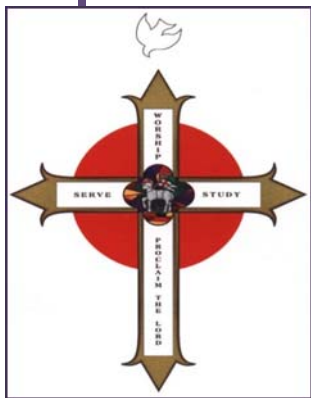


Cross Ties

February 2011



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



From the Rector's Desk

Well, she's gone. Molly has gone back to school after being with us for over a month. It was hard to drop her off at the airport and more than a few tears were shed on the way home. Once there, everywhere I looked there were traces and reminders of her presence, mostly in the clutter! There was the unmade bed, the open mascara in the bathroom, DVD cases strewn on the floor, and a countless host of half-filled water glasses scattered all over the house. As I took it all in, I could only breathe a short prayer: "Thank you, Lord."

When your 21 year-old daughter is home for a month, it is amazing how fast you fall back into the pattern of organizing your life around her agenda and around meeting her needs. Things were that way for so long as our children grew up that it just seemed to come naturally. Providing and caring for them is something that comes deep within us, so deep that I begin to question whether it comes from us at all!

Think about the love we have for our

children. Is there anything so sweet, so sharp, and so painful as this love? Is there any success for which we rejoice more than those of our kids? Are there any failures we lament more than the ones suffered by our children? Are there any people about whom we worry more than them? The answer to all these questions is a definite "No!"

One of the reasons I am so grateful to be a parent is that it has taught me so much about the love of God. If we were to identify the life experience that is most similar to God's love it would be the experience of having and raising children. In it we can come to have a glimpse into the ways God loves us: how he rejoices when we turn to Him and follow His will, how He sorrows when we disobey Him, how He grieves with us when we suffer. If we were to ever completely understand how much God loves us, it might well be the undoing of us. Meanwhile it is enough to know that we love with the Love wherewith we are loved. Again, thank You, Lord!

Father Craig Lister



Pre-Lenten Celebrations



Lent this year does not begin until Wednesday, March 9, 2011. St. Thomas' recognizes a pre-Lenten celebration with our traditional pancake supper on Shrove (Fat) Tuesday. That occasion alludes to the last day of feasting before the fast and penitence of Lent.

In Louisiana there is a large carnival, called Mardi Gras, held in New Orleans on the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday. Mardi Gras is music, parades, picnics, floats, excitement ... and one big holiday in New Orleans! Everyone is wearing purple, green, and gold; and adorned with long beads caught from the

beautiful floats. They sit on the ground throwing balls, playing music, having a picnic, and watching the crowds walk by between parades. All of the businesses and roads are practically shut down -- people are walking everywhere and meeting new friends. People are dressed in crazy costumes, children are everywhere, and they love it!

The origins of Mardi Gras can be traced to Medieval Europe, though there are no written record of how that really transformed into the current Mardi Gras of today. But the origins of the Mardi Gras celebrated today -- with Kings, Mardi Gras colors, and brass bands -- are traced to New Orleans.

New Orleans was established in 1718 by Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne. By the 1730s, Mardi Gras was celebrated openly in New Orleans... but not in parade form. In the early 1740s, Louisiana's Governor The Marquis de Vaudreuil established elegant society balls -- the model for the New Orleans Mardi Gras balls of today. The earliest reference to Mardi Gras "Carnival" appears in a 1781 report to the Spanish colonial governing body. That year, the Perseverance Benevolent & Mutual Aid Association is the first of hundreds of clubs and carnival organizations formed in New Orleans.

By the late 1830s, New Orleans held street processions of maskers with carriages and horseback to celebrate Mardi Gras. Newspapers began to announce Mardi Gras events in advance. In 1871, Mardi Gras's second "Krewe" is formed, the Twelfth Night Reveler's, with the first account of Mardi Gras "throws." 1872 was the year that a group of businessmen invented a King of Carnival -- Rex -- to parade in the first daytime parade. They introduced the Mardi Gras colors of purple, green and gold; the Mardi Gras song and the Mardi Gras flag. In 1873, the first floats were constructed entirely in New Orleans instead of France. In 1875, Governor Warmoth of Louisiana signs the "Mardi Gras Act" making it a legal holiday in Louisiana, which it still is. Most Mardi Gras Krewes today developed from private social clubs that have restrictive membership policies.

