

THE GOOD NEWS LETTER

Vol. 8 No. 11

Serving St. David's & St. John's Episcopal Churches

December 2002

Reflections of Fr. David	Page 2
Rev. Carol's message	Page 3
The Healing Corner	Page 5
Cookie Walk and other ECW news	Page 6

St. David's

Fr. David R. Pike, Rector, Church Box 103
Edith Cole, Secretary, Box 26
Sue Gabel, Administrative Assistant
Dr. Timothy Flynn, Music Director

Vestry

John Strickler, Sr. Warden, Box 134
Bill Fleener, Jr., Jr. Warden, Box 37
Dave Byers, Treasurer, Box 15
Ron Schavey, Box 44
Scott Foster, Box 121
Dawn Sonnenberg, Box 138
Gail Donovan, Box 17
Debbie Davis, Box 28
Tom George, Box 119
John Post, Box 87
Jerry Williams, Box 115
Craig Leinbach, Box 27
Amber Matthews, Clerk to the Vestry

St. John's

Rev. Carol A. Spangenberg, Rector
Karen Gin, Secretary

Vestry

Ted Dotts, Senior Warden
William Gin, Junior Warden
Deborah Walker, Secretary
Mary Stafford
Nina Robinson
Cara Stapor
Sandra Garrison
Stephen Stofflet
Alma Stahl
Brett McRae
Karen Steiner

Newsletter

Ric Sorrell, e-mail: ric@sorrell-family.net, Box 140

St. David's Episcopal Church

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Service Schedule

Sunday: 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.
Wednesday 6:30 p.m.
Friday 7:00 a.m.

St. John's Episcopal Church

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Charlotte, MI 48813
Telephone: 517-543-4430
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517-327-1839 (Rev. Carol)
E-mail: stjohsepiscopalchurch201@yahoo.com
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Service Schedule

Sunday: 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.
Wednesday 6:30 p.m.

Reflections of Father David

Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit. One God, now and for ever. Amen.

The Book of Common Prayer, page 211

We know about the need for preparations involving any great trip or large project. No one in their right mind would undertake a round-the-world trip without first exploring what places to visit, what clothing to take, how much money to have on hand, what travel arrangements to make. The same holds true for a big project. We always make sure we have the proper tools and materials, a clear understanding of what we want to accomplish, and the time and energy to complete the project. It therefore comes as no surprise that the spiritual aspects of our lives require just as much careful planning and preparation as our secular activities. This is the heart of Advent.

The season of Advent is all about you and me getting ready for two life-changing events. First, Advent calls us to prepare for the birth of the Christ. Never in the course of human history has one birth changed so many lives in such profound ways. For generations, the Hebrew people looked for the coming of the Messiah, the one who would restore and set right all things. They read and studied, talked and prayed, debated and dreamed. Because they had such preconceived ideas, when the Messiah came they could not recognize him.

Advent is a time for us to take stock and make sure that our expectations of the Messiah are true to what the prophets and scripture say. It is so

easy for us to distort the message and romanticize reality, especially as we move further and further from the actual event. Advent is our reality check, to be sure we understand what the birth of Christ is really all about. We need to know what we are getting ready to celebrate.

Secondly, Advent calls us to prepare for the final return of the risen Christ. You could ask a dozen religious leaders what the “Second Coming of Christ” is going to be like, and without a doubt you would end up with a dozen different interpretations. Scripture gives us an idea, but there is much, including when this event will take place, that we simply don’t know. What we do know is that it will happen at an unexpected time, it will affect all of us, and we need to be ready. Advent is our reminder that we must work at being ever vigilant so we are not caught unprepared.

Use these quiet days to heed the prophets’ warnings and calls to repentance. Focus on what is truly important in life and willingly discard those things that draw us away from God.

May God always richly bless and keep you.

With deepest affection,
Fr. David

St. David's Christmas Services

Christmas Eve Day: 7:00 p.m. the Children's service with music and Eucharist

Christmas Eve Night: 10:30 p.m. Pre-Christmas Eve music

Christmas Eve Night: 11:00 p.m. Candlelight Choral Service with Eucharist

Christmas Day: 10:30 a.m. Eucharist

Reverend Carol's message

Christmas Is Wonderful

I have been doing a lot of thinking lately about the significance of Christmas in our lives and I have come to the conclusion that it has become a season of great celebration for two reasons. One reason is to sell stuff, to buy stuff, wrap stuff, and then to clean up the stuff after we open it. It has become a time when we call people we don't call the rest of the year or haven't written to since last Christmas or we haven't wanted to hear from since last Christmas. The other reason is to celebrate the reason we have Christmas in the first place.

Christianity is the only religion in the known history of civilization that sent a true human being to be among us and was still God. The gods of other religions have had prophets, speakers, and teachers, but none were willing or able to sacrifice

a person of God in a human form to bear the pain of the death in order to give us humans a second chance so that we may live forever with our God. No other god promises eternal life nor do they promise forgiveness with no strings attached.

