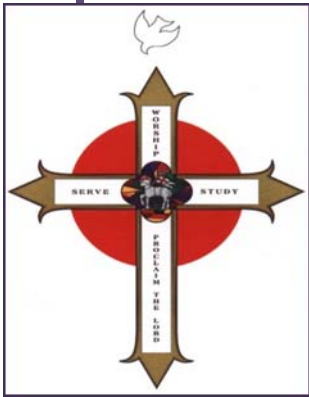


# Cross Ties

September 2010



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



## *From the Rector's Desk*

The calendar year begins on January 1<sup>st</sup>, the Church year near the beginning of December, and the parish program year in September. Confusing isn't it? I am glad, though, that September always feels like a beginning for me. I get a feeling of excitement as the existing programs of the parish restart and new ones commence as well. Often new folks will show up in September if they have moved into the area over the summer.

Most of all, however, September feels like a reunion. Everyone has completed vacation travels, the kids are back in school (hurray!), and everyone is back at church! That's why I would like us to think of September 12<sup>th</sup> of this year as Homecoming Sunday. I hope all of you will make a point of being with us that day in church as we renew the bonds of fellowship between us. Besides, you wouldn't want to miss the annual Ice Cream Social that will be held that day right after the 10 o'clock service. 8 o'clockers who come back for the Social get to be first in line (right)!

We are facing a lot of challenges this year at St. Thomas.' We have made a

commitment to pay our diocesan assessment as part of our 2011 budget. This represents a \$12,500 increase over 2010, so we will each need to prayerfully review our financial commitments to the parish in order for us to continue to move ahead.



More important than anything else, though, we need to re-commit ourselves to being Christ to each other and to our community. I told the Vestry in July that this past year+ with all of you has truly been a gift to me. I told them that St. Thomas in 2009-10 has been closer to the ideal I have had in my mind of what "church" should be than any other place or time in my 32 years of ordained ministry. I hope you all take that as a compliment, for that is how I feel about it. Nonetheless, with the efforts and commitment we have shown come great responsibilities and opportunities. Not only do I know we are up to the task, I also know that God's Holy Spirit will provide us with what we need to succeed! God bless you all, and I'll see you on the 12<sup>th</sup> if not before.

Father Craig Lister

## *September Prayer*

Almighty God, in giving us dominion over things on earth, you made us fellow workers in your creation: Give us wisdom and reverence so to use the resources of nature, that no one may suffer from our abuse of them, and that generations yet to come may continue to praise you for your bounty; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

## *A Letter to Bishop Curry from St. Thomas*

Your Vestry discussed the Fair Share plan at the June meeting. Over the next month we listened to the St. Thomas' family and continued the discussion at the July meeting. I asked fellow Vestry members to send me their thoughts and ideas for the letter to Bishop Curry and incorporated them into the below letter. The letter was reviewed at the August meeting and Fr. Craig reviewed it before the entire Vestry signed.

The changes to Canon 18 become effective January 1, 2011, and the Vestry believes Bishop Curry deserves an explanation as to why we see The Episcopal Church moving away from scripture and towards a misinformed new-age agenda. Furthermore, we see the future survival of small parishes in danger as the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina demands more operating money and the membership continues to shrink both in the state and nation.

If you have concerns, comments, or any other words please speak to a member of your Vestry.

Oliver

August 13, 2010

The Right Reverend Michael Curry, Bishop of North Carolina  
Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina  
200 W. Morgan St. Suite 300  
Raleigh, NC 27601-1338

Dear Bishop Curry,

It is with deep concern for our parish family and great anxiety over the future of The Episcopal Church (TEC) that we comply with the Fair Share under Canon 18. This decision was 8 to 1 with a Vestry member desiring to reduce the Fair Share giving to 10% of St. Thomas's budget. The point was clear; the Diocese should operate on a tithe.

Our Vestry in 2003 voted to forego our yearly diocesan contribution. Since 2007, we have provided the minimum required giving in keeping with our Canons. This year we increased the contribution as the budget grew. We made these decisions in good faith attempting to look beyond the direction the Bishops and TEC seem to be taking us. While the giving was to support the Diocese's Outreach work locally and in the world, we do not support TEC's stated social agenda.

The new Fair Share, which we rejected at Convention in 2009 and 2010, unduly burdens small parishes and will severely limit St. Thomas' local outreach and ministry. We reject the "flat tax" concept.

