



LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

Christ is Risen!

Risen Christ, thank you for Easter Sunday in our lives and this 50 day season in all of Christian community! Thank you for bringing so much alive in us. For you beloved, are the bounce in our step, the sparkle in our eyes, the enthusiasm in our spirits, the leaven of our life—our constant companion. Yes, our faith is strong on Easter day. There is no valley so low that together we cannot endure. There is no hill so high that together we cannot climb. We rejoice in you with us these next 50 days! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

I thank each member of our community, friends and visitors who shared our Easter sunrise and Festal Eucharist with us this year. All of our volunteering hearts, hands and spirits working together before our services, all of our volunteers, community prayers, singing and praises during the service, all the food and drink and hospitality shared after the service, created an awesome opportunity for us to share in the Risen Christ.

In God's Love, NL+

St. Thomas' Parish Votes "Yes" For the Next Two Steps

On Sunday February 10th, 17th & 24th the St. Thomas' community was invited to attend meetings to determine whether or not the parish was "of a mind" to move forward in our discernment journey, which included the hiring of a financial (fund-raising) consultant and an architect. Of those who attended the meetings

and voted, the final tally was 68 people who voted "Yes" to move forward; 2 persons voted "No". The financial consultant will guide us in determining how much money we will be able to raise from within the parish membership for a building campaign, which could include a renovation as well as new construction. Our architects will conduct an investigation of our current support systems and building structures as well as render some simple architectural drafts of possibility in response to the discernment meetings. These next two steps will help us determine if St. Thomas' is in a position to move forward with either a renovation and/or a building campaign.

The vestry is thrilled to begin their capitol campaign training with Eleanor Weis, from the Episcopal Church Foundation, on Wednesday, March 26th. Our second training with Eleanor is already scheduled for April 12th. Eleanor has been working for the Episcopal Church Foundation for two years on all phases of church campaigns—and—comes strongly recommended from the bishop's office. Prior to her service with ECF, Eleanor ran the annual fund program for Hospice and before that, she worked as a policy analyst on Capitol Hill. Eleanor is a graduate of Vanderbilt with an M.S. from George Washington. Eleanor is also an Episcopalian.

The vestry spent an all-day-interview/presentation session with three different architectural firms. Each company was provided 1 1/5 hours for their presentation. These presentations were preceded by individual meetings with the clergy and time to visit our campus as well. Eleanor and another ECF member, George Holiman (voluntarily) attended these presentations. We are also thrilled to have invited AURAform as our architect for the next phase of our discernment.

AURAform Inc is an office for architecture located in Old Town Alexandria, Virginia. The firm's Principals, Matthew Jarvis and John Riordan, co-founded the office after both working for multiple design award winning firms, on projects ranging from art galleries to wineries to modern custom homes.

Matthew Jarvis established a reputation among design professionals beginning his career working at the internationally renowned office, Architekturburo Peter Zumthor in Haldenstein, Switzerland. He pursued his vocation working as project architect for six years with David Jameson Architect, a modern architecture office in the



Food purchases made with the unused funds from the 2007 House of Ruth allocation. Over \$245 was spent on need supplies! Photo by Greg DuRoss.

Washington DC Metro Area. John Riordan is a certified architect who has practiced for over a decade at several prominent modern architecture

firms across the country.

The goal of AURAform is to exemplify the philosophy its name suggests, to form the subtle atmosphere that emanates from a place and to imbue it with the visceral elements of light and space. The architects of AURAform share the common belief that Architecture is an emotive expression, perceived through the sieve of human experience. Our tenet is to work closely with the client to develop a unique program that is buildable for the scope and cost defined, with the highest quality of craftsmanship, and to administer that vision to fruition.

News and resources related to our discernment journey are available at growth.stthomasdc.org/.

Alternatives Considered for Park Grass

Most members of St. Thomas' are aware that we have faced increasing challenges with the park over the past several years. It's unfortunate that none of those challenges are caused by the members of our parish; however, as the summer months approach with more homeless people sleeping there, and as dog owners in the neighborhood have become more aggressive about having their animals urinate and defecate on the grass, it's clear something needs to happen.

The fencing may cut down on the actual amount of dog waste our sexton and others have to remove, but some dog owners simply lift the fencing so their animals can get inside. This doesn't address the fact that the fencing is far from esthetically pleasing, and detracts a great deal from the beauty of the park we work so hard to maintain.

In a recent conversation, newer members learned from Betty Stacey, our loyal member who has spent hours working to maintain the park's beauty, that originally the landscaping plans called for what are now the grassy areas of the park to be hardscape. A competition was actually held with landscape students at George Washington University in the mid 1990's, and drew over 20 submissions. They were reviewed by St. Thomas' Building and Grounds Committee, and a final plan was developed. The part of the plan that called for the hardscape area was changed to grass to look more like Washington DC and less "like New York City."

