

Tidings

St. Thomas Episcopal Church

315 Lindsey Street
Reidsville, NC 27320

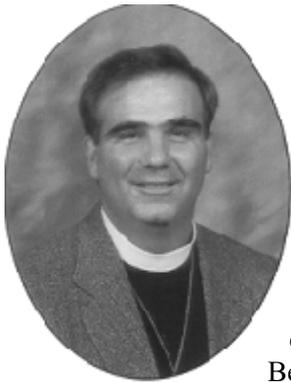
336-349-3511
FAX: 349-3568

Email: office@stthomasreidsville.org
www.stthomasreidsville.org

December 2005

From the Rector's Desk

The Rev. William D. Oldland



Advent is here. Advent for the members of the church means many things. It is the start of a new church year. It is a season of preparation and introspection. We do some self-examination and prepare ourselves for the second coming of Christ. Finally, we celebrate the birth of Christ in Bethlehem so long ago.

To help us understand the complexity and the deep meaning of the season the church has chosen some interesting traditions. One of those traditions is the changing of the colors in the church. The color moves from green to purple. The rich color of purple has two meanings. The first one has ancient roots. It is the symbol of royalty. We are celebrating the coming of Christ the King. We are expecting the return of a risen Lord. The color reminds us, therefore, of Jesus as the Son of the Living God, the King of Kings. The second meaning is one of introspection and reflection. The color purple was also chosen by the church to remind us of our own need to prepare for the opportunity to meet Christ face to face. We are called at this time to look at our own lives and see where we are in our spiritual walk and journey. After all, when Jesus comes again will we be prepared in heart, soul and mind to

come before the King of Kings? Would we be ready to kneel and ask for forgiveness?

Another tradition the church uses to help us with the meaning of Advent is found in the lessons. For example, the gospel for the first lesson of Advent in Mark is about the second coming. We are reminded that Jesus has said he will come again. We don't know the time. Instead, we are told to be watchful. We are encouraged to stay awake and wait expectantly for the return of Christ. The gospel lessons for the second and the third weeks involve John the Baptist and his message. John the Baptist prepares the way for the coming of the Messiah. In these lessons we are reminded that it is important to prepare ourselves, our souls and our bodies for the coming of the Messiah. Once again, the theme of introspection and reflection is prevalent.

Not only must we as individuals reflect on our spirituality, but the church is called to reflect on its own expression of faith as well. As the body of Christ in the world we are asked to reflect on how we are carrying the gospel to the world around us. How are we sharing the good news of Jesus Christ to the community of Reidsville? What is working? What is not? These questions are brought to the front of our minds and beg for an answer.

Finally, the last gospel lesson on the fourth Sunday of Advent reminds us of Jesus' birth through Mary, his mother.

continued on page 2...

The Vestry

Sr. Warden - Joanne Piazza	349-5827	rjpiazza@bellsouth.net
Jr. Warden - Tommy Thorn	616-0800	lthorn@netzero.net
Worship - Dot Reilly	634-1828	irishbr@aol.com
Pastoral Care - Tommy Thorn	616-0800	lthorn@netzero.net
Christian Ed. - Scotty Reeder	342-0027	rhiannonr@bellsouth.net
Parish Life - Anne Montaigne	349-9441	amontaigne@yahoo.com
Outreach - Todd Walker	342-9632	todd.walker@smallenoughtocare.com
Outreach - Phillip Dalton	613-9695	phillipesi@triad.rr.com
Communications - Melinda Rice	349-9770	melindarice@bellsouth.net
Finance - Paul Barrett	361-0793	barrett8@mindspring.com

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

Inside This Issue...