In complying with the "flat tax", St. Thomas' giving to the Diocese will increase over 50% or \$12,567 in 2011. Without cutting other items in our 2011 budget, we must ask our parishioners to increase giving another 4%. The local reported unemployment as of June was 12.3% for Lee County. If you include those who have stopped looking for jobs and exhausted unemployment benefits, the number goes to 17.3% per Lee County Economic Development. Absent improvement in the economy it will be difficult to look for increased giving. President

(continued on page 3)

*A Letter to Bishop Curry from St. Thomas (continued)*

Obama’s decision to push to raise taxes on earned income, dividends, and capital gains is putting even more pressure on the people of Lee County.

An important point our Vestry wishes to make is comparing The Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina’s allocated Outreach percentage to St. Thomas’. We already allocate more of our budget to Outreach than EDNC based on percentage of gross revenue.

Outreach for the Diocese of NC:	\$100,750	Percentage of Budget	<b>2.03%</b>
Global Outreach for Diocese:	\$118,480	Percentage of Budget	<b>2.39%</b>
Diocese total Operating Budget:	\$4,958,027	TOTAL	<b>4.42%</b>
St. Thomas’ Outreach:			
Outreach for Community:	\$18,000	Percentage of Budget	<b>5.5%</b>
Parish giving to EDNC	\$24,000	Percentage of Budget	<b>7.39%</b>
Parish total Operating Budget:	\$324,742	TOTAL	<b><u>12.89%</u></b>

St. Thomas’ is proud of the commitments made to Sanford and Lee County. It is because of our caring the first Bread Basket had a home. Today, in a new building, over 125 meals are served daily and it is supported by many churches and civic organizations. We supported the Helping Hand Clinic where local physicians and medical personnel give freely of their talents. The Montessori School of Sanford began in our lower parish hall. Today it has its own building. We support the Christian United Outreach Center (CUOC) where the many hungry families in Lee County receive free food and clothing. This summer we expanded our Outreach Ministry to include Backpack Pals, a project for hungry young school age children who receive a backpack each Friday full of healthy food for the weekend. We have sponsored events at Fort Bragg/Pope Air Force Bases for our military. We have a number of military families in our parish. Complying with Fair Share will reduce our ability to serve locally.

The “flat tax” approach is unfair to smaller parishes and lowers the asking amount of larger parishes.

We reject much of the social agenda of the Church. This includes the indirect support, through booths at the annual conventions, for the gay and lesbian coalition. Many parishioners have indicated their displeasure with the Presiding Bishop’s attempts to marginalize Christ and the election of two ecclesiastical individuals to leadership whom they believe defy scripture to support a new-age agenda. There is clear teaching of scripture on these matters that have been defended by the tradition of the Church throughout the centuries.

We also want the Diocese to understand our commitment to Fair Share is being done with caution, and future support will be conditional upon the support of the parishioners and Vestry. It is also with the understanding the Vestry may revisit the 2011 acceptance if conditions change.

Yours in Christ,

Oliver Crawley Senior Warden	Bob Nelson Treasurer	Seth Cox Member
Dave Zeph Junior Warden	Mike Griffin Member	Colin Watson Member
Gordy Reese Clerk	Charlene Jeffries Member	David Puckett Member

cc The Rev. R. Scott White  
 Church of Good Shepherd, Rocky Mount, NC  
 The Rev. John Tampa  
 Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Southern Pines, NC  
 Ms. Sarah Herr  
 The North Carolina Disciple, Raleigh NC

## *The Augustine Literacy Project Update*

The Augustine Literacy Project trained our own Alice Rainey in the July 2010 class at Holy Family Episcopal Church in Chapel Hill. She plans to begin tutoring a child who struggles with literacy skills once the new school year settles down. An organizational board meeting took place in July to begin the process of writing our own by-laws. Creating our own by-laws is one of the steps necessary to become a replication site at St. Thomas so we can train more Augustine Tutors and place them in our local schools.

Thanks go out to Sarah Reese for making an introductory presentation with me to Rev. Keith Miller of Jonesboro Presbyterian Church. Sarah's last Graduate School class required her to observe a non-profit organization that helps people in need and she chose the Augustine Project. Congratulations to Sarah as she embarks on her new career!

Three more individuals plan to train in the fall classes and we will have 9 people who are prepared to tutor struggling readers by the end of the year. Our goal is to organize and complete our very first training class in the summer of 2011 at the church and expand the program. Have questions please call Barbara Yuskevich at 774-1156.

