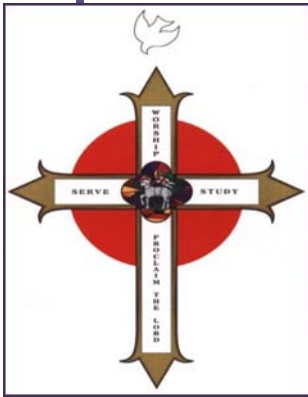
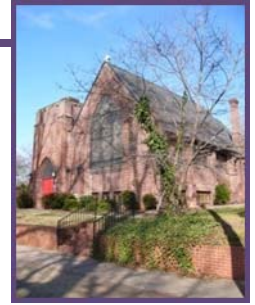


Cross Ties

May 2011



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



From the Rector's Desk

Well, Easter finally came! After the latest and the (seemingly longest) Lent, the Great Day arrived with all of its fanfare and joy. The celebration was sweet, but you may well be forgiven for asking, "Now what?"

Perhaps it would be helpful to remember that the commemoration of the Resurrection of Jesus is not simply a day, but rather a season consisting of seven Sundays. Furthermore, every Sunday is a 'little' Easter in and of itself! It is safe to say that the Church's year is 'permeated' through and through with Easter. Indeed, without Easter the Church has nothing at all to say to the world! With Easter, there is no more important message that will ever be conveyed.

I think most churches do a pretty good job of proclaiming that message on Sunday morning, but I sometimes wonder how well we do proclaiming it the rest of the week. That is where the real work takes place, because that is

where we are most likely to meet the people who have not heard the Good News, or those who don't know how good it is! You and I have to be Easter to the world. How do we manage that?



I don't think it happens by effecting a perpetually sunny disposition, though it might help! I don't think knowing every Resurrection-related Bible verse would necessarily convince anyone either. No, I think the

most effective way of being Easter to others is by radiating hope in all things. I believe Jesus has brought hope to the world, and not just that 'I hope I win the lottery' kind of hope, but that which is nurturing and sustaining to life. This is the kind of hope that says, with regard to the things we fear the most in life, "I know that I will be alright because I am in Jesus' hands. You need to be as well!"

It is my prayer that all of us will live into the Easter Hope. When that happens, we will proclaim the Resurrection to others almost without knowing that is what we are doing! God bless you all this Easter Season.

Father Craig Lister

St. Thomas' Library

Just a reminder that the library is open and available!! We have loads of great reference books (for those who want to delve into God's Word); lots of great inspirational books; we are building a collection of children's books and books for youth (educational and just fun reading); and we have quite an extensive collection of adult fiction. To check out books, all you need to do is sign the card in the back of the book and place it in the index file box on the small desk directly across from the door.

Peggy Nelson



From the Senior Warden

The forty days of Lent were certainly full of activity at St. Thomas'. We gathered four times for Evening Prayer with dinner afterwards. Average attendance at dinners was 90. We really turned out in a big way enjoying The Andy Griffith Show as the programs. Fr. Craig led the discussions with his usual humor, yet brought the 50 year old show to the present demonstrating human frailties and questions we all struggle over daily. Themes such as redemption, humility, pride, and forgiveness were central to the shows. Even children laughed and had a good time. Our young friend, Matthew Kerley, gave his comment after the second show, "That was a short movie". Ever wonder what a young person thinks of a black & white TV show without commercials? We have the answer.

The Wednesday morning Holy Communion had a good number attending too. Fr. Craig presented thought provoking homilies with questions for us to ponder in the quiet of our homes. His messages encouraged us to listen to God's word more closely and to strive to live our lives in a way pleasing to Him. Fr. Craig has a special talent to weave issues of today with biblical lessons, bring to light God's word in such a way to make the message personal.

The Women of the Church have decided to begin making kitchen improvements. Representatives of the WOC, Fr. Craig, and the wardens met twice to discuss the plan. Between the meetings, estimates of the cost were gathered. The group evaluated several ways to approach the project and agreed the first phase will be to acquire a new refrigerator and freezer and remove a small portion of cabinets. Thank you, women of St. Thomas', for your year-round effort to make us a family. Meals are not the only activity you do, but they are the most visible. We are all happier because of your love.

