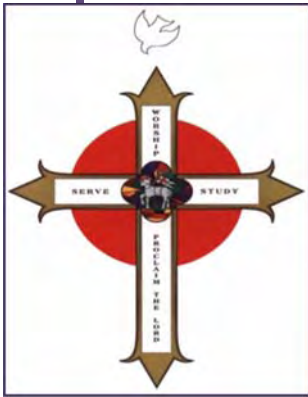


Cross Ties

July 2009



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



From The Rev. Craig Lister

I remember as a child how much I looked forward to the summertime. “No more pencils, no more books,” was the chant on the way home from the last day of school. For most of my childhood we lived in a rural part of downstate New York, and our house was right across the street from a lake. In the summer I would be out the door after breakfast in the morning, and often not home until suppertime. It was a slower, warmer time, but mostly it was a time to re-create in the way children do it best: by playing! I remember being shocked and feeling bad for my father the first time I realized that he had to go to work everyday, even in the Summer!

We adults, despite the fact that we have to work in the summer, nonetheless have special feelings for this season and look forward to it. You see, we still have that desire and need to re-create, and I think most of us feel it most keenly this time of year. We have different ways of playing than when we were kids, but we need it just as much. It is my prayer that all of you will find time to relax and slow down a bit over the next two months, and I hope you will include your life of faith in that as well.

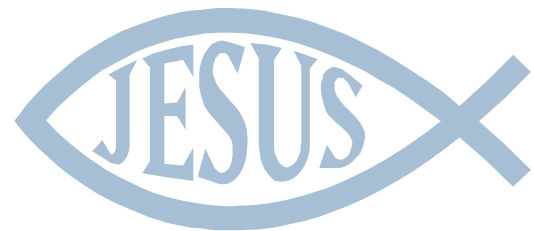
As Christians we are not immune to the pressure in our culture toward busy-ness. That culture tells us that the busier you are, the more in demand you are, and thereby the more important. If we are going to derive our sense of self worth by our busy-ness level, then relaxation and down time will somehow seem like the enemy. Believing people know that we are each infinitely important to God, and take our self worth from that. We know

our job in this world is to work and play in ways that are pleasing to Him. Godly play is not just the name of a Sunday school curriculum. It is a dimension (or should be) of every Christian’s life.

So, my suggestion is don’t always work your faith; play it as well. Take time to relax and always remember to thank God for it. It was never easy for Jesus to get away from the crowds that followed Him, but He often sought to retire with His disciples to a ‘lonely place’ where they could relax and recoup. I like to imagine in such times that He and His followers sang songs and perhaps even exchanged funny stories. I like to imagine that ‘lonely place’ ringing with Jesus’ hearty laughter.

I hope your summer is filled with a lot of ‘gaps’, times when you can relax, enjoy your family and friends, reveling in the gift of life, and praising the Author of it all!

In Christ’s love,
Fr. Craig Lister



Silent Sermon

A member of a certain church, who previously had been attending services regularly, stopped going. After a few weeks, the preacher decided to visit him.

It was a chilly evening. The preacher found the man at home alone, sitting before a blazing fire. Guessing the reason for his preacher's visit, the man welcomed him, led him to a comfortable chair near the fireplace and waited.

The preacher made himself at home but said nothing. In the grave silence, he contemplated the dance of the flames around the burning logs. After some minutes, the preacher took the fire tongs, carefully picked up a brightly burning ember and placed it to one side of the hearth all alone then he sat back in his chair, still silent. The host watched all this in quiet contemplation. As the one lone ember's flame flickered and diminished, there was a momentary glow and then its fire was no more.. Soon it was cold and dead.

Not a word had been spoken since the initial greeting. The preacher glanced at his watch and realized it was time to leave. He slowly stood up, picked up the cold, dead ember and placed it back in the middle of the fire. Immediately it began to glow, once more with the light and warmth of the burning coals around it.

As the preacher reached the door to leave, his host said with a tear running down his cheek, 'Thank you so much for your visit and especially for the fiery sermon. I shall be back in church next Sunday.'

We live in a world today which tries to say too much with too little. Consequently, few listen. Sometimes the best sermons are the ones left unspoken.