How can you help? **MAKE A DONATION!**

\_\_\_ \$25 buys an encoding/decoding text for a tutor trainee

\_\_\_ \$50 buys a set of phonetically controlled readers for our lending library

\_\_\_ \$300 buys textbooks and materials for one tutor trainee

\_\_\_ Volunteer a name of someone who would like to know more

Thanks for your continued support!

Barbara Yuskevich

### *Fall Classes at St. Thomas*

We have four, yep, count 'em, FOUR classes scheduled for this fall. You should be able to find something for you.

King David; held on Wednesday afternoons from 3:30 to 5:00 PM led by Jo Ann Bowman

Acts: The Sequel; held on Thursday mornings from 10:30AM to Noon led by Peggy Nelson

John's Gospel; held on Thursday evenings 6:30 to 8:30 PM led by Barbara Yuskevich

Remember Who You Are: A Disciple™ course; held on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 8:30PM led by Marty Pate & David Puckett

There are sign-up sheets in the Narthex and in the Lower Parish Hall for these four classes. Please sign up so books can be ordered or supplies put together.

## From the Treasurer

### General Fund Activities

July revenues were \$15,941, while expenditures totaled \$27,192. Same month revenues for 2009 were \$22,709. Actual revenues year to date fell behind budgeted revenues by \$3,954. The summer months have not been kind to operations.

The vestry wishes to thank JJ Cuff, Tammy Bennetts and Steve Yuskevich for conducting an audit on the 2009 calendar year financials. For many years now the audit has been conducted in accordance with the Manual of Business Methods in Church Affairs. Their report dated July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010 indicated the financials were prepared in accordance with the principles adopted by the Episcopal Church and approved by General Convention. Though the report is without qualifications, they did have some recommendation to which the Vestry reviewed at its August meeting and will act accordingly. The full report was made part of the minutes of that meeting. If you wish to get a first-hand look at the operations of our church serving on the audit committee can be an eye-opener.

The following presents the 2010 budget and the seven months ended July 31, 2010, with comparative 2009 amounts:

	<b>2010 Budget</b>	<b>7/31/2010</b>	<b>7/31/2009</b>	<b>Percent of Budget</b>
<b>Revenues, Fund Transfers &amp; Fund Balance Appropriated</b>	\$ 356,128	\$ 201,907	\$ 148,383	57%
<b>Caring for our Clergy</b>	158,000	93,634	57,599	59%
<b>Caring for Our Facilities</b>	63,063	42,590	22,783	68%
<b>Making it All Work</b>	35,694	18,479	18,875	52%
<b>Making a Celebration</b>	33,723	18,166	15,852	54%
<b>Making a Difference in the World</b>	19,800	9,269	2,387	47%
<b>Making Disciples</b>	11,218	7,440	4,837	66%
<b>Caring for the Larger Church</b>	28,000	14,000	11,276	50%
<b>Caring for Each Other</b>	6,630	2,283	2,297	34%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>356,128</b>	<b>205,861</b>	<b>135,906</b>	<b>58%</b>
<b>Cash over (less than) expenditures</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ (3,954)</b>	<b>\$ 12,477</b>	

Noteworthy regarding July's transactions:

- Gift of \$1,000 toward our outreach program.
- Weak cash flow will result in liquidating some of our investments.
- Investments saw an improvement during August.
- Renovations to the UPH offices are substantial complete, final invoices will be paid in August.

## Godly Play

Date	Godly Play Lesson
<b>September</b>	
5 Labor Day Weekend	No Sunday school
12	Ice Cream Social Prep Time
19	Abraham & Sarah
26 Confirmation	Exodus



The Godly Play class for the “three and ups” begins at 10:00am in the Godly Play classroom and ends shortly after the service in the Godly Play classroom. The members of this class will participate in the church service by receiving communion or a blessing with the congregation. After communion this class celebrates with a light snack and juice to symbolize the Communion feast taking place in church. I will be looking for volunteers to provide the “feast.” (For example goldfish, saltine crackers or cheese and juice)

Godly Play/Sunday School for the “eight and ups” will be taught by me. This class begins at 9:15 am.

I am in need of a Grapple teacher for the middle schoolers. Please volunteer or give me your recommendations as soon as you think of someone. Those students are presently taking confirmation classes to be confirmed on September 26th with the Bishop visits. We say a sad good bye to Laura Noetzelman who has been teaching this class. They meet at 9am in the undercroft classroom.

I have included a registration form to fill out and return to me directly or through the church office.

