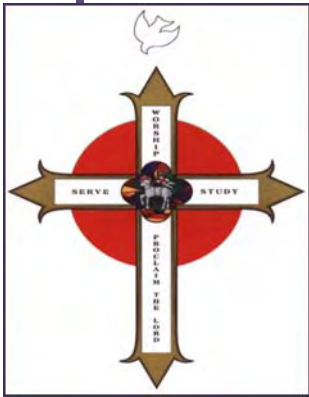


Cross Ties

February 2010



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



From Father Craig Lister

Those of us who grew up in the Episcopal Church may remember an interesting quirk in the church calendar which disappeared when the Prayerbook was changed in 1979. Of course, some of you younger folk grew up in the Episcopal Church and do not remember anything but the 1979 Prayerbook. Sadly, I do not fall into that group!

Anyway, in the old (1928) Prayerbook, three weeks before Lent really began on Ash Wednesday, there would be the mini-season of Pre-Lent, as it was called. Those three Sundays bore the strange names of Septuagesima, Sexagesima, and Quinquagesima (pronunciation lessons available for a fee!). The names mean the seventieth, sixtieth, and fiftieth day before Easter respectively. Anglicans did not invent the season of Pre-Lent; it was part of the Roman Catholic calendar until 1969.

In any case, when Septuagesima Sunday came, the vestments changed to Lenten purple, and the word, 'Alleluia' was not used again until Easter. As a child I can remember thinking that 'Pre-Lent' seemed no different than 'real' Lent, and I regarded it as the church's sneaky way of extending the penitential season! I always imagined that it had been invented by bony, grumpy old men who wanted us more repentant. As mentioned earlier, when the Prayerbook was revised in 1979, Pre-Lent disappeared from the calendar.

Given my childhood attitudes toward it, I would never propose restoring Pre-Lent to the church year, but I do now have some appreciation for the purpose it served. When there was Pre-Lent, Lent itself never arrived unexpected! That's my point in this liturgical history lesson: don't let Lent sneak up on you!



Many of us like to give things up for Lent, some like to take things on. Other people fast, and make extra time for prayer and study either of the Bible or of other spiritual books. All of these

things are profitable to our souls, but they don't happen without being planned for. The time for making that plan is not Ash Wednesday!

Lent this year begins on February 17. I hope, therefore, that you will devote some time this month toward getting prepared for it. My guess is that for many Lent seems like an irritating intrusion into an already too busy schedule. If you have a plan for Lent, however, I believe you will find it a rewarding and meaningful time. By the way, sometime this month I will be giving away Tootsie Roll Pops to anyone who can pronounce 'Septuagesima, Sexagesima, and Quinquagesima' correctly!

Father Craig Lister

We Need Your Help for the Lenten Booklet

Just write about your favorite parable and send it either to Jo Ann Bowman (jacob1809@charter.net) or Peggy Nelson at (phnelson@charter.net).

Deadline for submissions is February 10, 2010!!

Stewardship is "Going the Distance"

In the movie, "Field of Dreams", Kevin Costner is obsessed with building a baseball field in an Iowa corn field. At the point where he doubts himself and the project, he hears a voice telling him to "Go the Distance". This motivates him to continue his efforts and not quit. To me, the message, "Go the Distance," is central to stewardship.

At St. Thomas, we have just completed a successful pledge campaign to start the year. That's just the beginning. Now we have to "Go the Distance." We have to sustain that pledge, but just as important it is time to consider how we will contribute our time and talent.

Dean Thorndike gives a good example. He confided in me that in recent times he had considered that his days of contributing time and talent were numbered. He was concerned that it was someone else's time to pick up the slack. However, after a discussion with Father Craig about needs of the parish, he changed his mind and wanted to help on the Stewardship Committee. Dean told me that he decided that you really don't have an end point in giving time, talent, and treasure.

In a subsequent conversation with Father Craig, I told him about Dean's strong commitment. Father Craig responded, "Where in the Bible does it discuss retirement in regards to doing His work?" I got the point.

To all at St. Thomas, we have lots to do and many willing hands to help out. Our parish in our community is like a Clydesdale, not flashy, just willing to carry the load. Let's continue down that path. Never be afraid to offer your help nor hesitate to encourage others to participate in stewardship opportunities. Go the distance!

Fellow steward,
Ron Hewett

Godly Play

From Children's ministries: I have posted our schedule on our website. I will update it anytime I have a change.

The Godly Play classes need some juice and goldfish or oyster crackers for the feast time. If you can donate please use a permanent marker to write GP on the bottle, bag or box and put it on our counter in the UPH. Thanks for your help.

I want to thank all the teachers for the time they spend preparing and teaching our classes. The class sizes are growing and it is because of your hard work and love for the children. Thank you.

Pam Kerley

Women of the Church

The Women of the Church began 2010 with a visit to the Boys and Girls Club of Sanford-Lee County on January 4th. Seven ladies toured the facility, guided by Director Bo Hedrick and Assistant William Johnson.

