hester, will present a program of seasonal music. Sponsored by the Women of the Church, the concert is open to all music-lovers. Plan now to attend this grand opportunity to hear good music sung beautifully by a well-trained group of choristers.

www.stthomassanford.org/index.html

A Prayer for Parents

Oh God, make me a better parent. It is the most important job in the world and one for which there is no prior training.

Help me to understand my children, to listen patiently to what they have to say and to respond to their questions kindly.

Keep me from interrupting and contradicting them.

Help me to be as courteous to them as I would have them be to me.

Give me courage to confess my sins against my children and the generosity of spirit to ask them for forgiveness when I know I have done wrong.

Forbid that I should laugh at their mistakes or resort to shame and ridicule. Oh Lord, reduce the meanness in me.

May I cease to nag. When I am out of sorts, help me please, to hold my tongue and keep my temper under control.

Blind me to the insignificant shortcomings of my children and help me to see the good things they do.

Give me a ready word for honest praise. Make me ever mindful that they need the nurturing that comes with encouragement and appreciation for their small successes.

Help me remember that my children are only children and that I may not expect from them the judgment of adults.

Allow me not to rob them of the opportunity to wait on themselves, think for themselves, and to make their own mistakes.

Forbid I should ever punish them as a means of ridding myself of anger and frustration. Help me to exercise reason and control.

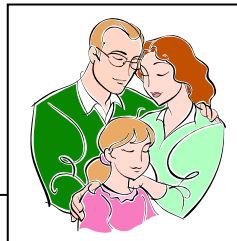
May I grant them all wishes that are sensible and give me the courage to withhold a privilege when I know it might do them harm.

Make me fair and just, considerate and companionable, so they will have genuine esteem, respect, and affection for me.

Make me fit to be loved and imitated by my children, for this is the greatest compliment of all. Amen

Author Unknown

Contributed By Jo Ann Bowman



St. Francis and the Christmas Crèche

The story of the origin of the Christmas crèche rests with the very holy man, Saint Francis of Assisi.

In the year 1223, Saint Francis, a deacon, was visiting the town of Greccio to celebrate Christmas. Greccio was a small town built on a mountainside overlooking a beautiful valley, all filled with vineyards. He realized that the chapel of the Franciscan hermitage would be too small to hold the congregation for Midnight Mass, so he found a niche in the rock near the town square and set up the altar.

To excite the inhabitants of Greccio to commemorate the nativity of the infant Jesus with great devotion, Saint Francis determined to keep it with all possible solemnity. Lest he be accused of lightness or novelty he asked and obtained the permission of the sovereign Pontiff. Then he prepared a manger and brought hay, and an ox, and an ass to the appointed place. The brethren were summoned, the people came together, the forest resounded with their voices, and that night was made glorious by many and brilliant lights.

Saint Francis stood before the manger, full of devotion and piety; the Holy Gospel was chanted by Francis. Then he preached. Being unable to utter His name for the tenderness of His love, Saint Francis called him the Babe of Bethlehem. A valiant soldier, Master John of Greccio, who had left the warfare of this world and become a dear friend of this holy man, affirmed that he beheld an infant marvelously beautiful, sleeping in the manger.

The story is long old, but the message is clear for us. May we never forget to see in our hearts the little Babe of Bethlehem who came to save us from sin. We must never forget that the wood of the manger that held Him so securely would one day give way to the wood of the cross. May we too embrace Him with all of our love as did Saint Francis.

The Rev. William Saunders, Dean
The Notre Dame Graduate School of Christendom College

Women of the Church – November Minutes

Fourteen ladies gathered in the Lower Parish Hall at 11 a.m. on November 1st for the meeting of Women of the Church, presided over by Co-President Frances Granger. A devotion based on David Jeremiah's writing, "Nothing In, Nothing Out," was given by devotion chair, Peggy Nelson. She elaborated on the theme, reminding all that we brought nothing into this world, and we can carry nothing out. She summarized the devotion with a quote by Jim Elliott: "He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose."

President Granger began the meeting with a presentation of a trophy received from Dr. T. V. Oommen of the Church Museum in appreciation for the donation made to the Museum by Women of the Church. Father Lister, who had stopped by the meeting, accepted the trophy which will be placed in the Library.

After the reading of the minutes, Secretary Jo Ann Bowman shared with the women a clarification of funds used in renovations. While taken from the Building Fund, the monies came from a generous donation by a parishioner whose donation was placed into the Building Fund for ease in bookkeeping. Peggy Nelson made a motion to request the vestry to separate these funds, labeling the newly contributed funds either "Building and Grounds" or something in keeping with that designation. Sue Comstock seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

(Continued on page 6)

Women of the Church (continued)

Jo Ann Thaxton made a motion suggesting that the vestry be asked to rename the present Building Fund, Funds for New Construction. Her motion was seconded by Charlotte Hohenstein and passed unanimously.