We are given this gift on Christmas, we are given the real human to have a real connection too, and all we have to do is to say thank you and believe. Let's give ourselves a Christmas gift this year and say "thank you God" then let our faith grow and grow, as we become more joyous in this holy season of Christmas.

Merry Christmas to you all,
Carol † and Dave

St. John's Christmas Services

Christmas Eve Day: 4:00 p.m. the Children's service with music and Eucharist

Christmas Eve Night: 10:30 p.m. Pre-Christmas Eve music

Christmas Eve Night: 11:00 p.m. Candlelight Choral Service with Eucharist

NO SERVICES ON CHRISTMAS DAY

NO Christian Education until school starts up in the new year.

Christmas Party at the Spangenberg's at 6:30 on December 13th

1612 Stoney Point

Lansing

321-0512

The Church mouse heard ...

Well, my mind must have been on vacation because I had **Russ** and **Pat Vine** in the wrong state. Actually, they spent two weeks in Tennessee and North Carolina. During that time they visited with **Laurie** and **Rosemary Mallett**. Laurie was responsible for the first pipe organ here at St. David's.

Patrick Jacobs is currently part of the Varsity Traveling Bowling Team at Grand Ledge High School. He is doing very well and is a valuable member of the team. **Carol Abbott** continues to represent St. David's on the Episcopal Capitol Area Convocation. **Eleanor Bishop** is home from medical treatment on her spine. Please keep her in your prayers. **Clarence Burgess** is recovering nicely from his earlier surgery. Mary Hill, mother of **Mary Jane Buzzie** will be spending the winter here in Lansing. Be sure to introduce yourself to Mary. Keep **Gail Donovan** in your prayers as her mother died last week in Port Huron. Also keep in your prayers **John Strickler** as his mother **Kay** died two weeks ago. **Lou Williams** requests your prayers as her 23 year old great-nephew died quite suddenly. Finally, **Lisa Ward** thanks everyone for their prayers and support during her father-in-laws illness and death.

Over Thanksgiving **Fr. David**, **Nancy** and the children went up to Charlevoix to be with all of Nancy's family. They had a great time. **Scott** and **Gayle Foster** went south to be with their family. **John** and **Barb Post** spent Thanksgiving in Midland with their son and his family. **Anita Frohnappel** continues to slowly recover from her illness earlier this summer. **Jerri Hoffman** is doing better and recovering from her recent illness. **Mike** and **Patricia Johnson** are the proud grandparents of a new grandson. This is a first child for their son **Jeff** who lives in Plainwell near Kalamazoo. **Don** and **Sally Lawrence** just had a nice visit with their son **Patrick** who lives with his family in Arizona. **Craig** and **Abby Leinbach** had a daughter, **Sheridan Hope** Leinbach who was born Saturday, December 7th at noon.

Amber Matthews has agreed to become the Clerk of the Vestry. **Rita Stanton** is recovering from eye surgery. **Rhoda** and **Jim Swift** continue to get stronger after their health problems. The Altar Guild had a wonderful meeting and brunch at the home of **Fay Gilman** and **Shirley** and **Bob Nostrant**. Helping with the food and cleanup were **Charla-Fay Smith** and her daughters **Shirley-Anne** and **Katie Rose**.

Dick and **Norma Hammond** are at their winter

St. David's December Birthdays

1	Sue Kohler
2	Loretta Kappler
2	Michael Sorrell
4	Jennifer Galvin
4	John Sistanich
7	Betty Jean Frost
7	Anna Strickler
8	Jim Thurston
11	Bill Paff
12	Shelly Albert
12	Laura Sistanich
13	Gordon Smith
13	Sara McNeil
13	Megan Coté
14	Carolyn Jacobs
14	Dana McNeil
18	Steve Freeman
20	Carlene Howrani
23	Genevieve Ward
25	Bill Hawes
25	Carole Leigh
28	Justin Brabon
29	Tom George

December Anniversaries

10	Clarence & Lucille Burgess
24	Philip & Margaret Smithka
30	Don & Andrea Flitton

home in St. Augustine, FL. They left Lansing on Nov 6th and will return in May, 2003. They are looking forward to **Karen**, **Rob** and grandchildren **Bridgette** and **Nickolas** visiting over the Christmas, New Year holidays. **Pat** and **Mike Johnson**, **Larry** and **Wink Ewing** and Dick's sister and brother-in-law **Sheryl** and **Dave Berry** will be coming down to St. Augustine around the middle of January to spend the remainder of the winter.

Have a wonderful Advent and on Christmas Eve don't forget to leave a small snack out for my mouse family and friends!