> Adult Christian Education	2
> Endowment Committee	2
> "It's a Special Season... But" - Don Gwarek	3
> Musical Notes from Ed	3
> Stewardship / ECW News	4
> Reidsville Outreach Center	4
> Bishop Curry's Visit	5
> Episcopal Day School	5
> Outreach News / EYC Youth	6
> Men's Club, Pledge Report, Jr. Warden's Notes	7

From the Rector's Desk

continued

Mary offers herself to be the mother of the Messiah. She responds to God by saying yes. She sets before us the example of being open to God's love and care. God Incarnate will come and grow in her. She will carry the Christ child and give birth to him after a long tedious journey. She will care for him as any mother would. She will watch him grow. She will see him teach. She will marvel at his healing. And on a fateful day, she will witness his death. Marvelously, she will also be a witness to the Resurrection. It isn't possible to think of her on that fourth Sunday and not review all of her life as she followed God. We are called to offer ourselves to God as she did. We are called to remember Jesus' birth. We are called to reflect on God Incarnate walking, teaching, healing and finally saving the entire world.

Advent is indeed upon us. The season is full of deep, rich meaning. The depth of this meaning is reflected in the color of the season and the lessons that we read. The color and the lessons call for a response, a response to yes to God.

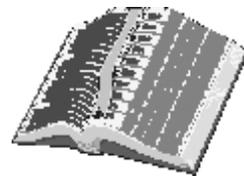
Come, Lord Jesus, Come. Come among us here. Come and make us whole. AMEN

Bill +



Adult Christian Education Opportunities

We are continuing with our studies of Revelation on Monday at 12 noon. We are in the 16th chapter. There is plenty of room for anyone who would like to join in the discussion.



In addition, we are studying stewardship on Sundays. This class is a biblical survey of stewardship. It would be helpful for everyone to bring a Bible, some pens, and a notebook. It is our hope this class will help us understand more fully the relationship God desires to have with us on an individual and corporate basis.

Endowment Committee

As we near the end of 2005, and the special "Season of Giving" approaches, we ask that you consider a gift to the Endowment Fund. It is the gift that keeps on giving. The principle, which ensures a secure future for Saint Thomas, is earning interest everyday. The interest is given back to our Church each year. This year that amount was \$1819.14. The Vestry allocates this money to facility improvements, outreach and operations under the guidelines adopted when the Endowment Fund was created.

Gifts can be made in honor of someone, in memory of someone, or just because you want to be one who plans for our future viability. Checks should be made to **St. Thomas' Endowment Fund** and given to the Endowment Committee Treasurer, **Steve Worth**. Other members of the Endowment Committee are **Anne Donecker, Laura Felts, Starr McHugh** and **Bill Sutton**.

According to the By Laws of the Endowment Committee, the members are appointed by the Vestry for a term of three years. After two terms the committee member must retire from the committee for at least one year. Bill Sutton's second three year term will end in December 2005. **Bob Lee Watt** has agreed to serve a three year term, replacing Bill Sutton.. His name will be presented to the Vestry for approval.

Special Christmas Services

Saturday December 24 ~ Christmas Eve

5:00 p.m. - Family & Children's Service - HE Rite II

10:30 p.m. - Christmas Carol Singing & Special Music

11:00 p.m. - Midnight Service - Holy Eucharist - Rite II

Sunday December 25 ~ Christmas Day

10:00 a.m. - Combined Service - Holy Eucharist - Rite II

Come as you are - even in your PJ's!



It's a Special Season . . . But

by Don Gwarek

You know, Christmas just ain't like it used to be.

For instance, ask any child what happens on Christmas and their answer probably would be, "Santa Claus is gonna bring me toys." Ask an adult and they might say, "Everyone is coming over to the house and I don't know if I have the time to do every thing I have to, or we're going to visit grandma, the mall was crowded and I've still have to get something for my bosses secretary and . . ." Whoa!

The "holiday" season can be pretty hectic and costly. We feel like we have to spend half of our life's savings to appease family or friends with costly gifts.

Starting in October, shops and malls everywhere around the world are decorated with white trees and tinsel. Jolly snowmen compete for space with Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer while bored little elves tend to Santa's reindeer while he is posing with children, eager to tell him about the latest gadget they are expecting for Christmas.

Maybe we should rename the season Giftmas, or Santamas or Frostymas.

