



LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

On Sunday morning, October 26, following the AURAFORM presentation of the Sanctuary Concept for St. Thomas', I lightly touched Barbara Hays, our Junior Warden, on the shoulder and said, "Thank you". Barbara responded, "For what—I didn't do anything, I just showed up". Indeed, thank you again Barbara...for "showing up" is so essential to the fullness of our life together as a spiritual community.

In the last couple of weeks the leadership of the parish, have been hosting "Thank you" receptions in the homes of our members. These receptions have been simple gatherings, in homes that folks worked hard to clean up, make tidy to welcome each of you, provide a bit of food and something to drink. It has been an extraordinary reminder how important it is to cross over the threshold into the intimacy of another's home; that it is a vulnerable gesture to welcome people you don't know well into the space you name as 'home'...and it is a place of vulnerability to be welcomed! Without exception, each reception has resulted in the simple and wonderful gift of life, seeing the Christ in one another...celebrating a great thanksgiving between and among us, which the word Eucharist means—thanksgiving.

As a sacramentally centered community, the spiritual journey of our lives is shaped by this simple thanksgiving for all of life.

Even the final words we say at the end of Holy Eucharist, just before "Thanks be to God" at the dismissal, are the following lines:

Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord, Amen.

We all have our pet peeves about things that irritate us during worship. Crumbs floating in the chalice; singing all six verses, incense, no incense, noise before the service starts. Admit it, there's something! One of my pet peeves is about this post-communion prayer—specifically; that often we don't act like it matters very much. We use this time to gather together our belongings in preparation for leaving the church. Find the umbrella. Find the kids. Sometimes we receive communion and then leave before the post-communion prayer, dismissal, or postlude. We need to get to the Guild Room or beat the rush to the restrooms or to brunch.

Still, I'm distracted that we think so little of the post-communion prayer that we let ourselves be sidetracked by other needs, instead of focusing on this final—and crucial—prayer. Why is it so crucial? Because the post-communion prayer intends to express the meaning of the sacrament we have just received together. It reminds us of what we're to expect in our daily life as God's people. This prayer is at the heart of a prayer of petition, in which we present our needs during the week to come, asking that God's will be done.

“Send us... grant us...” Whatever happens to us in the week to come, this prayer reminds us, happens to a people, a community, “accepted as living members” and “fed...with spiritual food.”

- We’re not alone even when no one else is there.
- We’re not “lone rangers” acting in isolation, but God’s people, sent as community to do God’s will in a needy world.

God’s will, we’re reminded, is to be recognized “in peace”—we act for the sake of peace, and for the sake of God’s peaceable kingdom. Peace, however, is not expected always to come easily, for we begin by praying for strength. We go in peace not as God’s weaklings, but strengthened by divine love.

And yet the kind of love that God gives us for strength is a love that calls us into those risky places where God’s will gets done—those scary places where love is most needed, those places that may not even want our love, but to which God is calling us to bring God’s peace. So we pray for courage. The courage not to back down, not to wait until later, not to let somebody else do it, not to fear, whatever cost in involved for us.

- Our praying shapes our belief that we’re sent to serve God in our life—not in mindless obedience, but in love.
- In love that has made us in its image;
- In love that for us and our wholeness—our holiness, our healing, our salvation—lived among us, suffering even death;
- In love more powerful than death, calling us to eternal life.

We’re sent out to be the community that believes in—that trusts our very lives to—the ultimate victory of just this kind of love, whatever the appearances to the contrary. And so we’re sent in love,

- “With gladness,” not in fear, not in smug self-righteousness;
- And with “singleness of heart,” not distracted by all the other demands on our allegiance.

So Barbara, thank you for taking seriously our Post Communion prayer; to each host of our receptions, and those who attended the receptions, thank you for your vulnerable response to our Post Communion prayer, for those about to be confirmed and received, for those who we count on to sing and pray with Sunday by Sunday and make bread, and clean our linens and greet people at our St. Thomas’ threshold, and those who have pledged and those who will pledge...for those who are spreading the word about St. Thomas’ and the meaning of her life to you, Thank you, for your courage and faithfulness, in response to your love of God, and responding to our final little prayer. It does really bother me, when I don’t take this little prayer with all the seriousness it deserves. Thank you for the reminder!