The Healing Corner

By Barb Post

In 1968 a friend loaned a book to me named "The Healing Light," written by Agnes Sanford. As I digested the message in the book, I became aware for the first time that ordinary people, such as myself, could pray for others. So, I started to experiment with this idea, and when I saw a person in need, I would pray silently for the person. And when I visited people in the hospital, again, I would pray silently for their healing. Then one day in my private prayers, I asked the Lord to let me know when it would be okay for me to pray out loud for others. I didn't have to wait long for that prayer to be answered. Soon a member of St. David's telephoned me and said, "Jean is in the hospital. You know her quite well--would you be willing to visit her?" So off I went, and as I visited with her I also prayed silently for her healing. Suddenly a lady's voice came from the other side of the curtain that separated my friend's bed from the other bed in the room saying, "Pardon me, but would you pray for me?" What could I do? I went and prayed for her. That was the first time I ever prayed out loud for anyone in their presence. What an answer to prayer! (As it turned out, John and I ministered to this lady for several weeks as she recovered in the hospital from multiple injuries obtained in an automobile accident. She was from out of town and didn't have any family or friends in the Lansing area.)

From that day -- when I became willing to open my mouth and pray with others -- I have seen many people healed of various problems! (I'm now convinced that God was willing for me to pray out loud for others all along--it was just that prior to that time, I didn't realize it was His will for me to do so.) And in the process, I've learned that God wants us all to be whole persons, and that if there is anything hurting us in any place He is willing to heal us.

We are fortunate at St. David's because for several years we have had Prayer Ministers available to pray following the Sunday services for those with special needs. And, more recently, The Order of St. Luke the Physician has been providing prayer ministry once a month at the time of communion during our services. As one of those who prays with others at those times, I can assure you that the Prayer Ministers are willing to

pray for you about anything that is of concern to you. You may want to pray for yourself, or for a friend or loved one, or for a situation at work, etc., etc. I can also assure you that each request is held in confidence by the Prayer Ministers. The procedure is simple--just go to the altar rail, state your concern(s), and the Prayer Ministers will pray for you in the name of Jesus. We have an awesome God who is always willing to touch us with His healing love! In Matthew's gospel, we read, "Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people." Jesus still heals today--throughout the world, in Lansing, and at St. David's! Praise the Lord!! ✠

Watermen's Corner

By Jim Thurston

On Tuesday, December 3, 2002 at 7:00 p.m., Duane Vernon of the Greater Lansing Credit Bureau was our guest speaker as he discussed credit reports and other credit bureau related items. He also talked about MSU sporting events that he is heavily involved with. Everyone had a great time and we invite all of you to join us for our next event.

I wish to thank everyone involved with our November Veterans Day celebration held at St. David's. It was a wonderful event and well attended. It looks like this could be a yearly event. I thank all who shared and for the great planning that Francis Jacobs did with the event.

Remember the Job Jar and have a wonderful and safe holiday. ✠

Crop Walk wrap-up

By Maria Leiby

We raised over \$2200 through the CROP WALK to feed the hungry both at home and abroad.

Thanks again!

St. David's Cookie Walk

By Rose McNab

The Cookie Walk will be Sunday, December 15th right after the 10:30 Eucharist. The ladies will meet on Monday night, December 9th to decorate the coffee cans for the sale. Please bring your shears, all one and two pound coffee cans, gift wrapping and glue. There will be a short business discussion as we work. We will need to have lots of cookies for the sale, so please be generous and make big batches of cookies. The money we make on the Cookie Walk will be used to make a happier Christmas for some families and the children at St. Vincent's Home. ☩

ECW Make and Take

By Rose McNab

The ECW Make and Take Party held Monday night November 18th was well attended and a good time was had by all. Andrea Flitton was the hostess and Margaret Yeager was our instructor. She showed us how to make Christmas cards, boxes for gift giving and a Snowman Soup package. This was a clever poem on a zip lock plastic bag containing cocoa mix and marshmallows with directions for making hot cocoa. At one table the group made the boxes and when finished, moved to another table to make the cards, and then the group exchanged tables to make the Snowman Soup. There was much fellowship, fun and laughter as we enjoyed our workmanship and admired the handiwork of the others persons at the table. There was coffee, hot cider and delicious food to end the evening. Those who were unable to attend missed a good time and it is hoped that they will be there next year when we have another Make and Take Party. ☩

St. David's Christian Ed notes

By Debbie Davis

The Christmas Program is well underway. The children are all very excited about the program this year to be held on Christmas Eve at the 7:00 p.m. service.

Thank you everyone for your support in the "Operation Christmas Child." We donated 51 filled gift-wrapped shoeboxes.

The "2003 Calendar" and the "Holiday Cookies," fund raisers was a huge success, thank you for all your support. These funds are to help the children in many ways, going to summer camp, the winter retreat, helping those who need help with school supplies, school pictures, just to name a few.

