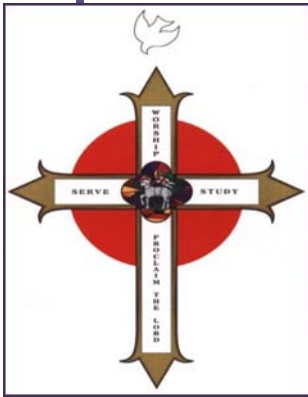
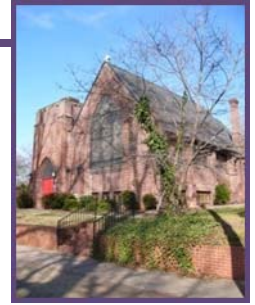


Cross Ties

March 2011



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



From the Rector's Desk

As Lent approaches this year, you are going to be hearing one statement quite frequently: “Jesus died for our sins.” You hear this phrase not only in Lent but all through the year and wherever you go around the Church. It is a phrase that cuts across denominational and cultural lines, which might make one suspect that it is a central tenet of the Christian Faith. That suspicion could not be more correct! “Jesus died for our sins” is at the heart of what we believe.

As we move into this holy season of Lent, we are hearing a lot about sin and its pervasive effect in our lives. It seems to me a good time, then, to look closely at this phrase, “Jesus died for our sins,” in order to better understand what it means.

In the Old Testament we read a lot about sin and forgiveness. Sin was defined as any departure from God’s law, which had the effect of separating the sinner from God and His fellowship. For forgiveness to occur, some sort of atonement had to be made in order to restore the individual or community back into that Divine Fellowship. For the Hebrew people that atonement took the form of a blood sacrifice.

For the Jews blood was a sacred symbol of life. This is the reason that all kosher meats have the blood removed before they are eaten, for to eat meat with blood is to profane the symbol of life. It was thought that offering the blood of domesticated animals was a sufficient and substitutionary sacrifice for sins. These animals were, after all, the symbol of wealth at the time. To give one for sacrifice was quite a financial offering. The greatest

animal offering was the spotless lamb sacrificed for the annual Passover feast.

What God has taught us through Jesus is that no animal’s blood can atone for human sins, but only the blood freely given of a sinless human being, who is none other than God’s divine Son. Jesus, therefore, becomes the Lamb of God, the perfect sacrifice for Sin. One may ask why anyone had to die for sin. The answer is, as St. Paul wrote, “the wages of Sin is death.” That’s why the Jews knew that only a blood (life) sacrifice would suffice. God will

not violate His own Laws. Jesus voluntarily gave up His life, sacrificed Himself, to atone for our sins.

This total sacrifice of Christ once and for all atoned for all of human sin. It reconciled the breach between God and humanity forever. That’s why, if you break up the word ‘atonement’, you get ‘at-one-ment’. God and humanity are brought into union. We are, as the prayerbook reminds us, “delivered us from evil and made worthy to stand before God.” Jesus’ offering of Himself made forgiveness possible for every sin ever committed in the past and for every sin that will be committed in the future. All we have to do is ask for that forgiveness; all we have to do is receive His gift with gratitude.

Next time you hear or read the words, “Jesus died for our sins,” I hope you may have a new appreciation of the power and love behind them. Please, keep a holy and blessed Lent!

Father Craig Lister



Parish Prayer for the Month of March (and the anticipation of Spring)

O heavenly Father, who hast filled the world with beauty: Open our eyes to behold thy gracious hand in all thy works that rejoicing in thy whole creation, we may learn to serve thee with gladness; for the sake of him through whom all things were made, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen



BCP page 814 prayer #1.

Senior Warden Report

These past few days have definitely confirmed spring is near. The season of Lent is only a few days away and we will focus on the sacrifice our Lord gave for the sins of the world.

I hope you will plan to attend the Lenten Dinners on four Wednesday evenings to hear Fr. Lister relate one of our childhood favorites, The Andy Griffith Show, to the morals and faith we hold true as Christians. I look forward to learning what the writers truly were teaching us as we watched and laughed at Barney, saw Opie's struggles with right and wrong, and maybe the parts of life Goober, Floyd, the Darlings, and others played.

Your vestry changes one-third of its members every year to offer new ideas and leadership. This year we elected a "rookie" and two members who have previously served. Dean Thorndike is serving his first term and brings along the calmness of wisdom. He has also agreed to serve on the internal audit committee which will review the expenditures for 2010.

Returning are Dr. Marty Pate and Wally Jones. Marty has served St. Thomas' in many ways as well as serving our community and the world. He is going to Haiti for the second time to share his medical skills and serve God.

Wally has previously been Junior Warden. He and Donna have been a team to make St. Thomas' a parish with warmth and welcome to new comers. He has always been willing to serve from being a delegate to convention to usher and painter.

Thank you,
Oliver Crawley



2011 St. Thomas Vestry

(L-R) Oliver Crawley (Senior Warden), Marty Pate, Dave Zeph (Junior Warden), Father Craig Lister, David Puckett, Dean Thorndike, Colin Watson, Charlene Jeffries, Gordy Reese and Wally Jones.