Pretty silly isn't it?

Sure . . . and sad.

Unfortunately many people today have forgotten why we celebrate the season and some feel that it is politically

incorrect to mention His name during the holidays. Christ is missing from his own birthday. And when it comes to gifts, just think of the gift He gave to us.

What gift, you ask?

Next time you look at a manger scene, look carefully at the baby Jesus. His arms are spread wide as if he is saying, "It's my birthday but I'm giving a gift to you. It is the gift of love. It is the most wonderful, the most amazing, the most powerful gift in the world. But there is so much of it I want you to share it with everyone you meet."

Wow!

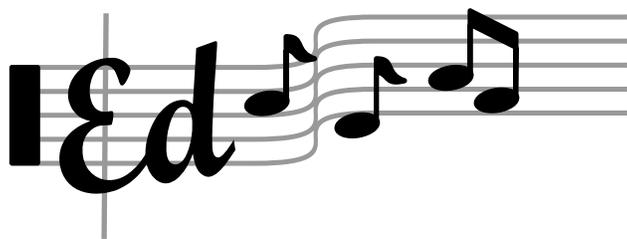
Love! The greatest gift in the world. It doesn't cost a thing and can't be put into a stocking or box. It can be given in a million ways but it's usually given in the form of a smile or a hug or a handshake first. And what a gift it is. It brings joy to both the giver and the receiver and can never be forgotten.

And best of all it is a gift that keeps on giving. It's a catchy thing. That wonderful hug or smile from you will multiply on and on until the whole world could be smiling just because of you.

Gosh! I'm smiling just because I know you.

Merry Christmas.

Musical notes from



Happy New Year!

I have just finished choosing hymns for the Sundays in Advent, the first season of the church year. The lessons comprise a wonderful, terrifying, comforting, exciting collection of end-of-time warnings and repentant calls to God mixed in with assurances of God's love and announcements of God's nearness. We look, with the ancient Hebrews, for the Messiah. We marvel at the coming of Jesus in such a humble

way. We remember the prophecies and connect them with what we recognize as their fulfillment. And we look for the day when Jesus returns.

The music for Advent is just as varied. There are quiet songs, sad songs, songs of hope, and triumphant songs. I have polled the choir as to which Advent hymns are known and loved and which are not. We can enjoy the more familiar hymns together in processing in and out on Sunday mornings, and we can listen during communion to those which may be less familiar.

As we listen and sing, let us prepare for the coming of Jesus. Let the prayer of Charles Wesley be ours as well:

*By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
By thine all-sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne.*

Ed Spencer

Stewardship

Many thanks to all of you who have returned your pledge cards! For those of you who haven't yet completed that task, I hope that you are finding time to give serious and prayerful thought to the gift of your time and talents for the benefit of the work of our parish during the coming year.

On November 1, Rochelle Tucker delivered the message during our combined All Saints service with Zion Baptist Church. In it she touched on the subject of stewardship, saying that, "stewardship is what you DO after you SAY you believe". To me, that was a very succinct and appropriate description of stewardship. I hope you will keep it in your hearts and minds as you consider your gift for the extension of God's kingdom.

Faithfully,
Donna Van Ness
Stewardship Chair

ECW News



Mark your calendar - **ECW Kitchen Clean-Up Day** – Tuesday December 6 @1:30 pm.

General Meeting - Sunday December 11 - following the 11:00 a.m. service.

Morning Chapter - Wednesday December 14, 10:30 a.m. - **Dottie Worth's** home.

ECW Fall Bazaar

Thanks to all who contributed many hours planning prior to and working the day of the ECW Fall Bazaar and to all who attended this annual event. Your efforts made this one of our very successful events. To date our profits have exceeded **\$4000**. The Parish House was decorated beautifully in autumn colors with new tablecloths to compliment the ones with the fruit designs. The bake sale and canned goods tables were overflowing with goodies. And most importantly everyone seemed to enjoy the day!