The High School students are putting on a fund raiser in January 2003. The theme is "The 1950's." The menu, set-up and dress, will be of the 50's. More information will be forthcoming. This is an event you don't want to miss! If you think you just might have saved an outfit from the past, best get it out, put it on and have fun!!

January 23, 2003, we are planning to go to Edru Skating Rink in Holt. Edru has "Christian Skating" every fourth Thursday of each month, with contemporary music. It is from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Grades First through High School are welcome to go for a fun filled evening. Parents, you are more than welcome to skate as well!!!! More information and registration forms will be handed out the first of January 2003. ☩

Capital Area Council news

By Carol Abbott

EMMSU (Episcopal Ministry at Michigan State University) now has a full time chaplain, the Rev. Sean Ferrell. It is hoped that the ministry will expand and reach more students. The services are held at All Saints at 5:00 p.m. on Sundays with a dinner afterward. If anyone has students at MSU, this may be a group that would interest them.

All Saints will be having an Adult Education class studying the Living in the Way course following the "Celebration of Disciplines" by Richard Foster. This class will meet for one year, with July and August off, beginning January 8, 2003 and ending at Easter time 2004. If you are interested in this, please call All Saints at 351-7160.

Watch for our joint ad with the area's Episcopal churches at Christmas. ☩

Notes from St. David's library

Who am I?

A life-long Episcopalian. Moved a lot. Attended and was member of 19 different churches, (one Methodist), and that doesn't include the 17 years of also worshipping at Roman Catholic Churches every Sunday, 8 different states, many visits to others Jewish, Russian Orthodox, Non-denominational ones, Pentacostal, etc. and yes, I have been involved in group Bible studies for over 40 years, attended a few seminary classes. And yes, I have met & known a passel(that word is not in the dictionary or the thesaurus, I can't spell it but I know it's a good word or a Southern colloquialism or I made it up, don't know) of folk, been instructed by many fine scholars, a few heretics and straggled to know the God of our Fathers as long as memory permits. I also have adult children, three of whom are in advanced religious study, and a loving, awesome, wonderful husband.

Do I feel smug? I do not. Do I feel more blessed? I do not. But doggonnit! I know that the power of the written word through Saints, ancient and contemporary, can assist us and move us closer to our God.

So READ. I have yet to hear from one single St. David's soul about reading. (I take that back. Someone identified me this past week. 11/15/02). Also *Glory Halleluiah*, I found lots of little bits of paper naming books in the card file. Yippee!

Here are the Book- Notes from the Library. (St. David's that is.)

First, let me correct an error from last month. The book When Religion Becomes Evil was not written by Charles Stanley (who is a wonderful Christian author), but by a new person Charles *Kimball*, a Middle East scholar and ordained clergyman.

Second, A Blessed Advent and Christmas to all.

Third - Since it is the season it is, and most folks I know feel overwhelmed, I recommend no specific book. Instead, I ask each one to pick up one devotional book or pamphlet and read every, day. A couple of beauties are Thomas A'Kemphis (sic) Imitation of Christ and Brother Lawrence, The Practice of the Presence of God. Gift God with time each day and may

you be richly blessed with His Peace, His Presence and a new joy this Christmas, free from the material cares of the season, and a deeper joy in the Reality of God In and among us. PAX

THE PHANTOM LIBRARIAN

Appointment by Bishop Gepert

Episcopal News Service©

The Rev. William Spaid, rector of St. Martin's Church in Kalamazoo, will become the Canon to the Ordinary effective January 1, 2003.

In an announcement made to the Diocese recently, Bishop Robert Gepert described the new staff position as one which would "provide the Bishop with a calm, non-anxious, prayerful, priestly presence that will challenge him and lead to thoughtful reflection and discernment."

According to the announcement by Bishop Gepert the Canon to the Ordinary, an assistant to the Bishop, "will be a resource to the Bishop to help shape diocesan community, set agenda for the Executive Council, help the Bishop prepare for meetings, sit in on meetings and keep records, assist with correspondence, provide follow-up to individuals after meeting with the Bishop, teach and preach on the Bishop's behalf, and assist with deanery Bible studies."

The Bishop's announcement also noted: "This ministry is further described as mentoring the ordination process, working with the Commission on Ministry, licensing of clergy and lay ministry, managing misconduct and disciplinary cases, working collegially with diocesan staff, commissions and committees, supervising and supporting the work of the Diocesan Secretary, Communications/Technical Support Staff, planning Convention, and other duties as assigned."

Fr. Spaid noted he was honored by the Bishop's appointment but a little overwhelmed by the scope of the work. He looks forward to the challenge of this specialized ministry.

Bishop Gepert asks you to remember Bill as well as the current diocesan staff as they change and move into the future. ☩

St. David's Episcopal Church
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May you all have a safe holiday!

*Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year!!*