Other locations in the United States where carnival takes place:

Mobile, Alabama - Mobile claims to have had the first parade in America. Some historians in Alabama say their Masque de la Mobile feasts were to celebrate Carnival even though they took place in August. They first celebrated in 1704 and then every year for 138 years. Two other Carnival groups met in Mobile. The Boeuf Gras Society met once a year on Mardi Gras Day from 1711 to 1861 and the Spanish Mystic Society met on Twelfth Nights from 1793 to 1833. But Mobile's most important contribution to Mardi Gras was from the Cowbellian deRakin Society, named after the rakes and cowbells they used as noisemakers. This society paraded on New Year's Eve starting in 1830 and grew so large one year they were written about in *The Times-Picayune*, the major paper for New Orleans. The group added floats and a theme to the parade in 1840. The Mistick Krewe of Comus was founded by some members of the Cowbellian deRakin Society and the society lent Comus floats and costumes to use. Mobile now has a Mardi Gras similar to New Orleans', complete with beads and balls.

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Galveston, Texas - Carnival in Galveston, Texas now has sixteen parades. Mardi Gras was first celebrated in Galveston in 1867 with a masked ball and one of Shakespeare's plays. The first two Carnival clubs were organized in 1871. The parades took place after dark. Following the parades were tableaux or galas. By 1873, people throughout Texas came to attend Mardi Gras in Galveston. The parades were too fancy and expensive to continue by the 1880s. Parades were stopped and the clubs still had their balls. Parades returned in the 1910s. Mardi Gras was cancelled in Galveston for World War I like New Orleans and Mobile had been. Because of World War II, not many men were available to participate in the parades, so private parties were all that took place for at least forty years. In 1985, George and Cynthia Mitchell helped create the Grand Night Parade. Many other parades came back to the scene or began parading and now more than 500,000 people visit Galveston annually to participate in the festivities.

Around the world elaborate carnivals, some lasting many days, are held. Some of the most famous are:

Brazil - In Brazil, the celebration is supposed to go on from the Saturday before Mardi Gras until Mardi Gras Day, but in some Brazilian cities the celebration can last seven or eight days. Just like New Orleans, not many important things are decided in Brazil from New Year's Day to Mardi Gras Day because they are preparing for or celebrating Carnival (Portuguese for Carnival). Most Brazilian parades have a theme, or enredo, which could be political, historical or a tribute to someone. The parades had to have a theme that related to Brazil until 1996. Some cities in Brazil do not have a street Carnival but they might have an indoor ball.

Rio de Janeiro is the mother of all carnival celebrations around the world. More than twelve escola de sambas, or samba schools, compete in categories of costumes, dance, and percussion. Escola de sambas include the floats, costumes, dancers, and musicians. They are also known as samba schools because the first escola de samba practiced in a grade school. The parades in Rio are known as bandas, with more than 10,000 participants per parade, the bandas go around most of Rio de Janeiro's neighborhoods.

Bolivia - Bolivia has Carnival parades for children and then more parades for adults. The children dress up in costumes and march in the streets. The adults make traditional dance groups and dance in the streets. But the main part of Bolivia's carnival is getting wet. Most everyone gets wet from water balloons and water buckets. In Oruru, Bolivia, their Carnival is the last ten days of the Carnival season. People there participate in crafts and dancing, but their main Carnival event is a ceremonial parade that lasts for twenty hours and parades four kilometers. Over 20,000 dancers are involved as well as 10,000 musicians. This parade attracts at least 400,000 people.

Caribbean Islands - Trinidad and Tobago's Carnival includes lots of steel bands and is only on Lundi Gras and Mardi Gras. Haiti's kanaval lasts the four days before Lent and millions of people visit Port-au-Prince to see lots of raras or bandes-a-pieds (marching bands). Families with children usually celebrate during the day because there is usually violence after dark when the raras are competing for the kanaval song of the year.

Venice, Italy - The Carnival in Venice, Italy is often referred to as the most elaborate Carnival and lasts ten days before Lent. Many events are held in the canals including shows, concerts, dances, and water processions with masked rowers and decorated boats. Their official ending to the celebration is the ball held St. Mark's Square.