Now however, it's 2008, and the idea of hardscape in the grassy area is looking a lot more attractive to our Building and Grounds committee, as well as our church staff and lay leadership. Pavers could be set in sand, which would provide for drainage and be much less attractive to the neighborhood canines. It would also be far less expensive to install. We'd like to hear from you: Please let us know your thoughts on this proposed change by contacting the

committee at property@stthomasdc.org, or the Vestry Liaison to the committee Barbara Hays at BLHays@aol.com. And many thanks to Betty Stacey for giving us this valuable background on our park which will undoubtedly help us to make a good decision regarding its care and upkeep.

In-House Financial Infrastructure Encourages All of Us to use Pledge Envelopes

Whether your financial gifts to the parish are week-by-week cash donations to the plate or if you have submitted a pledge card and 'promised' the parish an amount for our 2008 year of life together, to support the mission and ministry of the parish, our Treasurer, Finance team and our Accountant ALL STRONGLY ENCOURAGE EACH OF US TO USE OUR PLEDGE ENVELOPES (if you're not donating on-line). Our weekly team of 'counters' spend several hours, Sunday by Sunday in this largely invisible, respectfully quiet ministry, which is essential to the ongoing life of our community. Their work would be so much efficient, as the work of the rest of this spiritually-centered team, if they had the luxury of recording amounts with numbered envelopes. The envelopes can be found on a table in the Guild Room. Thank you, Really!

Episcopal 201 - A Chance To Think About What You Believe

If you're like most Episcopalians, your spiritual life centers on the Eucharist or Holy Communion on Sundays. There we pass on the Tradition of the Christian community, as we follow Jesus' instructions to his first followers to "do this for the remembrance of me." We also hear Scripture read and interpreted for us in preaching.

In addition to Scripture and Tradition, Episcopalians are known for the way we honor and value human Reason - including our ability to think carefully, ask questions, explore and inquire about the meanings of faith., makes available an engaging opportunity to.

The Episcopal 201 series, sponsored by the Education and Formation Committee, isn't a 'beginners class'. It's a chance to go a layer deeper than worship alone to focus on what it means, once you're starting to find yourself regularly at St. Thomas' Parish, to try to 'be the church' - to be a follower of Christ in today's challenging world.

The next five Sunday evenings we will gather for worship at the 5 p.m. Taize service, and then spend an hour from 6-7 p.m. talking together about some of the basic beliefs that lie behind the way we worship and live together as a parish. EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

- **April 6th Incarnation** ~ Did Jesus come to earth on purpose, and why?
- **April 13th Discipleship** - For followers of Christ, Is the point the goal or the journey?
- **April 20th Loving as God Loves** - Friends, strangers, and 'those people'!
- **April 27th Why Tomorrow Matters** - What if it really isn't all about just me?

Episcopal 201 is especially mindful of those who didn't grow up in the Episcopal Church. And in particular it prepares those who plan to be confirmed as an Episcopalian or received into the Episcopal church from another denomination. But mainly it is a chance for anyone in the parish who is serious about their ongoing spiritual formation and intellectual growth as a Christian to gather with others to learn more about who we are, and why we're here at St. Thomas' Parish. For information contact Wayne Floyd at waynefloyd1@verizon.net or 202-445-8521.

Outreach: Servathon 2008, Saturday, May 3, 2008

On Saturday, May 3, 2008, join us for Servathon 2008, presented by Greater DC Cares and Fannie Mae. Connect with thousands of other volunteers in service at DC Public Schools and help make our community a great place for all who live here! Greater DC Cares has declared 2008 our "Volunteer for DC Public Schools" Campaign. The state of the DC Public Schools is a regional issue about which we all can have a massive impact. Together, we will provide the schools with over 11,000 hours of volunteer service...in one marathon day! Our service would include painting, patching, gardening, etc.

To join us, please go to www.servathon.org, click on "Register Now!" and pick our team, "Saint Thomas Episcopal Parish." There is a registration fee of \$20.00. The site also asks that you raise sponsorship funds...although this is not necessary. Our donations (other than our registration fees) are in our hands and feet! At this writing, our school location has not yet been determined, but should be by April 2. If you have any questions, please contact David Swanson at 202-607-8972, or StThomasParishOutreach@yahoo.com, or dswansondc@aol.com. Registration closes on Friday, April 28th.

St. Thomas' Spring Hike to Kennedy Peak on Massanutten Mountain in Virginia

Come join us on Saturday, May 3, 2008 for a nine-mile circuit hike to Massanutten's Kennedy Peak, just west of Shenandoah National Park. We will ascend Stephens trail to the peak's observation tower and great 360-degree view of the surrounding Shenandoah Valley and the Blue Ridge mountains to the East. We will descend Massanutten trail along the mountain ridge back to the trailhead. This trip provides a

spectacular day in the mountains and a wonderful opportunity to get to know fellow parishioners!



The view from Massanutten's
Kennedy Peak

This moderate hike will cover approximately 1,400 vertical feet and take around 5 to 5 ½ hours, including breaks. We will carpool from the church parking lot at 8:00 AM SHARP and drive to the trailhead near the Camp Roosevelt

Recreation Area near Luray, VA.