The Lord is my Shepherd ----- that's a Relationship!
 I shall not want ----- that's Supply!
 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures ----that's Rest!
 He leadeth me beside the still waters -----that's Refreshment!
 He restoreth my soul ----- that's Healing!
 He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness --that's Guidance !
 For His name sake ----- that's Purpose!
 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death--that's Testing!
 I will fear no evil ----- that's Protection!
 For Thou art with me ----- that's Faithfulness!
 Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me -----that's Discipline!
 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies-----that's Hope!
 Thou annointest my head with oil ----- that's Consecration!
 My cup runneth over ----- that's Abundance!
 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life----that's Blessing!
 And I will dwell in the house of the Lord -----that's Security!
 Forever ----- that's Eternity!

Hi y'all! This is Happy Hank comin' at ya. My dog house was moved recently while some painting and sprucing up was done in the Rector's office. From my new perch in Kathy's office I have been a very interested observer. In particular, I've noticed a new face. Now I hear he's not new to a lot of people in the church but to this ole dawg our Rector, Fr Craig, is new. I've also sensed an undercurrent of excitement. People are looking forward to a "new beginning" and so am I! In addition to my "observing", and my traveling, I'm spending my summer reading my Bible and sharing quiet time with Jesus. If we become grounded in the Word, then when troubles come along we will already have a foundation in Jesus Christ to fall back on. What a comfort that will be in a time of need.

Oh and by the way, I'm still enjoying some additional summer reading of books in our library!

Happy Hank

Women of the Church May Update

“Cross Ties”

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Office Hours

Tuesday –Friday
 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

The Parish Staff

Father 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

Mari Hann,

Women of the Church

Mary Lee Dutton

Parish Life Committee Chair

Pat Kirkman

Outreach Committee Chair

The Parish Vestry

Serving through 2009

Steve Yuskevich, Sr. Warden

James Jessup

J.J. Cuff, Vestry Clerk

Serving through 2010

Seth Cox

Bob Nelson

Mike Griffin

Serving through 2011

Oliver Crawley, Jr. Warden

Charlene Jeffries

Gordy Reese

The Women of the Church did not hold a meeting in June. They are taking a break until the fall and will meet again starting in September.

Church News




In May, volunteers improved the appearances of the Rector’s Office and the Lower Parish Hall. The work, done over several week nights, included washing and painting the baseboards, and washing tables and chairs in the LPH.

The Rector’s Office received a cleaning from ceiling to floor. Painters repaired cracks in the ceiling and walls along with fresh paint. The curtains were cleaned as well as the large Oriental rug. The job was completed by adding an electrical outlet and ceiling light.

In June the columbarium and steeple are scheduled to be power washed to improve the appearances.

A new sign beside the sanctuary’s red doors was given honoring Fr. Craig’s arrival.

Thomas Brown	1	Tammy Bennetts	17	
Darlynda Patterson	1	Jeff Ward	19	
Lene Kerley	6	Margaret Puckett	20	
Jack Mathews	8	Kelly Griffin	21	
Diane Thorndike	13	Amy Earnhart	24	
Anne Layne	14	Claudia Cox	26	
Michael Crumpton	15	Dean Thorndike	26	Birthdays
Molly Crumpton	15	Betsy Parnell	27	
David Puckett	15	Fred Von Canon	29	



June Birthdays

Jane	Escher	2	Jeanie	Ellwood	15
Jack	Burrus	4	Virginia	Caviness	19
Pat	Clark	6	Charles	Burrus	21
Betty	Davies	6	Bob	Downing	27
Jack	Beyer	7	Jonathan	Kerley	27
Drusy	Schaeffer	7	Colin	Watson	27
Ellie	Mathews	11	Billy	Heins	28
Marc	Houston	12	Cindy	Julich	30
Wally	Jones	14	Mary Beth	Puckett	30

The Treasurer's Report

For the better part of two years we've been in somewhat of a holding pattern as we eagerly awaited the arrival of a new priest, in this case Fr. Lister and a new beginning of what Christ holds for us at St. Thomas.

You folks know the numbers as well as I. We seem to be a congregation that arises to the occasion. What makes this a little bit challenging for the Vestry is meeting our obligations as you grow in your love of the Lord. We invite each of you to be a part of this wonderful plan God holds for us.