The yard was given a seasonal touchup the day before Easter. Helen Ward joined with the men to make the landscape attractive. Helen personally trimmed and cared for the shrubs while the men spread mulch. Next time you arrive at St. Thomas', take a moment and look over the landscape, visit the Gilman Room and the beautiful gifts of furniture, and look at our fellow parishioners. Our church is alive and we are growing. Our outreach to the community is helping others beyond the big red doors. If you have not already felt a calling to participate in an activity, ask a friend or just take the first step and show up at a Bible study, women's or men's meeting, or whatever draws you.

Oliver Crawley



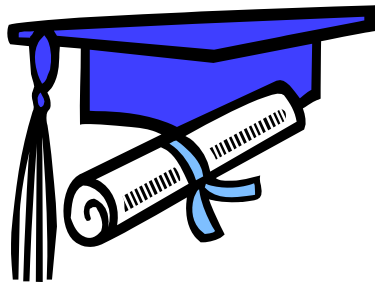
Gray Hodsdon

Joseph Graham Hodsdon (Gray)

Seems like just yesterday this young man joined our St. Thomas family as the youngest son of Rev. Doug and Debbie Hodsdon. Can you believe that on May 14th he will graduate from Episcopal High School of Jacksonville, FL?

Should you like to send him a card or gift, I'm sure he would love to hear from you. Graduation is so special and since we all had a part in seeing him to this important point in his life, celebrate it with him.

His address is 1439 N. Market St., Jacksonville, FL, 32206



Five Finger Prayer (Contributed by Mari Hann)

1. Your thumb is nearest you. So begin your prayers by praying for those closest to you. They are the easiest to remember. To pray for our loved ones is, as C. S. Lewis once said, a 'sweet duty.'
2. The next finger is the pointing finger. Pray for those who teach, instruct and heal. This includes teachers, doctors, and ministers. They need support and wisdom in pointing others in the right direction. Keep them in your prayers.
3. The next finger is the tallest finger. It reminds us of our leaders. Pray for the president, leaders in business and industry, and administrators. These people shape our nation and guide public opinion. They need God's guidance.
4. The fourth finger is our ring finger. Surprising to many is the fact that this is our weakest finger, as any piano teacher will testify. It should remind us to pray for those who are weak, in trouble or in pain. They need your prayers day and night. You cannot pray too much for them.
5. And lastly comes our little finger - the smallest finger of all - which is where we should place ourselves in relation to God and others. As the Bible says, 'The least shall be the greatest among you.' Your pinkie should remind you to pray for yourself. By the time you have prayed for the other four groups, your own needs will be put into proper perspective and you will be able to pray for yourself more effectively.

Prayer for Stewardship

We are always looking for new members to join our Stewardship Committee. Please consider this as you say this prayer.

Dear God,

We believe that all things are possible if we allow your Holy Spirit to empower us.

Send your Holy Spirit, we pray, upon each of us individually and upon this committee formed to respond to you in thanksgiving for your love.

We acknowledge that all we have has come from you as gifts of your love for us.

We want to respond to this love by gratefully returning a small portion to further your good works here on earth; to help others find and love you.

Help our committee to help others to become good stewards of your bounty.

Empower us, Lord, to work together, united in our common goal, fruitfully to help St. Thomas become good stewards in thanksgiving for your numerous gifts and blessings.

Empower us to devise and carry out an effective campaign to allow all to participate out of love for you.

Empower us to ignore or overcome obstacles that hinder our work, especially personal grievances.

Empower us to not minimize the work required of us but strengthen us for the task.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Original prayer written by *Morrie Tardiff, St. Alban's Episcopal Church Indianapolis, Indiana*

Please join us.

