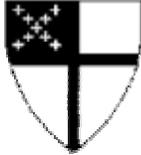


Tidings



St. Thomas' Episcopal Church

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February, 2003

From the Rector's Desk - The Rev. William D. Oldland

Every so often, I hear a question or concern about faith. Sometimes the question deals with knowing whether someone has enough faith. Sometimes the concern is over a loved one and the person wants to know if the reason the person is not getting well is due to a lack of faith on someone's part. In the context of these questions, faith is seen as something tangible, something one can actually, physically grab.

Faith, however, is not physical like a pen or a ball or a heart. Frederick Buechner's book *Wishful Thinking: A Theological ABC* has an interesting definition of faith. He writes, "Faith is better understood as a verb than as a noun, as a process than as a possession. Faith is not being sure where you're going but going anyway. A journey without maps." Defining faith as a journey means that faith is a verb.

A good example of faith as a verb is the story of Simeon. On February 2nd, we will celebrate the Presentation of Christ in the Temple. Simeon was an old man. The Holy Spirit came to him and told him he would not die before he saw the Messiah. Simeon went to the Temple every day. He waited there for the Messiah to appear. Something tells me he was looking for a grown man. After all, he was looking for the person who would restore God's people. What better place to find this person than in the Temple, God's Holy place in Jerusalem?

However, instead of seeing a grown man, ready to lead Israel in God's way, Simeon saw Mary and Joseph with the baby Jesus. Simeon knew this child was the Messiah. Can we possibly imagine his joy? He took the child and held the Messiah in his own arms. Can we imagine how he must have felt? We can be pretty sure this event was not what he expected. How wonderful it must have been! While he held baby Jesus in his arms, he was ready for the journey to end.

Faith is a journey. Faith moves us to places we might never have gone. Faith is full of surprises, wonderful and completely unexpected. I pray we might have faith like Simeon: stepping out on the journey and being open to the wonder and possibilities of God.

Peace on the Journey,
Bill+

VESTRY

<u>Sr. Warden</u> - Donna Van Ness	349-9956	ddvdoodle@yahoo.com
<u>Jr. Warden</u> - Tom Ham	349-7261	tjhamiii@vnet.net
<u>Finance</u> - Bob Lee Watt	342-2305	fwatt@bellsouth.net
<u>Pastoral Care</u> - Larry Johnson	349-7688	lkjohnson100@hotmail.com
<u>Christian Ed.</u> - Jim McCloskey	349-3354	jimmccloskey@adamselectric.com
<u>Outreach</u> - Todd Walker	342-9632	
<u>Long Range Planning</u> - Grace Moffitt	342-3905	gracemoffitt@mosescone.com
<u>Worship</u> - Caitlin Ferguson	342-3991	weswim2@earthlink.net
<u>Parish Life</u> - Anne Montaigne	349-9441	

Open Vestry Meetings are every third Monday at 6:45 p.m.

Inside This Issue. ..

- ◆ Highlights of January Vestry Retreat
- ◆ Balsley on Stewardship
- ◆ Diocesan Convention Moves Date Due to Snow
- ◆ Christian Education
- ◆ Tribute to Silent Servant-Steve Worth

Highlights of January Vestry Retreat

By Jim McCloskey, Vestry Clerk

The St. Thomas' Vestry assembled at The Summit on Friday evening, January 17 to begin its annual retreat.

This first order of business was the selection of a new Senior Warden. Rev. Bill Oldland recommended that Donna Van Ness be considered for the position. Her selection was unanimously confirmed.

After having been an outstanding Junior Warden for the last two years, Tom Ham generously agreed to continue in that capacity for another year.

Vestry liaisons for the various commissions were selected as follows:

Buildings and Grounds - Tom Ham
Christian Education - Jim McCloskey
Finance - Bob Lee Watt
Long-Range Planning - Grace Moffitt
Membership - Donna Van Ness
Parish Life - Anne Montaigne
Pastoral Care - Larry Johnson
Outreach - Todd Walker
Worship - Caitlin Ferguson

Vestry members will be working on chairs and members of the commissions. Any parishioner interested in serving as chair or as a member of a commission is asked to call the appropriate vestry member.

On Saturday morning at The Summit, Rev.

Oldland introduced his ambitious "Five-Year Plan" for St. Thomas.

Points of the plan include:

- * Attendance and Membership-65-80 people attend the 11:00 service. The goal is to increase the number 8-10 people per year.
- * Christian Education-increase the number of children and youth attending by 10% per year. Reorganize the Christian Education Commission to include the Youth Program and the Adult Sunday School Class.
- * Finance-The budget for 2003 is \$142,000. The goal is to increase this \$8,000-\$10,000 per year.
- * Parish Life-"Outreach for new members" and "Outreach for faithful members." The goal is to do a better job of incorporating new members and retaining current ones.
- * Pastoral Care-Establish and train Stephen's Ministers.
- * Outreach-Increase the outreach portion of the budget by 1% of the total budget per year.
- * Worship- Establish and train Lay Eucharistic Ministers (LEM's).