Barbara Yuskevich presented a comprehensive and well-organized overview of Food Fair plans. She reported that a total of 227 pies had been made: 76 large pies, 72 medium, and 79 small. She reminded everyone that with the pie-making sessions successfully completed, the emphasis would now shift to soup-making. Soups to be offered at the Food Fair include vegetable, beef vegetable, onion, taco, and chili. These are to be delivered Friday, November 19th. To accommodate Food Fair donors, Betsy Parnell will be accepting goods in the LPH on Friday, Nov. 19th from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. Pat Clark and Jo Ann Thaxton will be in the LPH from 4 p.m. until 7 p.m. Tracking baked goods and soup donations will be Joann Thaxton and Pat Clark. Brunswick stew, to be made by the same recipe by several ladies, will be assembled on Friday, the 19th, in the church kitchen. There will be no early sales.

She shared that additional freezer space was needed and reminded the ladies that the telephone committee (Amy Hurst, Jane Escher, and Mari Hann) would be soliciting baked goods from parishioners as well as accepting financial donations. A motion was made by Mari Hann that foods remaining from the Food Fair sale be used by members of the Food Ministry to aid community members in need. Seconded by Frances Granger, the motion passed unanimously.

Joann Thaxton and Mary Quinn reported on the highly successful Shrimp Boil recently held in the LPH. Sponsored by the Stewardship Committee, it was attended by over 100 parishioners. The excellent organization of the event was complimented, with help given by Women of the Church, Men of the Church, and the Episcopal Young People. Both ladies commented on the expertise of shrimp chef Ron Hewett.

An explanation of the Jesse Tree and its ornaments was given by Mari Hann and Jo Ann Bowman. Mari Hann announced that Debbie Noel, Jo Ann Bowman, and she will meet on Friday, November 5th, at 1 p.m. in the LPH to assemble the Jesse Tree ornaments.

Joann Thaxton gave the following advertising information:

- * Newspaper ad will appear on Wednesday, Nov. 10th, and consecutively on Nov. 16th through the 19th. They will be 5" x 7" ads.
- * Joann Thaxton and Tammy Bennetts will appear on local television on Tuesday, Nov. 16th, at 8 p.m.
- * Jo Ann Bowman will continue to supply ads for the weekly church bulletin.
- * Sue Comstock will arrange for the large Food Fair sign to be displayed on the front lawn.

Betsy Parnell suggested that funds earned this year from the Food Fair be used to update the kitchen. A motion was made by Sue Comstock and seconded by Frances Granger to proceed with this plan. Mary Quinn shared that Julie Riddle, professional kitchen planner, was available to peruse the present kitchen and present ideas for kitchen improvement. A kitchen committee, Frances Floyd, Mari Hann, Betsy Parnell, and Mary Quinn was appointed by President Granger. On the suggestion by Charlotte Hohenstein, Jo Ann Bowman, secretary, was instructed to write a letter to the vestry requesting support for this project.

Mari and Charlie Hann again will head the highly successful March Yard Sale. WOC members were reminded to begin saving items now. Parishioners will be requested to save anything they have for the March sale. Ladies were reminded that no clothes would be accepted for the sale, though books would be welcomed.

(Continued on page 7)

Women of the Church (continued)

A list of people on the Food Ministry list was circulated by the president, with suggestions of additional gifts of magazines or other small remembrances. Ladies were reminded that Barbara Miller's birthday is November 14th. Her address is Parkview Home, Sanford, NC.

Jo Ann Bowman announced the December program will be given by Dr. Daniel Hester and his chorus from Edwards School at 11 a.m. on December 6th. The 100 voice choir always presents music of outstanding quality, and all ladies...and guests...are encouraged to share in this wonderful musical Advent gift.

The January program (January 3, 2011) will be presented by Jennie and John McLamb who are on sabbatical from their mission work in Peru. Jennie is the daughter of Kathy Tinsley, the granddaughter of Sam and Jeanne Tinsley. All parishioners are invited to attend this highly interesting program dealing with the successful and inspiring work done by these dedicated young Christians.

President Granger closed the meeting with prayer.

Environmental Stewardship Committee by Ron Hewett

In 1991, the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina adopted a resolution encouraging all parishes to start "Earth Stewardship Committees." Progress has been made throughout the diocese and several parishes have started. Maybe our parish would be interested. Here are some thoughts provided by the North Carolina Disciple magazine to get us started.

If there is enough interest, we could start an Environmental Stewardship Committee outside of the current Stewardship Committee. This is an opportunity for parishioners of all ages to contribute some time and talent to a worthy cause.

If you have some ideas and want to start the dialog, please email Ron Hewett at rehewett@aol.com.

North Carolina Disciple Magazine:

THINKING ABOUT STARTING IN YOUR PARISH?

Take a deep breath. And relax! It's not rocket science. It's merely bringing people together who want to care for God's creation. And if there is anything that we do well as Episcopalians, it's committees! Here are some tips on starting and maintaining an Environmental Stewardship Committee, plus some ideas for possible projects and activities.

To start, some do's:

- Volunteer to schedule an exploratory meeting and make a list of others who might be interested.

- Appoint a convener to schedule future meetings, take notes, and lead discussions.

- Consult the rector about an appropriate "home" for the committee. A natural fit would be the Outreach Commission.

- Establish a clergy liaison if possible, your deacon, for example.