The winners of the raffle this year are:

First Prize: (*New England Village*) **Selena Johnson**
Second Prize: (*\$100 Gas*) **Leslie Dent**
Third Prize: (*Sunday Buffet for 6*) **David Hopper**
Fourth Prize: (*7-gal. camellia*) **Judy Wall**

Reidsville Outreach Center

October 31, 2005

Dear Bill and members of St. Thomas,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

The gratitude of so many in the Reidsville community goes out to you for your continued contributions to and support of our ministry. The **\$744.00** donation we received from your **Apple Pie sale** is a true blessing, and a shining example of caring "for the least of these" as Jesus commands us to do.

We continue to average over 200 families a week at our weekly food distribution. We are also distributing over \$1000 a month to families in need of help with rent, utilities, and other emergency needs. Your donations go a long way towards making our ministry possible, and we are deeply appreciative.

On a personal note, please know how much I appreciate all you do for the Center - and your friendship.

Please keep the work of the Center in your prayers - and your support. Working together, we can make a difference in Rockingham County.

In Christ,

Dr. William C. Hayes
Director
Reidsville Outreach Center

Volunteers Needed: Outreach Center

The Reidsville Outreach Center is in need of some volunteers. We particularly need one with a pickup truck to help with daily pick ups. We are now making pickups from two major grocery outlets in Reidsville and hope to increase the volume of food that we get from them. We may even be able to add more pickup points in the near future. If you are available and would like to volunteer some time to this worthy endeavor please see **Rev. Oldland** or **Tom Ham** for more details.

Church Signs

Many thanks to **Joanne Piazza** for sharing some Church sign sayings with us. We'll include more in future issues as space permits.

**COME IN AND PRAY TODAY...
BEAT THE CHRISTMAS RUSH!**

Bishop Curry's Visit - Oct. 30th

Photos courtesy of Tom Ham



Episcopal Day School

November at EDS



November has been a great month at EDS! We've had fun learning about the letters "Gg", "Hh" and "Ii". We've also learned the numbers 5, 6, & 7 as well as working on the color brown and the shape triangle. We had a guest speaker on October 15th in celebration of "Recycle Day". A parent, **Lori Thorn**, came to class on October 21st and spoke in celebration of "National Hello Day". We had fun on our Christmas float in the parade. Our theme was "Children Around the World". All the students were dressed in native outfits from several countries including Nigeria, Australia, Guatemala, The United States and others. We had our Thanksgiving luncheon for the students, their parents, and even some of our Sr. Friends were able to attend!!

The playground is still in the process of being installed. Hopefully it will be complete soon. The children are anxious to play on it!

Keep saving those **Box Tops** that are found on **General Mills** items. Remember – they are worth .10 cents each to us. That can really add up. We should receive our first Box Top check in December for \$105. Our current goal is 1,000 Box Tops by February 15th. We also collect **Tyson Project A+ Labels** from their frozen chicken foods and **Campbells Soup Labels**. See the bulletin board outside vestry room for details on what labels are accepted.

If you haven't registered your **Food Lion MVP card** it's not too late! We get a donation for a percentage of sales from all cards registered for our school. It does not effect your MVP savings in any way. There are no special items to purchase. Go to www.Foodlion.com to register or call Edie and she can register your card for you.

Until next month.....

Mrs. Edie & Mrs. Jeanette

Shoppers! 9 Easy Steps to help EDS

1. Logon to "foodlion.com"
2. Click on "fundraising" (lower left of screen)
3. Click on "Register MVP Card"
4. Click on "Select Organization"
5. Select State (NC), City (Reidsville), Organization (Episcopal Day School) and enter
6. Click on "Add MVP Cards"
7. Fill in the blanks. (The only tricky part is your MVP card #. There are 12 numbers, 10 big ones and 2 little ones.)
8. Click on "Next" to review your info.
9. Click on "Finished"

Every time you shop at Food Lion a portion of your dollars spent are donated directly to EDS. What a great way to help out!