St. Thomas Episcopal Church				
Finances to May 31, 2009				
		2009 Budget	Current Year to Date	Prior Year to Date
Revenues		\$ 307,922	\$ 91,403	\$ 96,133
Caring for our Clergy		128,429	28,882	
Caring for Our Facilities		43,575	11,471	
Making it All Work		47,418	13,450	
Making a Celebration		29,975	11,265	
Making a Difference in the Word		13,800	787	
Making Disciples		13,325	4,795	
Caring for the Larger Church		25,000	7,436	
Caring for Each Other		6,400	1,796	
Totals		307,922	79,882	99,296
		\$ -	\$ 11,521	\$ (3,163)

The seeds are being sown and it will soon be time to look for those who seek to respond to God and provide leadership for this church by serving on the Vestry. Begin praying now, the Vestry is more than excited about the future and encourages each of you to consider this important element in our spiritual growth.

Where In The World Is Happy Hank?

Where in the world (Bible) is Happy Hank?

Happy Hank has become a world traveler. Can you guess where he went this month?

1. This location was at one time the intellectual center of the world.
2. Paul visited this city while on his second missionary journey.
3. It is located in Southern Greece.

Look for the answer somewhere in this issue of Cross Ties.

The answer for Hank's last trip was Malta (Acts 27:13-28:10).

The White Lie Cake

Have you ever told a white lie? Then you are going to love this, especially all of the ladies who bake for church events.

Alice Grayson was to bake a cake for the Baptist Church Ladies' Group in Tuscaloosa, but forgot to do it until the last minute. She remembered it the morning of the bake sale and after rummaging through cabinets, found an angel food cake mix & quickly made it while drying her hair, dressing, and helping her son pack up for Scout camp.

When she took the cake from the oven, the centre had dropped flat and the cake was horribly disfigured and she exclaimed, "Oh dear, there is not time to bake another cake!" This cake was important to Alice because she did so want to fit in at her new church, and in her new community of friends.

So, being inventive, she looked around the house for something to build up the centre of the cake. She found it in the bathroom - a roll of toilet paper. She plunked it in and then covered it with icing. Not only did the finished product look beautiful, it looked perfect. And, before she left the house to drop the cake by the church and head for work, Alice woke her daughter and gave her some money and specific instructions to be at the bake sale the moment it opened at 9:30 and to buy the cake and bring it home.

When the daughter arrived at the sale, she found the attractive, perfect cake had already been sold. Amanda grabbed her cell phone and called her mom. Alice was horrified-she was beside herself! Everyone would know! What would they think?

She would be ostracized, talked about, ridiculed! All night, Alice lay awake in bed thinking about people pointing fingers at her and talking about her behind her back.

The next day, Alice promised herself she would try not to think about the cake and would attend the fancy luncheon/bridal shower at the home of a fellow church member and try to have a good time. She did not really want to attend because the hostess was a snob who more than once had looked down her nose at the fact that Alice was a single parent and not from the founding families of Tuscaloosa, but having already RSVP'd, she couldn't think of a believable excuse to stay home.

The meal was elegant, the company was definitely upper crust old south and, to Alice's horror, the cake in question was presented for dessert! Alice felt the blood drain from her body when she saw the cake! She started out of her chair to tell the hostess all about it, but before she could get to her feet, the Mayor's wife said, "what a beautiful cake!"

Alice, still stunned, sat back in her chair when she heard the hostess (who was a prominent church member) say, "Thank you, I baked it myself." Alice smiled and thought to herself, "God is good."