The Vestry embraced this plan, asking that God bless it and increase it.

The Long-Range Planning Commission, Chaired by Grace Moffitt Announces the Completion of St. Thomas' NEW SIGN !
Many thanks to:
Tim Reagan,
Adams Electric, & Tom Ham



Thoughts on Stewardship

By Tom Balsley

*They were all of them
saints of God,
and I mean, God helping,
to be one too.*

- from "I Sing A Song of the
Saints of God"

Christmas Eve was a bit different for our family this year. It was the first time in memory that we were not able to celebrate my father's birthday. However we did have a cake and acknowledged my dad's life by sharing good stories around the dinner table. But I know all of us felt an ache in our hearts because he was not present. Later in the evening my stepbrother Fred came over to me and said, "Although Bob is not here, his spirit is always going to be with us. His spirit lives on in you and me and through everyone in this family."

I have given this

much thought over the past several weeks. I am now beginning to understand more clearly the role of the Holy Spirit. I am sure Jesus' disciples could not understand what our Lord meant when he told them that his spirit would abide with them forever.

I have thought of all



the people in my life who influenced me and whose life-force is a part of my whole being. I can recall family members, teachers, coaches, youth leaders, ministers, co-workers and friends who believed in me and cared about me. I often think of an associate at

work who inspired me to always do my best. Even now, I will say to myself, "How would Paul handle this problem?"

In our faith community at St Thomas, there are people who have changed and shaped our lives. These individuals motivated, encouraged, and supported us. These

saints of God still reside in us and give our lives purpose and meaning. Maybe these saints haven't officially been canonized, but Saint Sally, Saint Nancy, Saint Tank, Saint Edith, Saint Tim, Saint Bob,

Saint Bill, Saint Wilbur, Saint Reather, St. Jim, and Saint Tymesia just to name a few, continue to live on in my heart. I know there are people who had a profound effect on your life and whose spirit is with you every day. It is comforting to know that even though these loved ones are no longer here on this earth, they remain a part of our lives and are with us in this life's journey.



**Reminder: 4th Sunday Food Donation
to The Reidsville Outreach Center
Canned Meats & Fruits**

Adult Christian Education Class

By Bill Oldland



February 21-23
"Discovering Reality with
C.S. Lewis"

A C.S. Lewis Foundation
Regional Retreat
The Cove
Ashville, NC

The Adult Sunday School Class began a study of C.S. Lewis' book, *Mere Christianity*, in early January. We are utilizing a study guide to help facilitate our discussions.

The adults have been delighted to be joined by the youth in the Senior High Sunday School Class.

Anyone can join in the class at any time. All one needs to do is read the assigned chapter and then use the study guide which is available in the church office.

As of January 26, the class was on Chapter 2. We plan to study this text through the month of February.

Class attendance in January has ranged from 14 to 24 people. Please come and join us for some wonderful discussion on the Christian life.

Study Schedule of *Mere Christianity* By C. S. Lewis

February 2: Chapter 3
Christian Behavior parts 1-6

February 9: Chapter 3
Christian Behavior parts 7-12

February 16: Chapter 4
Beyond Personality: Or First Steps in the Doctrine of the Trinity parts 1-6

February 23: Chapter 4
Beyond Personality: Or First Steps in the Doctrine of the Trinity parts 7-11

C.S. Lewis Websites to Explore: cslewis.org
cslewis.drzeus.net

Notes from Polly

By Polly Yeago, Director of Christian Education

Upcoming Events:

- Primary and intermediate classes will be studying The Eucharist during Lent.
- Two weeks before Lent, study guides for individual Lenten devotional times will be available for adults and children.
- Tiny Saints continues to be offered during the 11:00 service for children ages 2-5. This is a wonderful way for children to hear the lessons and participate in a service similar to the one in which their parents practice in church.
- The nursery needs two "gently used" high chairs and a crib. (We have a mattress.) Donations of cookies, crackers, and small drink boxes are always welcome and needed.

Youth Update

By Bill Oldland

During the month of January, the youth group had several big events. We started the month with a discussion on the topic of war and peace. Our discussion looked at the possibility of war with Iraq and we wondered what the Christian response to war should be, concluding that we should always pray for peace. We hope and pray for peace among all peoples at all times.

For our fun events, we went to a Greensboro Hockey Game and had a Lock-in. We went to Celebration Station and bowling, returning to the church for pizza and movies.