Much love,

Nancy Lee+

A LETTER FROM THE ASSISTANT RECTOR

Leaves are changing color and falling off trees, flowers are fading in gardens waiting to be tilled under for the winter, our stewardship drive is in full swing...yup, it is the middle of autumn and the end of our church calendar year. Just as the trees lose their leaves signalling an end, and the flowers from our gardens disappear, our church calendar is preparing us to enter into Advent and a new church year, which happens in a mere 4 weeks. We have a lot to accomplish in this busy month of November, which contains the heaviest travel day of the year: Thanksgiving. But it is not that busyness I want to address this month. I would like for all of us at St. Thomas' to think about this question: for what are we thankful?

I am thankful for this place where the Spirit's presence is palpable. I am thankful for being granted the privilege of serving as one of your priests. I am thankful for all those lives that have touched my heart so closely and have transformed me by their trust. I am thankful for the generosity of spirit and talent and treasure that imbues this place with a gracious and loving and welcoming hospitality that is a radical and prophetic light to a world that so needs illumination. I am thankful for the imagination and will and energy to dream and envision what St. Thomas' can be to the many generations that will follow us. And I am thankful that God has called me to be a priest among people for whom a love I did not know I was capable of possessing has been allowed to blossom.

Happy Thanksgiving.

John+

Samaritan Ministry Opportunities

Help the Homeless Walkathon – Walk for Samaritan Ministry in Fannie Mae's Help the Homeless Walkathon on the National Mall, November 22, or in a mini-walk at your parish.

Friends of Samaritan Ministry Partner Group – Help the Friends of Samaritan Ministry raise \$100,000 plus a \$20,000 bonus.

Next Step Experience – Hear from homeless people and others at a free, one-hour come-and-see event about how their lives have been changed through Samaritan Ministry's Next Step Program.

Volunteer Jobs – Casework associates, resume writers, front office coordinators and computer mentor volunteers needed in Southeast and Northwest offices.

Needed: New Home for Samaritan Ministry's Northwest Office – Samaritan Ministry needs to relocate from 1516 Hamilton St., NW. Help us find 3,000 to 3,600 square ft. of space in NW or NE, D.C.

Make a Wish Come True - Find out about Samaritan Ministry's wish list and how you can make a wish come true. Find out more, at <http://www.samaritanministry.org> or contact Dianne Lewis at dlewis@samaritanministry.org or 202-722-2280, ext. 319.

The State of Parish Investments

INVESTMENT	BALANCE 10/28/08	YTD RETURN 10/28/08	S&P YTD RETURN 10/28/08
Main Trust Fund	\$2,249,362	(11.16%)	(35.9%)
Capital Reserve Fund	\$ 164,566	(8.21%)	(35.9%)

YTD- Year To Date

S&P- Standard and Poor's Market Index

Given the volatile market in the past few months, the Finance Committee felt it was important to report on the investment balances for St. Thomas. The bad news is that investment balances are down for the year. The good news is that our investment balances for the Main Trust Fund and Capital Reserve Fund are only down 11.1% and 8.2% respectively for the year as of October 28, 2008. This is compared to the Standard and Poor's Market Index of 500 large publicly traded companies in the U.S. which is down 35.9% for the same period.

The main reason our portfolio is down significantly less than the overall market is that a large percentage of our portfolio is in bonds rather than stocks. Thus our exposure to the market decline is much less than the overall stock market. Our investment portfolio is professionally managed by the Investment Management Firm of de Garmo and Kelleher. Our professional advisor is Ellen Fishwick Martin who has been closely monitoring our portfolio during the market turmoil and has assured us that to date we have not been exposed to any significant asset losses due to the failure of financial management firms

in the past months. In good times we rely on our investment advisors to maximize our financial returns within the scope of the parish's financial objectives. But more importantly, we rely on our investment advisors to minimize risk and asset loss in a declining market.