Fellow Steward,

Ron Hewett



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Office Hours

Tuesday–Friday

9:00 am – 1:00 pm

Monday 9:00 am – 12:00 Noon

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*

Katie Yuskevich, *Nursery Care*

Ken Lokey, *Sexton*

Lay Leaders

Bob Nelson, *Treasurer*

Tom Reese

Asst. Treasurer

Frances Granger & Pat Clark

Women of the Church

Mary Lee Dutton

Parish Life Committee Chair

Pat Kirkman

Outreach Committee Chair

The Parish Vestry

Serving through 2011

Oliver Crawley, Sr. Warden

Charlene Jeffries

Gordy Reese

Serving through 2012

David Puckett

Colin Watson

Dave Zeph, Jr. Warden

Serving through 2013

Wally Jones

Marty Pate

Dean Thorndike

Women of the Church Minutes

The April meeting of the Women of the Church was held on Monday, April 4, in the Lower Parish Hall at 11 a.m., with thirteen women present. Frances Granger, WOC co-president, called the meeting to order.

Peggy Nelson, devotions chair, gave the history of a song she had heard at a family funeral – *In Christ Alone* by Stuart Townend and Keith Getty.

In Christ alone my hope is found, He is my light, my strength, my song;

This cornerstone, this solid ground, Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.

What heights of love, what depths of peace,

When fears are stilled, when strivings ease. My Comforter, my All in All, Here in the love of Christ I stand In Christ alone, who took on flesh, Fullness of God in helpless babe!

This gift of love and righteousness, Scorned by the ones He came to save. 'Til on that cross as Jesus died, The wrath of God was satisfied. For every sin on Him was laid; Here in the death of Christ I live. There in the ground His body lay, Light of the world by darkness slain;

Then bursting forth in glorious Day, Up from the grave He rose again! And as He stands in victory, Sin's curse has lost its grip on me; For I am His and He is mine, Bought with the precious blood of Christ. No guilt of life, no fear in death, This is the power of Christ in me;

From life's first cry to final breath, Jesus commands my destiny. No power of hell, no scheme of man,

Can ever pluck me from His hand; 'Til He returns or calls me home, Here in the power of Christ I'll stand.

She then shared the words and music of the song. After listening to the song, ladies enjoyed singing to the taped accompaniment and commented on its appropriateness as a devotional.

Following the reading and approval of the minutes, a short business meeting was held. The subject of discussion was the visit of Frances Granger with the Vestry and the material she shared with vestry members concerning remodeling and refurbishing of the church kitchen. Ladies talked about various aspects of refurbishment and discussed setting a priority list of purchases for the kitchen.

The meeting was dismissed with a prayer by Frances Granger. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 2, and ladies were reminded that the final meeting of the year will be June 6. All ladies are invited to bring salads to share for lunch at the June meeting.

Jo Ann Bowman

Handy Little Chart – God has a Positive Answer

YOU SAY

You say: 'It's impossible'

You say: 'I'm too tired'

You say: 'Nobody really loves me'

GOD SAYS

God says: All things are possible

God says: I will give you rest

God says: I love you

BIBLE VERSES

(Luke 18:27)

(Matthew 11:28-30)

(John 3:1 6 & John 3:34)

(Continued on page 6)

Handy Little Chart – God has a Positive Answer

(Continued from page 5)

YOU SAY

GOD SAYS

BIBLE VERSES

You say: 'I can't go on'	God says: My grace is sufficient	(II Corinthians 12:9 & Psalm 91:15)
You say: 'I can't figure things out'	God says: I will direct your steps	(Proverbs 3:5- 6)
You say: 'I can't do it'	God says: You can do all things	(Philippians 4:13)
You say: 'I'm not able'	God says: I am able	(II Corinthians 9:8)
You say: 'It's not worth it'	God says: It will be worth it	(Roman 8:28)
You say: 'I can't forgive myself'	God says: I Forgive you	(I John 1:9 & Romans 8:1)
You say: 'I can't manage'	God says: I will supply all your needs	(Philippians 4:19)
You say: 'I'm afraid'	God says: I have not given you a spirit of fear	(II Timothy 1:7)
You say: 'I'm always worried and frustrated'	God says: Cast all your cares on ME	(I Peter 5:7)
You say: 'I'm not smart enough'	God says: I give you wisdom	(I Corinthians 1:30)



James Dixon Kimball

James Dixon Kimball, Jr., 63, who was organist at St. Thomas' for five years, died at home in Sanford, NC, on Easter Sunday, April 24, 2011. During his time at St. Thomas' he accompanied the choir on a singing tour to England in 1979. His arrangement of old Southern camp songs was included in the concert repertoire.