Our final event was a Superbowl Party at the Ferguson's where we watched the game and discussed cliques. We ended the event planning our calendar for the rest of the year. The February schedule will be mailed to all youth.

Making a Difference

By Chuck Rhodes

Ever since I joined the St. Thomas community in 1979, I have been amazed at the number of dedicated parishioners who devote so much of their time to the work of the church. In fact, that has been one of the biggest attractions for me as a member. St. Thomas is blessed with people who "walk the walk" and "just do it". Personally, I am attracted most to those individuals who provide behind-the-scenes services, usually anonymously, and without seeking any recognition.

Among Merriam-Webster's definition of *service* is: "useful labor that does not produce a tangible commodity."

Steve Worth is someone who has provided just this sort of service to St. Thomas for approximately 14 years, serving on the Finance Committee. His primary responsibility is to track income the church receives. This includes posting all pledges, designated gifts, loose offering, and mis-



Steve Worth, a totally committed volunteer.

cellaneous income.

Steve performs these duties with the utmost interest of St. Thomas at heart. He is totally committed to accuracy and confidentiality in maintaining these records. Recruiting, training, and scheduling "Counters" each Sunday is a significant part of the overall process. This is done in strict compliance with Diocesan procedures regarding the handling of money.

A key player in developing the budget, Steve helps complete Parochial Reports, and is the "watch dog" of all financial matters in the church. Steve has been an invaluable resource to treasurers, priests,

and vestries during his time of service.

As a past treasurer, senior warden, and current Finance Committee member, I know first hand how much commitment, perseverance, and massive amounts of time this man devotes to St. Thomas.

Never once have I heard him criticized by others, or heard him complain about the time it takes to do his work.

Currently, with the help of Marian Safriet, he has successfully converted the church financial records to an internal book-keeping system, providing substantial savings to the church.

We all owe this very special "silent servant" our gratitude for the loving care that he gives so generously to St. Thomas. It's heartwarming to know that the gifts given to our church are being recorded and handled by such a wonderful gift from God, Steve Worth.

ECW By Jeanne Horsley

A general business meeting was held on January 19th. Treasurer Willie Adkins reported the profit on the October Fall Flea was \$4,805.27. Vice President Mavis Simon distributed the *ECW Yearbooks* for 2003. All women should receive a *Yearbook* from the ECW. Please check with the ushers when you leave church if you have not received yours.

The ECW provided a meal for the staff at the Free Clinic in January and plan to do this again in February. Planning is still going on regarding the purchase of a new refrigerator and ice maker for the kitchen. Freda Watt worked with acolytes and choir members on proper care of their vestments.

The ECW approved a budget of \$5,490 which includes contributions to the Presiding Bishop's Fund, Church Periodical Club, Missionary Christmas Fund, The Epiphany Offering (for missionaries), Lex Mathews Scholarship Fund and Thompson Children's Home.

ECW Meetings

2/13 - 10:30 a.m.

Morning Chapter
Pipkin Parlor

2/20 - 7:30 p.m.

Evening Chapter
Pipkin Parlor

2/23 - Noon

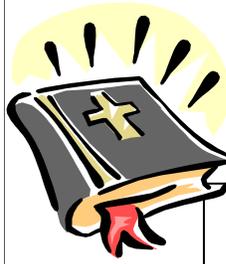
Gen. Business
Meeting
Parish House

This & That

Please Come!
Important Men's Club
Meeting Feb. 6, 6:30
To Make Assignments for
Pancake Dinner



Bishop Michael Curry
March 30
11:00 Worship Service
Confirmation,
Reaffirmation, & Reception
into St. Thomas



January Church & Sunday School Attendance

	5th	12th	19th	26th	Month Average
8:30	15	20	17	9	15.25
11:00	63	73	59	69	66.00
Nursery	2	2	1	4	2.25
Pre-2nd	0	1	1	0	.50
3rd-5th	5	4	3	4	4.00
Middle Sch.	1	2	1	1	1.25
High Sch.	2	3	5	3	3.25
Tiny Sts.	2	0	0	1	.75
Adults	14	14	12	12	13

Thank You Notes to St. Thomas

Dear St. Thomas,

We are so grateful for all your prayers and concerns that have brought us through our recent illness.

The many delicious meals and visits touched our hearts more than you will ever know.

We truly appreciate everything you have done for us in our time of need.

Joanne & Richard Piazza

Dear Parish Family,

What a wonderful gift the Advent Booklet was/is! On its arrival, I immediately sat down to read, and then used it every day. I found depth, insight, revelation, friendship—on the whole it is a remarkable sharing of generous people who added so much to my meditations.