Paying It Forward

The man slowly looked up. This was a woman clearly accustomed to the finer things of life. Her coat was new. She looked like she had never missed a meal in her life. His first thought was that she wanted to make fun of him, like so many others had done before. "Leave me alone," he growled... To his amazement, the woman continued standing. She was smiling – her even white teeth displayed in dazzling rows. "Are you hungry?" she asked. "No," he answered sarcastically. "I've just come from dining with the president. No go away." The woman's smile became even broader. Suddenly the man felt a gentle hand under his arm. "What are you doing, lady?" the man asked angrily. "I said to leave me alone." Just then a policeman came up. "Is there any problem, ma'am?" he asked. "No problem here, officer," the woman answered. "I'm just trying to get this man to his feet. Will you help me?" The officer scratched his head. "That's old Jack. He's been a fixture around here for a couple of years. What do you want with him?" "See that cafeteria over there?" she asked. "I'm going to get him something to eat and get him out of the cold for awhile." "Are you crazy, lady?" the homeless man resisted. "I don't want to go in there!" Then he felt strong hands grab his other arm and lift him up. "Let me go, officer. I didn't do anything." "This is a good deal for you, Jack," the officer answered. "Don't blow it." Finally, and with some difficulty, the woman and the police officer got Jack into the cafeteria and sat him at a table in a remote corner. It was the middle of the morning, so most of the breakfast crowd had already left and the lunch bunch had not yet arrived. The manager strode across the cafeteria and stood by his table. "What's going on here, officer?" he asked. "What is all this, is this man in trouble?" "This lady brought this man in here to be fed," the policeman answered. "Not in her!: the manager replied angrily. "Having a person like that here is bad for business." Old Jack smiled a toothless grin. "See, lady. I told you so. Now if you'll let me go. I didn't want to come here in the first place." The woman turned to the cafeteria manager and smiled. "Sir, are you familiar with Eddy and Associated, the banking firm down the street?" "Of course I am," the manager answered impatiently. "They hold their weekly meetings in one of my banquet rooms." "And do you make a goodly amount of money providing food at these weekly meetings?" "What business is that of yours?" "I, sir, am Penelope Eddy, president and CEO" of the company." "Oh." The woman smiled again. "I thought that might make a difference." She glanced at the cop who was busy stifling a giggle. "Would you like to join us in a cup of coffee and a meal, officer?" "No thanks, ma'am," the officer replied. "I'm on duty." "Then, perhaps, a cup of coffee to go?" "Yes, ma'am. That would be very nice." The cafeteria manager turned on his heel. "I'll get your coffee for you right away, officer." The officer watched him walk away. "You certainly put him in his place," he said. "That was not my intent. Believe it or not, I have a reason for all this." She sat down at the table across from her amazed dinner guest. She stared at him intently. "Jack, do you remember me?" Old Jack searched her face with his old, rheumy eyes "I think so – I mean you do look familiar." "I'm a little older perhaps," she said. "Maybe I've even filled out more than in my younger days when you worked here, and I came through that very door, cold and hungry." "Ma'am?" the officer said questioningly. He couldn't believe that such a magnificently turned out woman could every have been hungry. "I was just out of college," the woman began. "I had come to the city looking for a job, but I couldn't find anything. Finally I was down to my last few cents and had been kicked out of my apartment. I walked the streets for days. It was February and I was cold and nearly starving. I saw this place and walked in on the off chance that I could get something to eat." Jack lit up with a smile. "Now I remember," he said. "I was behind the serving counter. You came up and asked me if you could work for something to eat. I said that it was against company policy." "I know," the woman continued. "Then you made me the biggest roast beef sandwich that I had ever seen, gave me a cup of coffee, and told me to go over to a corner table and enjoy it. I was afraid that you would get in trouble. Then, when I looked over, I saw you put the price of my food in the cash register. I knew then that everything would be all right." "So you started your own business?" Old Jack said. "I got a job that very afternoon. I worked my way up. Eventually I started my own business that, with the help of God, prospered." She opened her purse and pulled out a business card. "When you are finished here, I want you to pay a visit to a Mr. Lyons. He's the personnel director of my company. I'll go to talk to him now and I'm certain he'll find something for you to do around the office." "I think he might even find the funds to give you a little advance so that you can buy some clothes and get a place to live until you get on your feet. If you ever need anything, my door is always opened to you." There were tears in the old man's eyes. "How can I ever thank you?" he said. "Don't thank me," the woman answered. "To God goes the glory. Thank Jesus... He led me to you." Outside the cafeteria, the officer and the woman paused at the entrance before going their separate ways. "Thank you for all your help, officer," she said. "On the contrary, Ms. Eddy" he answered. "Thank you. I saw a miracle today, something that I will never forget. And...And thank you for the coffee."