- Strive for diversity in the committee. Recruit men, women, youth, college students, professionals, and retirees.

(Continued of page 8)

Environmental Stewardship Committee by Ron Hewett (continued)

Meet monthly as you're getting started.

Collect a list of ideas, and then set some broad goals from which to plan activities:

Here are some examples:

A. Goal: Increase energy efficiency in the facilities your church maintains.

- 1). Invite the Junior Warden to a meeting to find out what is currently being done.
- 2). Get an energy audit of your buildings through NC Interfaith Power and Light [www.ncipl.org] to discover what more you can accomplish.
- 3). Appoint a subcommittee to work with the Junior Warden to follow through with suggestions from the energy audit.

B. Goal: Develop Educational Programs on the Topic 1). Organize a Sunday school class [see, for example: www.episcopalchurch.org, then search "A Catechism of Creation: An Episcopal Understanding" and "To Serve Christ in All Creation."].

- 2). Schedule a series of Adult Forums with guest speakers.
- 3). Study a book.

C. Goal: Build Channels of Communication to Discuss Environmental Stewardship

- 1). Start a resource table with a lending library of books, CDs and DVDs.
- 2). Put regular announcements and interesting facts in the church newsletter.

Submit your plans to the vestry for their knowledge and approval.

Some Don'ts:

Don't spin your wheels laboring over a well crafted mission statement. Your parish probably already has a mission statement. Any work being done by the Environmental Stewardship Committee no doubt will fit into that mission statement.

Don't get too ambitious, especially in the first year. Nothing burns out a committee faster than asking the same eight people to work on twenty projects.

Advent Music

A Ceremony of Advent Lessons and Carols will be presented on Sunday, December 12, at St. Thomas' 10 a.m. Service. Compositions from *The Winter Rose*, by Joseph M. Martin, will be presented by the Adult Choir, an eleven-piece chamber orchestra, and nine readers. It is a time to open hearts and spirits and joyfully anticipate the coming of the Babe of Bethlehem, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.



REMINDER: YARD SALE MARCH 5,
2011...NEED MANY GOOD ITEMS TO
SELL!!

From the Treasurer by Bob Nelson

General Fund Activities

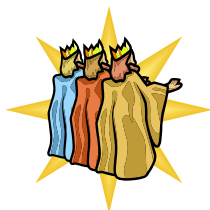
October revenues were \$29,392, while expenditures totaled \$29,368. Same month revenues for 2009 were \$19,173. Actual revenues year to date are on line with budgeted revenues. Spending is slightly below budget. The net results are revenues are slightly ahead of expenditures by \$3,825.

Noteworthy:

- We have yet to identify the donor of the Comcast stock.
- Approximately \$3,500 will be appropriated from the operating fund's fund balance to accomplish required roof replacement on the parish hall.
- Investments saw a nice improvement in October; year to date we are up \$1,405 over January 1 balances.
- Need to wrap up on the pledge drive

The following presents the 2010 budget and the nine months ended October, 2010, with comparative 2009 totals:

	2010 Budget	10/31/2010	10/31/2009	Percent of Budget
Revenues, Fund Transfers & Fund Balance Appropriated	\$ 356,128	\$ 294,164	\$ 222,170	83%
Caring for our Clergy	158,000	132,622	97,789	84%
Caring for Our Facilities	63,063	62,636	35,924	99%
Making it All Work	35,694	25,174	37,141	71%
Making a Celebration	33,723	25,543	23,369	76%
Making a Difference in the World	19,800	11,109	4,932	56%
Making Disciples	11,218	9,895	7,456	88%
Caring for the Larger Church	28,000	20,000	18,475	71%
Caring for Each Other	6,630	3,360	3,192	51%
Totals	356,128	290,339	228,278	82%
Cash over (less than) expenditures	\$ -	\$ 3,825	\$ (6,108)	



Senior Warden Report

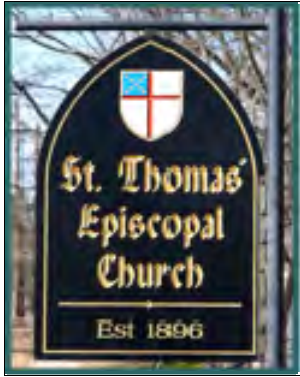
Our parish recently received two gifts now located in the Gilman Room. W. H. Heins graciously gave a painting that draws upon the colors in the room. He suggested an appropriate piece of furniture be placed below that would draw the eye and enhance the space. This piece would be large enough to accommodate serving trays for meetings in the room. Upon seeing the painting and hearing Billy Hein's ideas, Retta Gilman offered to give the furniture. The sideboard was found in a local shop, purchased, and delivered. Please take time to see the additions in the Gilman Room. Plans for 2011 include painting the room and refinishing upper parish hall hardwood floors.

We are thankful to Retta and Billy for their generosity and continued interest in helping St. Thomas' be a parish of comfort and beauty.

Oliver Crawley



Kathy Stancar admires the new painting and sideboard in the Gilman Room



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.”*

St. Thomas’ Episcopal Church
312 N. Steele Street
Sanford, North Carolina 27331-0759
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