Bring plenty of water, pack a lunch, and wear appropriate footwear (we may need to hop scotch across small streams at times). Clouds and sprinkles will not deter us! Have a favorite verse or poem on God's earth and the gift of nature? Bring it to share at rest breaks.

Please sign up on the sign-up sheet posted at church (look for it on the bulletin board or door into the Guild Room) and indicate if you can drive! For further information, call Jerry Donahoe at (202) 543-1339.

You're Invited to St. Thomas' Third Annual Gala

When: April 26TH, 7:00 - 10:00 P.M.

Where: Human Rights Campaign (Lobby)

Cost: \$85.00

You will be treated to:

- A sumptuous reception featuring hors d'oeuvres and wine provided by Fresh Start Catering to be enjoyed in the main room or outside patio.
- An evening of entertainment featuring a special guest performer and dancing! A silent auction featuring a number of items of art and other items including a laptop computer!
- A live auction featuring fabulous prizes and vacations.

Please consider making an auction donation. For silent auction items contact Jeff Franke at outjaf@yahoo.com. For live auction items contact Brett Snyder at bsnyder@dl.com.

The Human Rights Campaign is located at 1640 Rhode Island Avenue NW (corner of 17th & Rhode Island), Washington DC. Attire is semi-formal. RSVP by April 14, 2008. RSVP online at www.stthomasdc.org.

For more information, contact Benny Young at benyoung@verizon.net.

Louie Stewart to Chair Pride Festivities

Parishioner, Louie Stewart has agreed to chair the Pride Festivities for St. Thomas' this year. The event has grown to involve so many volunteers and activities and Louie has graciously agreed to coordinate the different and varied events that we will participate in and sponsor.

Parish Bookstore Features Recommendations by the Women of St. Thomas'

This month our Parish Bookstore features reading suggestions from the women of St. Thomas' Parish. We asked parishioners to share the books that have guided their faith and work in the church. The recommendations include spiritual guides, art history, fiction, and more. Check them out online at <http://www.stthomasdc.org/amazon-store.html>.

These books can be borrowed from the library or are available for purchase on Amazon. A portion of the proceeds from any book purchase goes to the parish general fund. A portion of any purchase you make at Amazon will be donated to St. Thomas' Parish if you use this link, <http://tinyurl.com/33wzhm>.

If you would like to make a recommendation for the bookstore email the communications committee at communications@stthomasdc.org.

Submitting Announcements and Articles

Please use the following email addresses to communicate your Parish news....

- **Phoenix articles** should be sent phoenix@stthomasdc.org. The Phoenix is published on the first and fifteen of the month. Articles should be submitted a week before publication.
- **Announcements** for the website and the Sunday Bulletin should be sent to announcements@stthomasdc.org. Announcements received by Wednesday by noon will appear the following Sunday, otherwise, they will appear the week after that. Announcements will be posted to the website within two days. These announcements will also be added to the online parish calendar.

- **Requests for "blast" emails** that are sent to everyone on the Parish mailing list should be submitted to communications@stthomasdc.org. Requests are considered on a case by case basis and will be sent out within a week of receiving the request, if appropriate.



Eleanor Morton mounts the steps of the ruins with her loot from Sunday's Easter Egg Hunt. More Easter photos are available online, http://www.stthomasdc.org/gallery/?g2_itemId=15803

- If you would like to set up a **dedicated email address, email list or have printed signs, fliers, or letters** made, please contact communications@stthomasdc.org. These requests are considered on a case by case basis and handled as quickly as possible by our volunteers.

All other inquiries can also be sent to communications@stthomasdc.org.

LETTER FROM OUR BISHOP, JOHN CHANE

Dear Friends,

I would like to share with you, the following letter from Bishop Chane in response to his discernment concerning Beth O'Callaghan's journey in the Diocese of Washington's ordination process. Beth too is grateful for the support we have given her in this journey.

NL+

Dear Nancy Lee,

Thank you for meeting with me to discuss the future of Beth O'Callaghan, postulant in the Diocese of Washington. As you know, one of the issues that the Commission on Ministry and I are always concerned with is providing a broad and diverse experience in congregational life and ministry for those who are in the ordination process.

The nurturing that the St. Thomas' community has demonstrated toward Beth in raising her up has been a blessing to the Diocese and for that I thank you, the vestry, and all those in the parish who have supported Beth's entrance into the ordination process.

It has become clear, however, that Beth needs a new opportunity for experiencing a life in another congregational setting in order that she may gain a fuller view of the breadth of life, work, mission, and ministry in the Diocese and the larger Church. To fulfill this need, I have directed her to serve the remainder of her postulancy under the guidance of the Rev. Susan Burns, rector of Church of the Redeemer.

Thank you again for the support the parish has shown for Beth in her journey to ordination.

*In Christ's Peace, Power and Love,
The Rt. Rev. John Bryson Chane, D.D.*