The finance committee and the vestry will continue to monitor St. Thomas's investments and do our best to act in the best financial interest of the parish. If you have any questions regarding our investments please to not hesitate to ask Dan Costello, Treasurer, or Drew Boatner, Finance Chair for additional information.

Do you have questions about your own personal finances? Drew Boatner and Dan Costello are planning to conduct Personal Finance Workshops for the parish in the near future. Stay tuned for more details.

***Help the Homeless Walkathon
November 22, 2008***

Join St. Thomas' Parish and the Samaritan Ministry of Greater Washington in a walk to end homelessness on *November 22, 2008*. Over 12,000 people in the Washington Metro region have no place to call home. The Fannie Mae Help the Homeless Program raises awareness of and funds for local organizations that are working to prevent and end homelessness, with an emphasis on programs like the Next Step Program, that help homeless people return to independent living.

St. Thomas' Parish is encouraging members to walk with Bishop John and Karen Chane under the Samaritan Ministry banner November 22 on the National Mall. Every walker counts! Samaritan Ministry will receive a \$25,000 bonus from Fannie Mae if they recruit 1500 walkers.

Go to:

www.helpthehomelessdc.org/site/TR/Events/General/1339587510pg=team&fr_id=1000&team_id=1311

for more information and to sign up and join the Samaritan Ministry team.

To the Women of St. Thomas'!

Mary, Elizabeth, Mary Magdelene, Mother Theresa, Katherine Jefferts-Schori, Nancy Lee Jose, You...

You're invited to fall celebration of women in the church. We will have lunch, fellowship, and joy on *Sunday, November 16, 2008 at 2pm* at the home of our rector, Rev. Nancy Lee Jose. Bring a female friend

and ideas for what you would like to see St. Thomas Women's Ministry be. Please RSVP to Jessie Brewster (jessie.brewster@gmail.com) by November 11, 2008. We look forward to enjoying this celebration with each of you!

Sincerely,

Jessie Brewster & Amy Whitford
1304 Emerson St., NW
Washington, DC 20011

Conquer the Crash

From Ron Wilson

Robert Prechter published a book in 2002, "Conquer the Crash", which not only warned of the current financial crisis but also explained how to prepare for it. The basis of his insight is based on the Elliott Wave Principle. The Elliott Wave Principle is based on the Wave Principle which is a detailed description of how groups of people behave. It reveals that mass psychology swings from pessimism to optimism and back in a natural sequence, creating specific and measurable patterns. One of the easiest places to see this phenomenon at work is in the financial markets, where changing investor psychology is recorded in the form of price movements. If you can identify repeating patterns in prices, and figure out where in those repeating patterns we are today, then you can predict where we are going in the future. The Elliott Wave Principle is named for its discoverer, Ralph Nelson Elliott. Mr. Elliott completed the bulk of his work on the Principle in the 1930s and 1940s. After he published his book in 2002 he provided a monthly Financial Forecast that gave updates on the coming of the crash.

I have subscribed for several years to his service which provides a monthly forecast. www.ElliottWave.com
<http://www.elliottwave.com>. I consider Robert Prechter brilliant and a unique person as he clearly saw the problems we are now encountering in his socioeconomic analysis and his interpretation of the Elliott Wave Principle. His work may prove helpful for you.

A special congratulations and welcome to Tim Johnson, Aaron Adkins, David Park, and Kristopher Bengtson on their confirmation into the Episcopal Church on Saturday, November 1st, 2008. I do hope everyone has a wonderful Thanksgiving and enjoys the beginning of the holiday season. GM

Updated Parish news can always be found online at www.stthomasdc.org/news/index.html

Send Phoenix articles to phoenix@stthomasdc.org

Send Parish announcements to announcements@stthomasdc.org