



LETTER FROM THE RECTOR

Greetings Friends,

As most of you probably know by now, Wayne and I bought a home in NW Washington this summer. We're about two miles from the parish and less than one mile to Rock Creek Parkway. What we've discovered much to our delight is that this short walk to the Parkway brings miles of rewards! Things such as:

- ❖ In July the temperature was consistently five to seven degrees cooler as soon as you stepped foot onto the Rock Creek trails
- ❖ Lots of shade and majestic trees -- and the birds sing about it
- ❖ People playing and picnicking, unattached to electronic equipment
- ❖ Trails galore to explore, and creeks gushing with surprises if you get down close
- ❖ Frieda's entire persona breaks out into a smile -- as do we! It seems that people hold hands more, play more, gaze at one another and inhale/embrace creation all around them, children run -- make up kidz games -- unafraid -- chock full of young spontaneity

The list is much longer and, with your imagination, you can fill out the picture. We also noticed another 'happening' when we're driving and take the Parkway to get to somewhere else... drivers take turns letting other folks onto the Parkway! There is little or no honking, speeding or tailgating -- even and especially during rush hour!

I don't want to make more of this than there is... or do I? Are people 'nicer' when they're close to nature? Or maybe just nice people go to the park? Is there something about taking time to disconnect from what drives us so that we can connect to something that invites us to remember we're all a part of creation? What I do increasingly realize and cherish, is that getting my hands dirty while gardening, taking joy in watching a young plant grow and mature, weeding and fertilizing with care, picking up trash wherever I take a walk and speaking to a stranger, makes a difference in the world that we share... and, in a small way, is a good difference. I invite each of you, to be the difference this month that you'd like to see!

Love,

Nancy Lee +

Newcomer's Series to Begin October 12th

From 12:30pm to 1:30pm, meeting in the John Johnson Godly Play Room, Nancy Lee Jose and John Dwyer will be hosting a Six-Session Newcomer's Series for all those who would like a 'glimpse' into the Episcopal Church. The Episcopal Media Center has produced a collection of productions aimed at welcoming new people into the Episcopal Church community. Our format will be to view a fifteen to twenty minute video and spend the rest of our time asking questions and/or talking about the video presentation. Our topics of conversation will be:

- Sacraments: Participating in Signs of God's Grace
- What it Means to be Episcopalian
- Baptism: Sacrament of New Birth
- Do This for the Remembrance of Me
- An Introduction to the Book of Common Prayer
- Welcome to the Episcopal Church

Samaritan Ministry Seeks New Offices



Samaritan Ministry of Greater Washington (SMGW) is seeking a new main office for its NW/NE program staff and its management staff beginning in early 2009. The house on Hamilton Street, NW, which has been the main office since 1994, is being sold to help finance Christ Lutheran Church's renovation of its sanctuary and parish hall.

The new space needs to provide office space for eighteen paid and volunteer staff plus a reception area, a program participant computer lab/work area, an eighteen-person conference room, a photocopier/work area, and storage areas (for non-perishable foods, interview clothing, and toiletries for participants and supplies/files for staff), plus kitchen, restroom and parking facilities. It is estimated that the new space needs to be between 3,000 and 3,600 square feet, depending on configuration

Ideally, the space would be:

- Centrally located in NW or NE Washington, convenient to participants, volunteers, staff, other agencies and good public transportation.
- Welcoming, comfortable and pleasant-looking in it's interior and exterior (a large, handicap-accessible house owned by a partner parish has proven to be ideal in the past).
- Available through a space-sharing (possibly shared ministry) agreement involving a monthly payment by SMGW at below-market rates (the current payment for space and utilities is \$3,170 per month) and a charitable contribution from the owner which could be tax deductible.

Every Member Counts, Stewardship 2008 Campaign



As Senior Warden John Carter announced at the 11am service on September 21st, St. Thomas' Parish has embarked on our "Every Member Counts and We're Counting on Every Member" Stewardship campaign. A new feature of this

year's campaign is "Every Member Counts" receptions. There will be twelve such evenings hosted by parishioners from mid-October through late November where small groups can learn about the Parish's needs. Please watch the mail for your invitation.

By now, you should have received your pledge card and "Every Member Counts" brochure in the mail. Please return your completed pledge card in the offering plate or to a member of the Stewardship Committee (John Carter, Mary Hager, Kurt Jacobs, Jaye Lopez and Byron Smalley,) Nancy Lee Jose or John Dwyer by November 23rd. This will enable the Vestry to prepare the 2009 budget in a timely fashion. If you have any questions about Stewardship, please do not hesitate to talk with a member of the Stewardship Committee or contact jaye.lopez@gmail.com directly.