February Women of the Church Minutes

Fifteen women attended the February 7th meeting of Women of the Church. Frances Granger, WOC Co-Chair, called the meeting to order. A devotional, taken from Heartlight, a daily web devotion, was presented by Peggy Nelson.

The program of the day was based on the book, *Hidden in Plain View*, by Jacqueline L. Tobin and Raymond G. Dobard, PH.D. Peggy Nelson, assisted by granddaughter Katie Kerley, shared the compelling story of quilts used as signals to runaway slaves seeking sanctuary as they headed north. Quilt squares prepared by Peggy and Katie (who made two) and computerized illustrations highlighted the program presentation.

Following the reading of the minutes and the treasurer's report, both accepted as read, attention was turned to old business, a final overview of the November Food Fair. Barbara Yuskevich, Food Fair chair, shared a list of suggestions for improving next year's November project.

A report was made on kitchen appliances being considered for use in the proposed kitchen repair/make-over. Mari Hann presented information on the upcoming Yard Sale, scheduled for Saturday, March 5th. She reminded members of the need for pre-sale preparations, cashiers, helpers for the actual sale, and post-sale support in disposing of leftover items. It was reiterated that no clothing would be accepted for the sale. Appliances, books, and other items will be welcomed. Donations will be received in the LPH from Monday, February 28 through Friday, March 4th. Joann Thaxton gave an overview of Yard Sale advertising, and members voted on ads to be featured in the Sanford Herald.

There being no additional business, the meeting was adjourned, after a dismissal prayer.

A Valuable Lesson

A successful business man was growing old and knew it was time to choose a successor to take over the business.

Instead of choosing one of his Directors or his children, he decided to do something different. He called all the young executives in his company together.

He said, "It is time for me to step down and choose the next CEO. I have decided to choose one of you. "The young executives were Shocked, but the boss continued, "I am going to give each one of you a SEED today - one very special SEED. I want you to plant the seed, water it, and come back here one year from today with what you have grown from the seed I have given you. I will then judge the plants that you bring, and the one I choose will be the next CEO."

One man, named Jim, was there that day and he, like the others, received a seed. He went home and excitedly, told his wife the story. She helped him get a pot, soil and compost and he planted the seed. Every day he would water it and watch to see if it had grown. After about three weeks, some of the other executives began to talk about their seeds and the plants that were beginning to grow.

Jim kept checking his seed, but nothing ever grew.

Three weeks, four weeks, five weeks went by, still nothing.

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

By now, others were talking about their plants, but Jim didn't have a plant and he felt like a failure.

Six months went by -- still nothing in Jim's pot. He just knew he had killed his seed. Everyone else had trees and tall plants, but he had nothing. Jim didn't say anything to his colleagues, however, he just kept watering and fertilizing the soil - He so wanted the seed to grow.

A year finally went by and all the young executives of the company brought their plants to the CEO for inspection.

Jim told his wife that he wasn't going to take an empty pot. But she asked him to be honest about what happened. Jim felt sick to his stomach, it was going to be the most embarrassing moment of his life, but he knew his wife was right.

He took his empty pot to the board room. When Jim arrived, he was amazed at the variety of plants grown by the other executives.

They were beautiful -- in all shapes and sizes.

Jim put his empty pot on the floor and many of his colleagues laughed, a few felt sorry for him!

When the CEO arrived, he surveyed the room and greeted his young executives.

Jim just tried to hide in the back. "My, what great plants, trees and flowers you have grown," said the CEO.

"Today one of you will be appointed the next CEO!"

All of a sudden, the CEO spotted Jim at the back of the room with his empty pot.

He ordered the Financial Director to bring him to the front..

Jim was terrified. He thought, "The CEO knows I'm a failure! Maybe he will have me fired!"

When Jim got to the front, the CEO asked him what had happened to his seed.

Jim told him the story.

The CEO asked everyone to sit down except Jim. He looked at Jim, and then announced to the young executives, "Behold your next Chief Executive Officer!"

"Cross Ties"

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Pat Kirkman

Outreach Committee Chair

The Parish Vestry

Serving through 2010

Seth Cox

Bob Nelson

Mike Griffin

Serving through 2011

Oliver Crawley, Sr. Warden

Charlene Jeffries

Gordy Reese

Serving through 2012

David Puckett

Colin Watson

Dave Zeph, Jr. Warden

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

His name is Jim!"

Jim couldn't believe it. Jim couldn't even grow his seed.

"How could he be the new CEO?" the others said.

Then the CEO said, "One year ago today, I gave everyone in this room a seed.

I told you to take the seed, plant it, water it, and bring it back to me today.

But I gave you all boiled seeds; they were dead - it was not possible for them to grow.

All of you, except Jim, have brought me trees and plants and flowers. When you found that the seed would not grow, you substituted another seed for the one I gave you.

Jim was the only one with the courage and honesty to bring me a pot with my seed in it.

Therefore, he is the one who will be the new Chief Executive Officer!"