He was a piano major at East Carolina College, winning the annual concerto competition at the end of his junior year and performed the Third Movement of Brahms' First Piano Concerto, with the school orchestra. After receiving his bachelor's degree, he did graduate work at the University of Illinois.

He taught music in the three Lee County schools, Broadway, Deep River, and Greenwood. He continued his teaching career in the merged county and city school systems where he was honored as Outstanding Young Educator of the Year.

His musical versatility enabled him to play piano in *The Executives* dance band as well as performing solo "cocktail music" of his own arrangement for over 37 years.

Organ studies at The Juilliard School in New York City expanded his performance career to include appointment as church organist at St. Thomas' Episcopal Church for five years and for 29 years at St. Luke Methodist Church.

A memorial service was held at St. Luke United Methodist Church on Tuesday, April 26, at 2 p.m., led by the Rev. Dr. Vernon Tyson, the Rev. Thomas Loftis, and current minister, the Rev. Dr. Gene Cobb.

Treasurer's Report by Bob Nelson

St. Thomas Episcopal Church					
Statement of Activity To March, 2011					
	2011 Budget	Year to Date	Remaining	Percent of Budget	Year Ended 2010
Revenues	\$ 331,934	\$ 76,248	\$ 255,686	23%	\$ 344,917
Caring for our Clergy	161,743	39,330	122,413	24%	155,380
Caring for Our Facilities	36,150	10,840	25,310	30%	44,032
Making it All Work	33,560	5,811	27,749	17%	31,328
Making a Celebration	29,136	6,394	22,742	22%	31,467
Making a Difference in the World	18,600	4,858	13,742	26%	17,340
Making Disciples	11,205	1,816	9,389	16%	11,524
Caring for the Larger Church	36,540	9,465	27,075	26%	26,160
Caring for Each Other	5,000	898	4,102	18%	4,292
Totals	331,934	79,412	252,522	24%	321,523
Cash over (less than) expenditures	\$ -	\$ (3,164)			\$ 23,394

An atheist was walking through the woods.

"What majestic trees!" "What powerful rivers!" "What beautiful animals!" He said to himself.

As the atheist walked alongside the river, he heard a rustling in the bushes behind him. He turned towards the sound and saw a **7-foot grizzly bear** charging at him. The atheist ran as fast as he could up the path.

Looking over his shoulder he saw the bear was closing in on him. He looked over his shoulder again, now the bear was even closer. He tripped and fell on the ground. He rolled over to pick himself up but the bear was already on top of him about to strike!

At that instant moment, the Atheist cried out: *"OH MY GOD!"*

Suddenly, time stopped. The bear froze. The forest was silent, and a brilliant light shone upon the man as a voice boomed out of the sky.

"You deny my existence for all these years, teach others I don't exist and even credit creation to cosmic accident."

"Do you expect me to help you out of this predicament?"

"Am I to count you now as a believer?"

The atheist looked directly into the light, and said,

"It would be hypocritical of me to suddenly ask you to treat me as a Christian now, but could you perhaps make the BEAR a Christian?"

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

“**VERY WELL!**”, said the voice.

The brilliant light disappeared and, the sounds of the forest resumed.

The bear with jaws gaped wide in a snarl and paws set to rip into the atheist dropped his right paw, closed his mouth, then brought both paws together, bowed his head & spoke;

”*Lord bless this food, which I am about to receive from Thy bounty, through Christ our Lord, Amen.*”



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.”