Thank you for your continued commitment to St. Thomas' Parish, a place where wherever you may be on your faith journey, there is room at the table for you.

Why I Give

From Kristin Jones

Hi. I'm Kristin Jones and I've been asked to talk about why I give to St. Thomas'. I found the spiritual journeys of Bishop Dixon and Nancy Lee fascinating and inspiring. They changed my ideas about tithing. However, my story does not include the "T" word. My journey has been more modest.

I came to St. Thomas' when I moved to the Copley Plaza at the other end of Church Street about a quarter century ago. There was a sign on a telephone pole inviting new members to join the St. Thomas' choir; I showed up on a Sunday. Dorothea Dennison told me about the next parish event. She said, "Parish dinner, Tuesday. Bring a cantaloupe." If you knew Dorothea, you know I showed up with a

cantaloupe in hand. There I learned the choir met on Thursdays. I showed up two nights later and I've been here since. At first, I had little money and lots of time. Soon, I was a regular church lady: here three days a week and serving on every other committee plus a couple of tours on the Vestry. I felt I was providing quite a bit of talent, but it still took me a while before I made a pledge.

My contributions were modest. One reality check cropped up when I had a boyfriend who liked my hands. I was getting a manicure every week until I realized the amount I paid for manicures exactly matched how much I was giving to St. Thomas'. A little rebalancing was in order.

Then I got my kids -- with huge support from the people of St. Thomas' as I went through two long, difficult adoptions. Then came the costs of full-time childcare. During those years I had the will, but not the way.

Finally, as school started and daycare costs came down, my pledging became reliable. In fact, last year I almost perfected my approach. Thanks to the prompting of the Stewardship Campaign, I shifted to Electronic Funds Transfer. No more envelopes! It is practically painless.

What's next? As I watch this parish deliberate its future, I have to stop and wonder where we are going. For many years, it has been enough, for me, to come to this wonderful place and be in the middle of this amazing community. But the Discernment Process has broadened my perspective. I have begun to see this parish as a light that perhaps is not shining as brightly in the world as it might.

We have something to share. Nancy Lee has given us a name for it: radical hospitality. It means sharing this wonderful community more broadly. It means pointing out to a larger world that we stand for inclusion, celebration of our strengths and differences, seeing every

individual as special and vitally important. We stand for something that is needed in this world.

So here's what it comes down to for me. We can sit back complacently and enjoy what we have, or we can work together to share our radical hospitality with more of our neighbors, and shine our light to more of the world. That is something that is really worth our time, our talent, and our treasure.

Thank You

From Cynthia Pettigrew

Thanks to all of you at St. Thomas' for your prayers, support, and many kindnesses during my recent surgery and recovery. First of all, I must thank Nancy Lee and John for their prayers, emotional and spiritual support, and never-failing encouragement throughout this ordeal. From the first day that I told them of the need for surgery, they were both totally supportive of whatever I needed to do in order to regain my maximum strength. I cannot thank them enough!

Thank you to Tim who also provided so much emotional support in the days leading up to the surgery. he was especially supportive of my fears of losing my musical abilities and I must thank him again for the opportunity to perform with my daughter.

Thank you to Tim and John for being so willing to step in for much of the administrative work during my absence. They worked together to produce the service leaflets and announcement sheets each week and to help run the day-to-day office needs. Thanks guys!

A huge thank you must go to Bettina Hager for being so willing and able to step in as an office volunteer during August. She was so eager to learn and was an extremely reliable and knowledgeable support person while she was here. It gave me such peace of mind to know that the office was in good hands while I was away. Thanks Bettina!

There are many others I need to thank -- Esteban for his caring support, Nicole for making sure the bills were paid, Jim Mills for helping to answer phones. If I have forgotten someone, I apologize in advance! Let me just say thanks to all of you in the St. Thomas' community for your love and support!

I am slowly but surely getting back to normal. I will be in physical therapy for quite a while. I may not be in the office routinely Monday through Friday, but I am getting here as frequently as possible. I am also using the tools necessary to get work done from home. So many hugs to all of you! Thanks be to God!

St. Thomas' Autumn Hike in the Shenandoah Mountains



From Jerry Donahoe

Come join us on Saturday, November 1st, 2008 for an 8.5 mile circuit hike on the Overall Run and Beecher Ridge trails. This scenic hike passes one of the largest continuous waterfalls in Virginia and provides magnificent views of the Shenandoah and Massanutten Mountains. Add to this the enjoyment of hollows, valley streams, meadows, and fellow parishioners and you have a wonderful day in store in the Shenandoahs. And who knows? You may just catch a glimpse of a black bear in the wild.