Don't forget the adult Sunday school class that meets in the upper parish hall at 11:30. We have nursery care, Katie Yuskavich, who will be available in the nursery from 9am until 12:30 during church and Sunday school.

Pam Kerley

## A Word from Happy Hank

Hi y'all! Have you enjoyed this sizzling summer? Have you spent some quiet time reading? Ya know, this ole dog's big ears have been pickin' up some more interesting information. I heard a sweet lady the other day talking about food for CUOC. She said if each person in this church brought just one can of vegetables each week there would be plenty to fill those baskets and it wouldn't cost anyone more than a dollar! Now, if you brought a box of cereal or some peanut butter, it would cost a little bit more but those are needed, too. Just think of the people you could be helping and it doesn't take much effort at all. Don't know about you but I'm ready for Bible study classes to begin again. See you there.

Happy Hank

The Sunday School teacher was describing how Lot's wife looked back and turned into a pillar of salt, when little Jason interrupted, "My Mummy looked back once, while she was driving," he announced triumphantly, "and she turned into a telephone pole!"

## *Florida Court Sets Atheist Holy Day*

In Florida, an atheist created a case against Easter and Passover Holy days.

He hired an attorney to bring a discrimination case against Christians and Jews and observances of their holy days. The argument was that it was unfair that atheists had no such recognized days

The case was brought before a judge. After listening to the passionate presentation by the lawyer, the judge banged his gavel declaring, "Case dismissed!"

The lawyer immediately stood objecting to the ruling saying, "Your honor, How can you possibly dismiss this case? The Christians have Christmas, Easter and others. The Jews have Passover, Yom Kippur and Hanukkah, yet my client and all other atheists have no such holidays... "

The judge leaned forward in his chair saying, "But you do. Your client, counsel, is woefully ignorant."

The lawyer said, "Your Honor, we are unaware of any special observance or holiday for atheists."

The judge said, "The calendar says April 1st is April Fools Day. Psalm 14:1 states, 'The fool says in his heart, there is no God.' Thus, it is the opinion of this court, that, if your client says there is no God, then he is a fool. Therefore, April 1st is his day. Court is adjourned..."; You gotta love a Judge that knows his scripture!

## *Stewardship: It's Not for Wimps*

Every now and then I get a little wimpy when I am asked to give of my time or money to causes or projects in the community. I come up with an easy immediate response and just blurt out, "I'm way too busy," or "No, thanks." I believe we all have gone that route from time to time. But, then I get this voice in the back of my head that says, "Wimp!"

Rather than the immediate answer, what I really should have said was, "Let me think about this for a bit and pray on it." That gives me a little space, not to put off the person asking for help, but to really give the request some thought. And if I really think and pray about it, I usually find out that, "Shucks, I can give it some time," or, "Okay, I can budget something to give." My point, regardless how busy I think I am, I can come up with some time to help out. I just have to get my act together and plan it carefully.

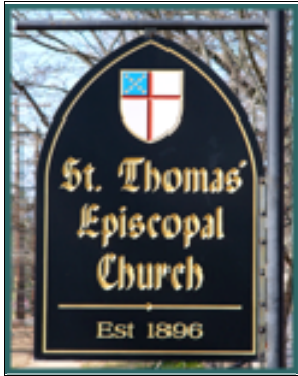
Now, the kicker. When someone asks you for time or money, they have a responsibility too. Don't go asking for someone to give time without some idea of how much time you are really asking of the person. How many meetings or events? How long are the meetings or events? Are they planned and substantive? How much time is really needed to get the job done? At least have some idea of what you are asking of the person. The person whom you are asking to contribute has the right to know this isn't an open-ended commitment.

It's the same for money. We have a right to know if the gift is going for the advertised purpose. Is it being well spent? Does the group spending the money know that my donation is coming out of scarce resources? You have a right to answers before you donate.

Bottom line: We need to take the time to prayerfully consider how we can find some spare time and money to contribute to our church and community, and we have the right to know that if we are good stewards, that those receiving our time and treasure are also being good stewards. The questions and answers aren't always easy. Just, don't be a wimp about it!

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.”*

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312 N. Steele Street  
Sanford, North Carolina 27331-0759

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9:00 am – 1:00 pm

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Pam Kerley, *Director Of Children's Ministries*

Dr. Jo Ann Bowman, *Choir Director*

Sophie Johnson, *Organist*

Kathy Stancar, *Secretary*

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Seth Cox

Bob Nelson

Mike Griffin

*Serving through 2011*

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