It was explained that students ages 6-18 are cared for and supervised after school hours during the “regular school year.” During the summer, all day supervision is available. Services offered at the Boys and Girls club include educational and recreational opportunities. Additionally, social and personal behavior skills are stressed. The goal for all students is to be educated and productive citizens after graduation from high school and/or college.

Supported by many agencies in Sanford, the club welcomes contributions from churches and other groups. The St. Thomas’ Women of the Church are proud to be annual contributors to the Boys and Girls Club.

The visit was enjoyed by Women of the Church members. They also appreciated the warm hospitality shown by employees of the Boys and Girls Club.

The February meeting of the Women of the Church will be held on Monday, February 1 at 11 a.m. All St. Thomas’ parish women are encouraged to join this positive and hard-working group.

Help for the Boys and Girls Clubs

The Boys and Girls Club of Sanford is in need of a VCR. If you have a spare, please consider donating it to the club. Their phone number is 776-3525.

February Prayer: For the Poor and Neglected

Almighty and most merciful God, we remember before you all poor and neglected persons whom it would be easy for us to forget: the homeless and the destitute, the old and the sick, and all who have none to care for them. Help us to heal those who are broken in body or spirit, and to turn their sorrow into joy. Grant this, Father, for the love of your Son, who for our sake became poor, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.



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Office Hours

Tuesday – Friday

9:00 am – 1:00 pm

The Parish Staff

The Rev Craig Lister

Rector

Pam Kerley, *Director Of Children's Ministries*

Dr. Jo Ann Bowman, *Choir Director*

Sophie Johnson, *Organist*

Kathy Stancar, *Secretary*

Marci Warren, *Nursery Care*

Lay Leaders

Bob Nelson, *Treasurer*

Tom Reese

Asst. Treasurer

There was a little old cleaning woman that went to the local church. When the invitation was given at the end of the service, she went forward wanting to become a member. The pastor listened as she told him how she had accepted Jesus and wanted to be baptized and become a member of the church.

The pastor thought to himself, "oh my, she is so unkempt, even smells a little, and her fingernails are not clean. She picks up garbage, cleans toilets - what would the members think of her." He told her that she needed to go home and pray about it and then decide.

The following week, here she came again. She told the pastor that she had prayed about it and still wanted to be baptized. "I have passed this church for so long. It is so beautiful, and I truly want to become a member."

Again the pastor told her to go home and pray some more. A few weeks later while out eating at the restaurant, the pastor saw the little old lady. He did not want her to think that he was ignoring her so he approached her and said, "I have not seen you for a while. Is everything all right?"

"Oh, yes," she said. "I talked with Jesus, and he told me not to worry about becoming a member of your church."

"He did?" said the pastor.

"Oh, yes" she replied. "He said even He hasn't been able to get into your church yet, and He's been trying for years."



One Sunday a pastor told his congregation that the church needed some extra money and asked the people to prayerfully consider giving a little extra in the offering plate. He said that whoever gave the most would be able to pick out three hymns.

After the offering plates were passed, the pastor glanced down and noticed that someone had placed a \$1,000 bill in offering. He was so excited that he immediately shared his joy with his congregation and said he'd like to personally thank the person who placed the money in the plate.

And there sat our Rosie all the way in the back shyly raised her hand. The pastor asked her to come to the front. Slowly she made her way to the pastor. He told her how wonderful it was that she gave so much and in thanksgiving asked her to pick out three hymns.

Her eyes brightened as she looked over the congregation, pointed to the three most handsome men in the building and said, "I'll take him and him and him!"



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS 2010

Craig Lister	4	Cody Venrick	10	Kathryn Brown	23
Carol Phelps	4	Christopher Gille	14	Ruth Cameron	27
Mollie Schrull	4	Judy Laughinghouse	15	Jan Carlson	27
John Rogerson	6	Morgan Gille	17	Rebekah Payne	28
Brandon Steger	7	Peggy Nelson	18	Rachel Payne	29
Sarah Reese	8	Freddie Rainey III	18	Nancy Lister	30
Marlys Rutledge	8	Mike Manolios	19	Jack Stewart	30
		Ken Lokey	21		

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS 2010

Cornelia Olive	2	Trish Hamilton	9	David Patterson	16
Rosie Payne	2	Rebecca Wright	10	Pam Kerley	17
Randy Seymore	2	Rick Brown	12	Ann Hodges	20
Betty Rosser	3	Frances Floyd	12	Susan Johns	20
John Reese	6	Dalia Stoutzenberger	13	Keith Caviness	21
Sarah Johns	7	Stephen Stoutzenberger	13	Kenneth Laughinghouse	22
John McKenzie	8	John Schrull	15	Mary Dawkins	25
		Katie Hyer	16	Kathleen Yachovitz	27

Of all the systems of morality, ancient or modern which have come under my observation, none appears to me so pure as that of Jesus. ~Thomas Jefferson