- * If you plant honesty, you will reap trust
- * If you plant goodness, you will reap friends
- * If you plant humility, you will reap greatness
- * If you plant perseverance, you will reap contentment
- * If you plant consideration, you will reap perspective
- * If you plant hard work, you will reap success
- * If you plant forgiveness, you will reap reconciliation

So, be careful what you plant now; it will determine what you will reap later.

Thanks to Jo Ann Bowman for this contribution.



Signs You Might Not Be Reading Your Bible Enough

1. You open it and have to blow the dust off the pages before you can read it.
2. You think Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was a hit song from the 70s.
3. You open to one of the Gospels and a World War II Savings Bond falls out.
4. You think the Old Testament exploits of Hercules were awesome.
5. You get frustrated because you can't find *any* mention of Charlton Heston.
6. The kids have started asking too many questions about your bedtime story, "Jonah the Shepherd Boy and His Ark of Many Colors."

Junior Warden Report

As you know the Upper Parrish Hall renovations are now complete. The floors were sanded stained and sealed with three coats of polyurethane. All the walls received one if not two coats of paint. The electrical was upgraded by replacing all two prong (non-grounded) outlets with three prong (grounded) outlets. This relieved a safety concern which we had. I would like to thank again all who helped with the loading and unloading of the storage PODS. Also thanks to the paint crew which did such a great job on all the walls. Some of the walls required two coats. But I would especially like to thank David Patterson who stayed with me throughout the project starting with removing the old shoe molding to replacing all the floor vents. He is now helping with the new office for the DRE. We work well together... he forgets were he laid the hammer or tape measure just as often as I do.

Dave Zeph

March Birthdays



Name	Day
Seth Cox	1
Katheryn Vaccarello	1
Edith Boys	2
Mary Lee Dutton	2
Alice Anne Ford	2
Callie Davis	3
Drew Edwards	3
Larry Wright	4
Alice Rainey	4
Oliver Crawley	5
Madeline Bouchard	6
Bob Bennetts	10
Emily Hewett	10
Steve Alexander	11

Name	Day
Charlie Crompton	13
William Puckett	14
Carleton Riser	18
Elizabeth Schrull	20
Sam Stewart	24
Ellen White	24
Doug Wilkinson	25
Callie Steger	26
Michael Holder	26
Kevin Noel	26
Billy Freeman, Jr.	28
Louise Spofford	28
Brenna Steger	29

From the Treasurer: Wrapping Up the Year Ended 2010

By now you should have received your cash and/or non-cash acknowledgements for 2010. If not, contact the church office. 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.

We will be turning the records over to the church audit committee in short order to examine the 2010 transactions and for them to offer recommendations on ways to improve our controls and procedures. The vestry is about accuracy and transparency and they encourage inquiries regarding how your gifts to God's Plan are spent.

The following is a summary of revenues and expenditures by fund for the year ended December 31, 2010:

Fund	Beginning Balance	Revenues	Expenditures	Ending Balance
General	\$ 141,827	\$ 344,917	\$ 321,523	\$ 176,513
Columbarium	31,452	1,049	3,856	28,645
Youth Ministry	5,816	407		6,223
Youth Endowment	5,430	53		5,483
Outreach	9,796	95		9,891
Augustine	2,513	22	300	2,235
Stephen Ministry	2,418	24		2,441
Von Canon M&R	8,022	13	8,035	-
Building	177,528	1,919	18,461	160,986
Men's Group	472	9		481
Women of the Church	6,552	4,800	1,595	9,757
Heifer Project	448	199		647
Memorial	21,247	2,200	3,728	19,719
Choir	8,510	5,385	5,993	7,902

General Fund

Revenues for 2010 of \$344,917 exceeded 2009 revenues by \$32,240. Our 2010 budgeted revenues were \$335,670; actual exceeded the budget by \$9,247. Proposed revenues budgeted for 2011 are \$333,468 of which nearly 99% is covered by pledges.

Expenditures of \$319,120 for 2010 reflected an increase over 2009 of \$31,538. Our 2010 budgeted expenditures were \$341,670; actual was less than budgeted by \$22,550. The proposed expenditures budget is also \$333,463.

Items significant in 2011 reflect:

- Maintaining outreach at 2010 levels of \$18,000

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

- Increase in amount to the Diocese due to changes in calculations of \$15,236.
- Guest musicians to be paid from the Choir fund

The response to the 2011 pledge drive was generous with 104 pledge cards returned compared to 97 in 2010. Pledged amounts for 2011 totaled **\$310,543**; a 5% increase over 2010 pledges. Open discussion, training and spiritual leadership continue to be 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 \$11,287 during 2010. This was a nice improvement although it does not reflect the entire loss incurred in 2008. The investment committee meets quarterly to discuss investment options.

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

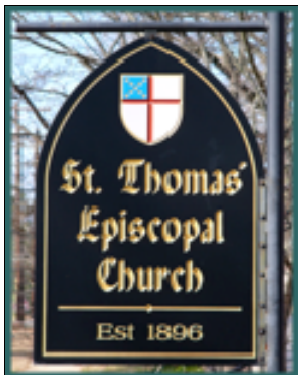
Bob Nelson

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.



...

“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.”