- Jim McCloskey

Thanksgiving Dinner

\$5000 Gift to Soup Kitchen



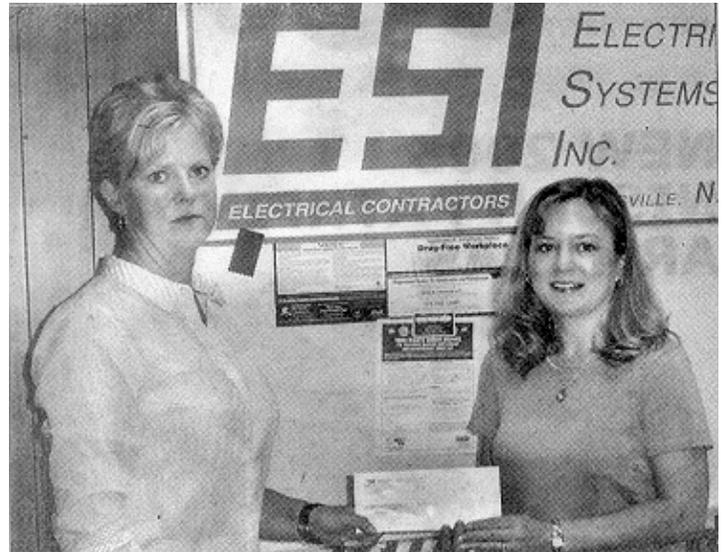
Many thanks to all of the many volunteers who helped to prepare, serve and deliver Thanksgiving dinner this year. Since 1984, St. Thomas', with the help of community volunteers, has prepared Thanksgiving dinner for the community.

This year a record of over **450** meals were served, about 150+ to folks who ate in the Parish House, and another 306 delivered to homes.

The community-wide effort included vegetables donated by the Sanitary Café, and desserts from Holy Infant, First Baptist, First Presbyterian and Woodmont United Methodist churches.

This ministry meets many needs in the community while it also gives the folks who work at the Soup Kitchen and the Outreach Center an opportunity to spend the day at home with their families.

Bill Oldland summed up very well this community effort, "I often hear people ask where God is in the wake of all of the devastation brought on by the hurricanes and other disasters. I tell them God is in the people. He is in their hands and hearts."



The **Electric Systems Charity Committee** has donated **\$5,000** to the **Reidsville Soup Kitchen** this year. The money was raised from contributions made by employees. **Stephanie Trent** (left), executive director of the Reidsville Soup Kitchen, receives the check from **Dawn Stanley**, treasurer of Electric Systems.

Youth Group & Activities

The youth group is continuing to be involved with various activities with other youth groups. For the month of the December our activities will include:

Events for December include...

Date	Time	Place	Event
12/4	4:45 p.m.	Meet at St. Thomas	Christmas Traditions Meet at the church at 4:45 p.m. We will go to St. Francis. Dinner will be at 6:30. Bring \$3.00 to pay for the meal.
12/11	4:45 p.m.	Meet at St. Thomas	Progressive Dinner Meet at the church at 4:45 p.m. We are not sure what time the activity will be over. We will have to call your parents to pick you up on our way home.
12/18	TBA	Meet at St. Thomas	Christmas Party We are just going to have some fun and celebrate the season with our friends at St. Francis. Bring \$3.00 just in case for a meal.
12/25			Christmas day – NO YOUTH GROUP!

Where Two or Three are
Gathered Together...



DATE	SERVICE	ATTENDANCE
October 23	8:30	12
	11:00	48
October 30	10:00	71
<i>Bishop Curry's Visit 1 Baptism, 3 Confirmations</i>		
November 1	7:30 pm	53
<i>Combined service with Zion Baptist</i>		
November 6	8:30	19
	11:00	54
November 13	8:30	5
	11:00	41
<i>Cursillo #94 weekend at BJP</i>		
November 20	10:00	55
<i>Parish Meeting</i>		



To keep your directory up-to-date, please make note of this email address change:

Richard & Joanne Piazza
rjpiazza@bellsouth.net

Please pray for the repose of the soul of

Eugene Watson Hodges

April 5, 1921 ~ November 21, 2005

Thank You!