This hike will cover approximately 1,965 vertical feet and take around six hours, including lunch and breaks. We will carpool from the church parking lot at 8:00 AM SHARP and drive to the trailhead at the end of VA630, south of Bentonville, VA.

Bring plenty of water, pack a lunch, dress in layers, and wear appropriate hiking boots/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. If time allows, we may reward ourselves with a trip to a winery and dinner on the way back, for those who are interested.

Please sign up on the sheet posted on the door to the Guild Room (coffee hour room) at church and indicate if you can drive! For further information, call Jerry Donahoe at (202) 543-1339.

This is an electronics, cell phone and smoke-free event!



Editor's Note: I want to point out that I was the first to sign up for this hike. I was on the last one to Kennedy Peak and found I was woefully unprepared.. I spent the next day with my feet propped up nursing my scratches and bug bites. But, as I told Jerry last Sunday, I got SO MUCH mileage out of that one afternoon it was worth it! Every time a friend of mine makes the assertion "Greg has never done a butch thing in his life." I bring out the pictures of that hike and recount the story like I'm Marlon Brando in "Apocalypse Now." Trust me, it's TOTALLY worth it -- if not to enjoy nature, then just to get your friends off your back... just really do make sure you bring enough water!

Easy Bake Oven Users Read On...

From Dennis Hobb

You've probably noticed that for quite a while now we've had home-baked bread for Eucharist. What you probably don't know is that it's very

easy to make. In fact, it only takes an hour and fifteen minutes to make enough bread for two Sundays. The bread we use at St. Thomas' has six ingredients: whole wheat flour, oil, honey, water, baking powder and salt. the only unusual implements required are a cookie sheet and a rolling pin. This could almost be done in an easy bake over, but the big one in your kitchen will work just fine.

I'll be bringing the recipe to church for the next few weeks and will be gently recruiting people who would like to try their hand at this. It's easy, it's actually fun, and it's a great way to contribute to the life of the congregation without a long-term commitment.

Save the Dates!

The Inclusion Committee will be co-hosting an interfaith potluck with the GLBT group from the National City Christian Church (NCCC) on Saturday, October 18th, at 6pm. The event will take place at NCCC, which is located on Thomas Circle (use the 14th street entrance). All St. Thomas' members are invited to attend -- the GLBT issue is an area of common interest that should help begin to build this interfaith bridge. Please email Phillip Kronstein at phillip.kronstein@gmail.com or Jessie Brewster at jessie.brewster@gmail.com for more information.

FALL PUMPKIN CARVING PARTY!!

When: Saturday, October 25th, from 2-6pm

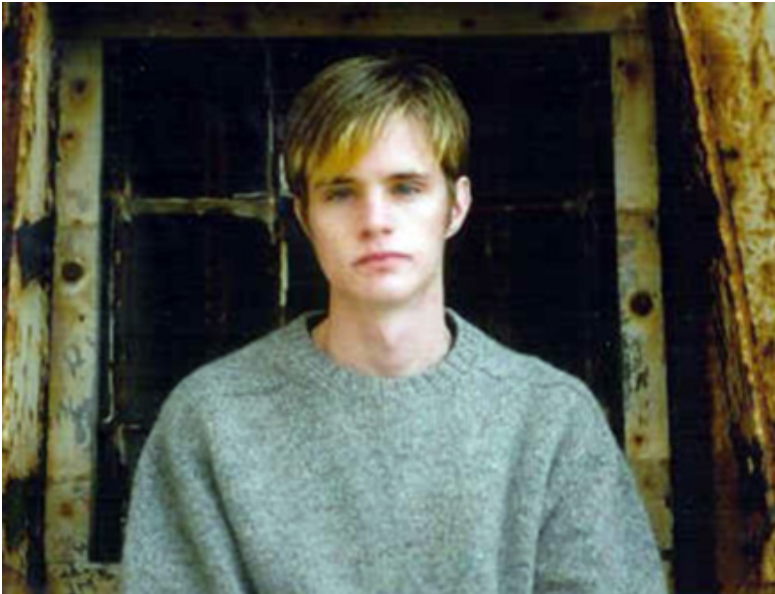
Who: Brought to you by the Inclusion Committee

Where: The home of Jaye Lopez and Anne Van Soest

Why: Pumpkins don't carve themselves!

Look for an email invitation in the next couple of weeks.

Matthew Shepard



From Louie Stewart

October 12th, 2008, marks the tenth anniversary of the death of Matthew Shepard, a 21-year old Wyoming student, who died as the result of a vicious attack against his person based on the fact that he was gay. Please remember Matthew, his family and friends in your prayers on this anniversary of his death. Remember all of those who live in fear because of their sexual orientation in the small towns across our country.

**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**