Where in the World is Happy Hank? Answer: Athens

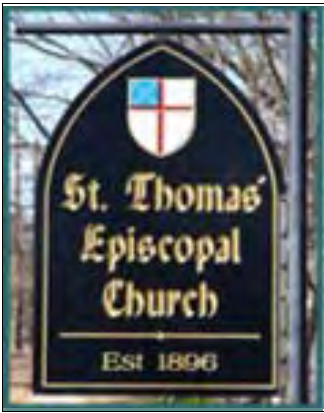
Godly Play Schedule for 2009-2010 Church Year

Cindy 776-9024
Debbie 774-8876

Katherine 776-8477

Dalia 718-5271 cell 770-9866
Pat 542-4002

Date	#	Book	Story	Teacher
Jul-09				
5	x		No Sunday school	xxxxx
12 1 st day of SS	55	YC&W	Getting Ready to be with God & The Light	Debbie/Dalia
19	126	YC&W	Circle of the church year – How the church tells time.	Dalia/Pat
26	24	Liturgical	The Holy Family	Pat/Debbie
August				
2	92	YC&W	Creation	Debbie/Cindy
9	20	Sacred	Noah	Dalia/Pat
16	x		Heifer Sunday – Combined classes	Pam/Debbie
23	x		No Sunday school – kids in church to “sell” the Heifer animal	xxxxx
30	x		No Sunday school	xxxxx
September				
6	x		No Sunday school (Labor Day weekend)	xxxxx
13	26	Sacred	Abraham & Sarah	Debbie/Katherine
20	32	Sacred	Exodus	Dalia/Cindy
27	38	Sacred	10 Best Ways to Live	Pat/Debbie
October				
4	44	Sacred	Ark & Tent	Debbie/Cindy
11	48	Sacred	Promised Land	Dalia/Pat
18	53	Sacred	Jerusalem	Pat/Katherine
25	59	Sacred	Exile & Return	Debbie/Dalia
November				
1	63	Sacred	Jonah	Dalia/Pat
8	41	GP4	Joseph	Pat/Cindy
15	x		Heifer Sunday – Combined classes	Pam/Debbie
22	x		No Sunday school – kids in church to “sell” the Heifer animal	xxxxx
29 Advent I	x		Thanksgiving Break – No Class	xxxxx
December				
6 Advent II	130	YC&W	Advent I & II	Debbie/Pat
13 Advent III	136	YC&W	Advent III & IV	Cindy/Dalia
20 Advent IV	x		Christmas Break – No Class	xxxxx
24	x		Christmas Eve Children’s service	Pageant
27	x		Christmas Break – No Class	xxxxx
Jan-10				
3	66	LC	Epiphany	Dalia/Katherine
10	147	YC&W	Boy Jesus in the temple	Katherine/Pat
17	150	YC&W	Jesus is Baptized	Pat/Cindy
24	153	YC&W	Jesus in the Wilderness	Cindy/Debbie
31	156	YC&W	Mustard Seed	Debbie/Dalia
February				
7	159	YC&W	The Leaven	Dalia/Katherine
14	162	YC&W	The Great Pearl	Katherine/Pat
21	166	YC&W	The Sower	Pat/Cindy
28	169	YC&W	The Good Samaritan	Cindy/Debbie
March				
7	173	YC&W	The Great Banquet	Debbie/Dalia
14	178	YC&W	Jesus and the Children	Dalia/Katherine
21	180	YC&W	Jesus and Bartimaeus	Katherine/Pat
28 Palm Sunday	189	YC&W	Jesus’ Last Passover	Pat/Cindy
April				
4 Easter			Easter Break – Flowering of the Alter & Egg Hunt	
11	193	YC&W	Jesus is risen: Appearance to Mary Magdalene	Cindy/Debbie
18	196	YC&W	Jesus is risen: The road to Emmaus	Debbie/Dalia
25	199	YC&W	The Good Shepherd and the Wolf	Dalia/Katherine
May				
2	201	YC&W	The Good Shepherd and the Lord’s Supper I	Katherine/Pat
9	204	YC&W	The Good Shepherd and the Lord’s Supper II	Pat/Cindy
16	207	YC&W	Ascension	Cindy/Debbie
23	209	YC&W	Pentecost	Debbie/Dalia
30	212	YC & W	Baptism	Dalia/Katherine
June				
6	103	Sacred	Paul’s discovery – Vol. 4 pg 126	Katherine/Pat
13	x		Heifer Sunday – Combined Classes	Pam/Debbie
20	x		No Sunday school – kids in church to “sell” the Heifer animal	xxxxx
27	x		No Sunday school	xxxxx
June 21 st - June 25, 2010			VBS	VBS



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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