It is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to emlore His protection and favor. ~George Washington

Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other. ~John Adams

I have carefully examined the evidences of the Christian religion, and if I was sitting as a juror upon its authenticity I would unhesitatingly give my verdict in its favor. I can prove its truth as clearly as any proposition ever submitted to the mind of man. ~Alexander Hamilton

We've staked our future on our ability to follow the Ten Commandments with all of our heart. ~James Madison

Here is my Creed. I believe in one God, the Creator of the Universe. That He governs it by His Providence. That he ought to be worshipped. ~Benjamin Franklin

From the Treasurer: Wrapping Up 2009

By now you should have received your cash and/or non-cash acknowledgements for 2009. Some of you may have received two separate statements, one for each spouse. There are a few instances where we didn't have your envelop number and the system assigned the contribution to the signer of the check. If you know your envelop number please include it on your check. We will continue to try and minimize the occurrence of two statements. If you would like giving envelopes, contact the church office.

The 2010 budget will be discussed and adopted at the vestry's retreat the first week of February. The proposed amounts will likely be very close to the final.

We will be turning over the records to the church audit committee in short order to examine the 2009 transactions and for them to offer recommendations on ways to improve our controls and procedures. The vestry is about accuracy and transparency and we encourage inquiries regarding how your gifts to God are spent.

The following is a summary of revenues and expenditures by fund for the year ended December 31, 2009:

Fund	Beginning Balance	Revenues	Expenditures	Ending Balance
General	\$ 85,210	\$ 312,677	\$ 289,985	\$ 141,827
Columbarium	32,037		585	31,452
Youth Ministry	3,831	1,985		5,816
Youth Endowment	5,430			5,430
Outreach	7,055	2,741		9,796
Augustine	2,213	300		2,513
Stephen Ministry	2,418			2,418
Von Canon M&R	8,022			8,022
Building	25,433	154,995	2,900	177,528
Men's Group	235	246	9	472
Women of the Church	5,971	4,124	3,543	6,552
Heifer Project	134	812	500	448
Memorial	20,482	765		21,247
Choir	10,659	3,320	5,468	8,510

General Fund

Revenues for 2009 of \$312,677 exceeded 2008 revenues by \$58,713. Our 2009 budgeted revenues were \$307,922; actual exceeded the budget by \$4,755. You can see the impact of operating with a full-time rector versus an interim rector. Proposed revenues budgeted for 2010 are \$324,614 of which nearly 91% is covered by pledges.

Likewise, expenditures for 2009 reflected an increase over 2008 by \$56,633. Our 2009 budgeted expenditures were \$307,922; actual was less than budgeted by \$17,937. The proposed expenditures budget is also \$324,614. Items significant in 2010 reflect:

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- the rector for the entire year
- a 50% increase in outreach from \$12,000 to \$18,000; an element of our ministry that continues to gain momentum.
- an increase in diocesan support of \$3,600
- a commitment to guest musicians of \$3,000, a expenditure that was borne by special requests from parishioners.

The response to the 2010 pledge drive was generous with 97 pledge cards returned compared to 74 in 2009. Pledged amounts for 2010 totaled **\$296,419**; a 30% increase over the 2009 pledge. Understanding, training and spiritual leadership were important factors in this year’s response. It is not too late to submit a pledge. Not reflected in revenues is an improvement in the fair value of our investments which appreciated \$33,925 during 2009. This was a nice improvement although it does not reflect the entire loss incurred in 2008 of approximately \$56,000. The vestry has appointed a 5 person committee to oversee our investments in an effort to improve return and minimize risk.

The following presents the 2010 proposed budget and years ended December 31, 2009 and 2008 actual amounts:

	2010 Budget	Y/ E2009	Y/ E2008
Revenues	\$ 324,614	\$ 312,677	\$ 271,390
Caring for our Clergy	155,990	118,624	93,521
Caring for Our Facilities	34,500	44,175	37,377
Making it All Work	35,934	43,971	28,659
Making a Celebration	32,470	29,639	28,829
Making a Difference in the Word	19,800	13,382	10,200
Making Disciples	10,260	11,842	9,245
Caring for the Larger Church	28,000	24,476	21,441
Caring for Each Other	7,660	3,876	4,080
Totals	324,614	289,985	233,352
Cash over (less than) expenditures	\$ -	\$ 22,692	\$ 38,038

Other funds of the church

Amounts budgeted in the general operations which are not entirely spent for outreach, EYC and Stephen’s ministry are transferred to the Outreach fund, Youth Ministry fund and Stephen’s ministry fund and are reflected as revenues of the respective fund above.

St. Thomas was blessed with a considerable gift to its Building fund in 2009. The Women of the Church also transferred \$1,400 from their fund raising efforts to the Building fund in 2009. All but \$2,900 of repairs and capital improvements came out of the general operations of the church in 2009.

If you have any questions please contact Bob Nelson or Tom Reese.

Bob Nelson



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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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