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“Cross Ties”

is published monthly by
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Carciz, Spain - Spaniards in Cadiz, Spain celebrate with papier mache figures and satirical songs copied from Venice's celebration. Carnival was cancelled during the Spanish Civil War, but it has always been in Cadiz with several celebrations starting a week before Mardi Gras and ending a week after Mardi Gras. The main celebrations start the Saturday before Mardi Gras and end on Mardi Gras Day.

Germany – Here the Carnival is called fasching and the largest parade is in Dusseldorf and called Rosenmontag. Rosenmontag is on Lundi Gras and more than 500,000 people attend.

(Note: A major thank you to Dr. Jo Ann Bowman for this submission)

Office Hours

Tuesday –Friday
 9:00 am – 1:00 pm



Dr. Jo Ann Bowman, *Choir Director*
 Sophie Johnson, *Organist*
 Kathy Stancar, *Secretary*
 Katie Yuskevich, *Nursery Care*
 Ken

Congratulations!!

Bob Perry and Rosie Payne are pleased to announce to our church family the marriage of their daughter, Sarah Suzanne Lassiter Payne, to Geoffrey Bowen Carroll, son of Mr. and Mrs. B.J. Carroll of Greensboro, N.C.



Sarah and Geoff will be married in Finch Chapel at Greensboro College, on February 26, 2011 at 5:30 p.m. We give thanks to God for the blessing of this wonderful young man joining our family. We are also asking for prayers that any snow, ice or ill weather will not occur the last week of February, although a light dusting of snow as the bride enters the chapel will be acceptable.

Conn watson
 Dave Zeph, Jr. Warden

Godly Play

Godly Play meets at 10am for children age 3-7.

There is a nursery for children under 3.

If you are over the age of 7 your class meets at 9:10am in the Godly Play Classroom.

EYC meets after the service on Sundays for 7th to 12th graders.

February				
6	Parable of the Good Samaritan	L.8 Vol.3	Marcy – Storyteller Pat	Nancy Katherine
13	“St.” Valentine	Enrich. L.4 Vol.7	Pat – Storyteller Nancy	Katherine Dalia
20	Parable of the Great Pearl	L.9 Vol.3	Nancy – Storyteller Katherine	Dalia Debbie
27	No Class			
March				
6	Parable of the Sower	L.10 Vol.3	Katherine – Storyteller Dalia	Debbie Marcy
13 Lent	“St.” Patrick	Enrich L.5 Vol.7	Dalia – Storyteller Debbie	Marcy Pat
20 Lent	Parable of the Leaven	L.11 Vol.3	Debbie – Storyteller Marcy	Debbie Nancy
27 Lent	No Class			

Before you schedule your summer vacations put St. Thomas’ Vacation Bible School on your schedule so you can plan around it. JUNE 26th – JUNE 30th.



Lenten Booklet

It's time to write your page or paragraph for the Lenten booklet! The theme is "Omitting the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, what time or event in His life would you like to witness and why?" Some suggestions to get you started thinking: Great feast days of the church (Transfiguration) or one of Jesus' miracles (a list follows). Please send you paragraph to either Jo Ann Bowman at jacob1809@charter.net or to Peggy Nelson at phnelson149@gmail.com. If you do not use e-mail then "snail" mail or give it to one of us. Please get on this right away! It would be great to have this out BEFORE Lent begins for a change!

Thank you so much,
Peggy and Jo Ann



WEB site for miracles: www.aboutbibleprophecy.com/miracles.htm.

1. Changing water into wine
2. Healing of the royal official's son
3. Healing of a man possessed by a demon in Capernaum
4. Healing of Simon Peter's mother-in-law
5. Healing the sick during the evening
6. Catching a large number of fish
7. Healing a leper
8. Healing a centurion's servant
9. Healing a paralyzed man
10. Healing a withered hand
11. Raising a widow's son
12. Calming the stormy sea
13. Healing the Gerasene demon-possessed man
14. Healing a woman with internal bleeding
15. Raising Jairus' daughter
16. Healing two blind men
17. Healing a mute man possessed by a demon
18. Healing a man who was crippled for 38 years

19. Feeding 5000 men and their families
20. Walking on water
21. Healing a demon-possessed girl
22. Healing a deaf man with a speech impediment
23. Feeding the 4000 men and their families
24. Healing a blind man in Bethsaida
25. Healing a man born blind
26. Healing a boy possessed by a demon
27. Catching a fish with a coin in its mouth
28. Healing a blind and mute man who was possessed by a demon
29. Healing a woman with an 18 year infirmity
30. Healing a man with dropsy
31. Healing 10 men suffering from leprosy
32. Bringing Lazarus back to life
33. Healing Bartimaeus of blindness
34. The withering fig tree that produced no fruit
35. Restoring a severed ear
36. Catching of the 153 fish

Kids Write about the Bible

The first book of the Bible is Guinness's. In the book of Guinness Adam and Eve were created from an apple.