But most particularly, my thanks go to David Zoernig for finding the writers, compiling the entries, and turning out the finished product. Whatever David puts his hand to, is truly charged with the breath of the Spirit. I miss you all; blessings & prayers, Mary Brent Trigg

P.S. The new "Tidings" layout is great!

Dear St. Thomas,

Thank you for the lovely Christmas gifts you sent my daughter and me. You should have seen the smile on her face! She lit up like a Christmas tree—just seeing that smile was a gift to me.

Without you, my family would've had a very dim Christmas. To me, it wasn't about the gifts, but the spirit and joy of Christmas.

The thoughtfulness of your love, the sharing and giving of your devoted time and effort in helping those in need—I can't begin to thank you enough. I hope to see you some day soon.

May God Forever Bless You,
Tami and Brittany

**2003 Diocesan
Convention
Rescheduled for
February 1
Christ Church
Raleigh**

9:30 - 11:45 Morning Legislative
Session

Opening Devotions

Call to Order

Appointments and Elections

Late nominations & late resolu-
tions

Report from Sec. of the Diocese

Report Diocesan Council on the
State of the Church

Report from Commission on
Ministry

Pastoral Address by Bishop

Mission Strategy Report

Introduction of new clergy and
others

First Ballot

12:15-1:15 Holy Eucharist

Celebrant: Bishop Curry

Preacher: Suffragan Bishop

1:15-2:15 Lunch

2:30-5:00 Afternoon Legislative
Session

Second Ballot

Mission and Ministry Budget

Report from the Com. on Consti-
tution and Canons

Third Ballot

Resolutions

Closing Prayers

**St. Thomas' Delegates are
Pam Allen and David Zo-
ernig.**



NYC's Goliard Ensemble Concert

By David Zoernig, Choir Director and Organist

Touring the area during their annual Southeastern Music Festival, the Goliard Ensemble performs at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, February 9 at First Baptist Church. Admission is free, though offerings will be accepted to support the special music fund at St. Thomas.

The Goliard Ensemble has appeared at Lincoln Center, Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, and numerous other venues throughout the country. The Ensemble has premiered works by composers Vincent Persichetti, Lowell Lieberman, and Ronald Roseman.

Each season brings a different Composer-in-Residence who teaches and interacts with audiences. Ben Bierman, the 2002-03 Goliard Ensemble Composer-in-Residence, will perform with the Ensemble for the Triad premiere of his work, Mi-fun-to. Bierman is the recipient of the Institute for Studies in American Music Award for 2000, and has performed and recorded as a trumpeter with artists including B.B. King, Tito Puente, and Celia Cruz.

A variety of works will be offered at the February 9 concert, including pieces by Perti, Albinoni, Brahms, and Schubert. Performers include Jim Blanton, Tenor; Susan Dominguez, violin; Arielle Leviuff, piano; Elizabeth Thorne, contralto; and Lawrence Zoernig (my brother!), 'cello.

Vestry Adopts Deficit Budget for 2003

By Bob Watt, Treasurer

In order to maintain the same level of operations and services for the coming year, the Vestry adopted a budget which projects a deficit of \$21,653 for 2003. This decision was not made without a great deal of thought and discussion, but the Vestry believes its action to be the only practical choice available.

The amount of pledges for 2003 is \$16,000 less than in 2002, and many operating expenses have increased. We have little or no control over a majority of church expenditures such as utility payments, pension and insurance for the rector and his family, the diocesan asking, property insurance, and salaries for the rector, organist, secretary, and sexton. These expenses make up 80% of our total budget!

Pledges for 2003 are down for a combination of reasons, but primarily due to members moving and some pledges being decreased because of the economy. We have gained some new pledging units and some pledges increased, but this was not enough to offset our losses. The large majority of pledges remained the same from 2002 to 2003.

If our budget figures are accurate, we will have to spend about half of our general reserves to get through this year. I hope and pray that St. Thomas will be able to substantially reduce this deficit figure by the end of the year, but it will take a united effort to provide more financial support. I hope those families who had to reduce their pledges will try to contribute the same amount as they did in 2002. I hope families who left their pledges the same will make an effort to increase their pledges. This will not be easy for any of us, but together, with God's help, we can "move mountains." Thank you for all you do for our church.

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Who's Who at St. Thomas

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- * Director of Christian Ed.-
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- * Church Secretary -
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- * Sexton-
John Black 349-3511

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- Cheri Barrett 361-0793
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Suzanne Howard 349-7046
- * Layreader & Chalice Bearer
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* Steve Worth 349-7538

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* Webmaster - John Bullock

616-1029
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WANTED: INFORMATION-STORIES-PICTURES-IDEAS!
Newsletter Deadline: the 25th of EVERY month
brhodes3@triad.rr.com OR Call the church office 349-3511