The **Reidsville Soup Kitchen, Inc.** would like to take this opportunity to express their sincere appreciation for your recent expressions of goodwill.

Support such as yours ensures the continuation of this much needed community project.

Men's Club

Dear Church Family,

The St. Thomas Men's Club has batted around the idea of putting together a church cookbook as a fund-raiser. After discussing it, we realize it would take a lot of effort and recipes. So, this is our first look into the cooking landscape of St. Thomas. We want to see how much interest there is among you all and determine who might be interested in helping. We are thinking the proceeds could go to the building fund. Are you interested? Do you have recipes you are willing to publish? Would you like to help compile the recipes and provide logistical and/or sales support? Please write to me, Tommy Thorn at lthorn@netzero.net or leave a note for me at the church office.



God's peace to you,
Tommy

The **Men's Club** will meet on Thursday December 1 at 6:30 p.m. in the Parish House. The menu will feature :

Lasagna
Salad
Italian bread
Dessert

Pledge Report

	October	Year-to-Date
Total Income	12,732.33	124,805.65
Total Expenses	13,934.29	132,193.11
Difference	-1,201.96	-7,387.46

From the Junior Warden

Dear Fellow St. Thomasans,

Please join me in thanking **Steve Worth** for painting the cabinet for Father Bill's office. It looks great! Steve picked up the brush and made it happen when others of us could not or would not. Thank God for his willingness to get in there and finish the job that the **ECW** started when they commissioned the construction of the cabinet to fill a need in Bill's office (extra shelf space!). Thank you Steve!

Sincerely,
Tommy Thorn
Jr. Warden

St. Thomas Episcopal Church

315 Lindsey Street
Reidsville, NC 27320

Non-Profit Organization
US Postage
PAID
Permit #19
Reidsville, NC

Return Service Requested

December 2005



Inside This Issue...

> Adult Christian Education	2
> Endowment Committee	2
> "It's a Special Season... But" - Don Gwarek	3
> Musical Notes from Ed	3
> Stewardship / ECW News	4
> Reidsville Outreach Center	4
> Bishop Curry's Visit	5
> Episcopal Day School	5
> Outreach News / EYC Youth	6
> Men's Club, Pledge Report, Jr. Warden's Notes	7

Who's Who

CHURCH STAFF:

- Rector - The Rev. Bill Oldland
349-3511
rector@stthomasreidsville.org
- Organist & Choir Director
Ed Spencer
music@stthomasreidsville.org
- Director of Christian Ed. -
Polly Yeago 643-7708
jyeago@worldnet.att.net
- Office Manager & Rector's Secretary
Jenny Wilkins
349-3511
office@stthomasreidsville.org
- Sexton -
Cori Anderson 349-3541
eds@stthomasreidsville.org
- Episcopal Day School Administrator
Shay Johnson

LAY WORKERS:

- Acolyte Coordinator -
Jan Wheless 342-4011
- Youth Leaders -
Gayle Ferguson 342-3991
weswim2@bellsouth.net

Cheri Barrett 361-0793
Barrett8@mindspring.com
- Altar Guild
Suzanne Howard 349-7046
- Layreader & Chalice Bearer
Coordinator
Tom Ham 349-7261
tjhamiii@nuvox.net
- Usher Coordinator -
Steve Worth 349-7538
- Greeters Coordinator -
Freda Watt 342-2305
fwatt@bellsouth.net
- Worship Chair -
Dot Reilly 634-1828
- Pastoral Care Chair -
Tommy Thorn 616-0800
- Outreach Chair -
Tom Balsley 349-3638
cardsfan@triad.rr.com
- Webmaster -
John Bullock 349-9232
john@mygraphicdetails.com

WANTED!!!

INFORMATION - STORIES - PICTURES - IDEAS!
Newsletter Deadline: the 20th of EVERY month
news@stthomasreidsville.org OR Call the church office 349-3511