Adam and Eve were created from an apple tree. Noah's wife was Joan of the Ark. Noah built the ark and the animals came on in pears.

Moses went to the top of Mount Cyanide to get the 10 Commandments.

The first commandment was when Eve told Adam to eat the apple.



Caring for Our Kitchen

Our church kitchen has over many years provided us as a church family with a wonderful place of fellowship allowing us to prepare meals, luncheons, and coffee hours as well as wedding and funeral receptions and other special occasions.

We have also been blessed with many donations including a commercial gas stove from Billy Heins, a microwave oven and dishwasher from Charlotte Hohenstein and a Shark floor cleaner from the WOC. All of these gifts helped to update and serve our needs.

Maintaining the kitchen's cleanliness and safety has been a primary concern and handled mainly by the women of the church.

It is very important that we have a safe, sanitary and well organized kitchen with plenty of supplies to keep it running smoothly. This means that those of us who use the kitchen either individually or as a group be responsible for cleanup and returning the kitchen to a clean and safe place for the next person or group who wants to use it for their event.

We need to wash all dishes and utensils, dry them and return them to the proper location. We need to carefully clean the coffee pot and warmer, get rid of the coffee grounds and then unplug the pot and warmer to prevent overheating and/or fire.

We also need to take all leftovers home. Do not leave them in the refrigerator or cabinets to sit indefinitely. They most often do not get used and are thrown away to prevent spoilage and bugs from coming into the area. Countertops and sinks also need to be scrubbed and linens that are used should be carried home washed then returned to the drawers where they are stored.

If supplies, i.e. cups, plates, napkins, coffee etc. are running low we need to know so they can be ordered and restocked in a timely manner. As you can see this has been and is a lot of work for those of us who have been doing this job for some time.

Please help us by reading the helpful notes posted by the coffee pot, refrigerator and ice chest. Remember: "Many hands make light work".

Thank you,

One of the "assistant kitchen mice"

Mari Hann



Stewardship – Thanks from the Heart

Our pledge campaign for the 2011 budget year was an overwhelming success. We exceeded our goal of 100 pledges with at least 10 new ones. We exceeded the 5 per cent increase in giving to cover the 2011 budget. The abundance you provided will continue to mark St Thomas as a parish that cares.

There are so many people to thank that I don't know where to begin. But, I'll try.

Thank you to those pledging for the first time for their example of faith and charity.

Thank you to the Stewardship Committee. My fellow Stewardship Committee members put together a thoughtful campaign that appealed to all with a good balance of care and leadership.

Thank you to the Vestry for setting the example to our congregation and making St Thomas a church that is truly a good steward of our resources.

Thank you to the committees, groups, choir, and individuals that do outreach and take care of our parish and community with their time, talent, and treasure.

Thank you to our treasurer who has a great sense of where our needs are and how we can match those needs with resources.

Thank you to Bob Bennetts for keeping the lines of communication open through his work on Cross Ties.

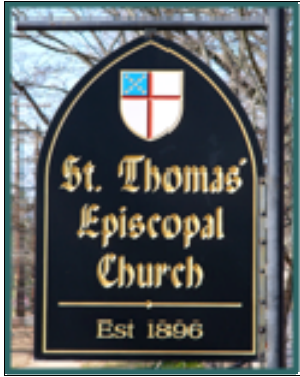
Thank you to Kathy for her help in keeping the pledge campaign mailings and materials on track.

Thank you to Father Craig who inspires us on a daily basis to keep the faith so we can inspire others to join us in keeping the faith.

And a special thank you to all St Thomas parishioners for opening their hearts in response to our challenge. The joy of stewardship is being borne by many. It is truly a blessing to be among such a spirited group of Christians who have given...from their hearts.

Your Fellow Steward,

Ron Hewett



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
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

