

THE GOOD NEWS LETTER

Vol. 9 No. 1

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

January 2003

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St. David's

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Sue Gabel, Administrative Assistant
Dr. Timothy Flynn, Music Director

Vestry

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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
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Newsletter

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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.

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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

And the shepherds returned, (to their fields and flocks) glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Luke 2:20

Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

Matthew 2:11b-12

Please take a moment and think of where we would be without the season of Epiphany. God, in an incredible act of selfless love, gave the world a wonderful gift, His Son. The problem was that His Son was born in a small, obscure town far away from the human power-center of the time. Very few people knew what was going on.

There was no 6:00 p.m. news coverage to hype the arrival of Jesus. There were no banner headlines on the morning papers. Billboards didn't sprout across the land proclaiming the birth of Jesus. It was a very quiet, intimate event which forever changed the lives of a young girl named Mary and her new husband, Joseph.

The angels knew it and they told the shepherds. The shepherds left their flocks of sheep and sought out this wonderful event. Afterwards, they returned to their flocks and told the news to everyone they met. Some believed the shepherds, and some did not.

Then the strange, exotic men from the east appeared. Wonderful mystics who studied the stars, read the books of wisdom, and knew in their hearts that this was the long awaited savior of the world. They arrived bringing their rare and

unusual gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. After worshipping the Child, they returned to their homes spreading the news of this wondrous birth. Again, some believed the story of the wise men, others did not.

See how simple the pattern is? People come and see for themselves. Then they go and share their experience with others. Some believe, some do not. Those who do believe, go, and see for themselves. Then they go and tell others what they have experienced. Once more, some believe and others do not. And so the pattern continues.

We have come and seen the birth of the Christ firsthand. That was our Christmas experience. Now, like the shepherds, like the wise men, like those in each generation, we must go out and share what we have seen and experienced with those we meet. It is our obligation to follow the star and spread the news of Christ's birth. There is a pattern, there are footsteps for us to follow. We will not journey alone. Let us begin.

With deepest affection,

Fr. David

St. David's Confirmation Class

In the next couple of weeks, Fr. David will be starting a Confirmation Class for any high school student who will be 16 years old by the first of June. If you have a student who needs to be confirmed, please let Fr. David know so he can be sure to have each families input on when and at what time the class will be held.

Reverend Carol's message

What is Epiphany?

When you read this, we will be in the Season of Epiphany. Next to Easter, Epiphany is the second oldest season of the Church year. This season was celebrated in Asia Minor and in Egypt as early as the 2nd. Century. When Epiphany first began it celebrated both the birth and baptism of Jesus and fell on Jan 6th. January 6th was chosen as Epiphany Day because it was the winter solstice, which was a pagan festival celebrating the birthday of the sun god.

In 331 B.C. the winter solstice was moved to Dec. 25th, and so the dates were separated, the birth on December 25 and the baptism on the 6th of January. And the theme of Epiphany was divided between the coming of the Magi, or the Three Wise Men, the representation of all coming to the child of God, and the light of God now in the world for all to have and shine in.

The word Epiphany means "manifestation" or the light shines in the darkness God sends his son to reveal the light of life into this world. We might hear Epiphany referred to as the Feast of Manifestation, Feast of Lights, Feast of the Appearing of Christ, Feast of the Three Kings, or the Twelfth Night. But what ever name we call it, we are celebrating the light of Christ, in our lives.

And this light will not disappear nor will it become dull or faint, it is a light that will shine and beam as brightly as we allow our Lord into our hearts, our minds and our actions.

When we come to the season of Epiphany we never know how many weeks this season will be; the designers of our Church year call this time the "accordion" season. The number of weeks Epiphany lasts depends on the date of Easter for that year. If Easter comes early, the Epiphany season is short; if it is late, the season is longer.

However, no matter how long or short this season is, it is one of great importance, for it reminds us of the light and person of Jesus Christ. And it is in this reality that we live and have our faith confirmed. And it is in this reality that we grow to know Christ in our lives as a living being within our own being. Let us all allow this light to glow within us and let the light of Christ shine through our words and actions.

May all of you have a Blessed New Year,

Rev. Carol

St. David's ECW Meeting

The ECW will meet on Monday, January 13, at 7:00 p.m. to plan the schedule for this new year. We will host a meeting for the Church Women United in March. This meeting will be held in the morning and we will provide a light breakfast, including coffee, juice, muffins, etc. We will need helpers to prepare for this meeting. All members of St. David's are invited to join us to plan activities and to make suggestions on how we might interest more members to come to the meetings.

The Church mouse heard ...

As always, the church looked beautiful for Christmas. People worked hard at getting everything ready and lots of people (and church mice) really appreciated and enjoyed the labor of others. It was so nice to look out the Narthex doors after the service and see the luminaria glowing softly in the fresh snow. **Gary Mugnolo, Bill Strong, Jennifer** and **Andrew Pike**, and **Nick** and **Ellie Strong** did a great job of getting them out and lighted. **Tom George** took care of the wonderful candles on the church window ledges. We were able to have extra poinsettias this year thanks to **Nan Strickler** driving down to Charlotte to pick them up. Nan and **Debbie Davis** and the rest of the Sunday School Teachers worked hard with the students in putting together a Christmas Pageant around the song The 12 Days of Christmas. It was really cute! **Dr. Tim** and the choir did a wonderful job of the Christmas music. I think the angels came down and sang with them, it sounded so good. **Sue** and **Edith** did a great job in the office getting special bulletins out for regular services, extra services, and funerals. Speaking of the office staff, if you have not picked up your offering envelopes yet, they are waiting for you in the Narthex. Please pick them up so they don't have to be mailed to your home. And speaking of the Narthex, have you noticed the clean carpets. They were cleaned during Christmas break and they really look nice.

Dave and **Janie Byers** are back from two weeks in California. No word yet on a new grandchild. **Ken** and **Edith Cole** and **Harold** and **Betty Payne** enjoyed having **Chris** and **Beth** and the grandchildren with them this year. The Paynes son, **Bill**, and his children were up as well. The news about the unexpected death of **Ray McNab** was the only sad spot in a grand Christmas season. Ray's Memorial Service was perfect and fit Ray perfectly. Please continue to keep **Rose** in your prayers. **Lou Williams** is back from spending Christmas with her children and plans are well underway for her new home in the south. Lou plans on moving later this spring. Now that Christmas and New Years are over, I think I will

St. David's January Birthdays

2	John Runcie
6	Alex Lynaugh
7	Jim Ellis
7	Diane Brabon
10	Brian Paff
13	Gloria Bastian
13	Jeff Albert
14	Pearl Brooks
14	Nathan Martzke
14	Andrew Leigh
17	Mary Buzzie
18	Mickey Jarous
19	Barb Post
20	Nan Strickler
21	Bill Dods
21	Edith Cole
21	Amanda Wils
23	Faris Howrani
23	Trey Fleener
24	Charles Henley
25	Patrick Jacobs
27	Pauline Solomon
28	Glynn Warren
28	KaCey Chapin

January Anniversaries

5	Make & Pat Johnson
19	John Winters & Carol Abbott

go south where it is warmer. I will be in good company as many of our members are already there!! If I do, I will drop the church a postcard. Happy 2003!!

The Sunday School teacher asked, "Now, Johnny, tell me, do you say prayers before eating?"

"No, ma'am," he replied, "We don't have to. My mom's a good cook!"

News from Carol's Corner

Dave and I want to thank everyone for the wonderful greetings, gifts and cards we received during the Christmas season. We so appreciate everything we are given and are very blessed to be in St. John's Church family. Thank you for all who made the Christmas Season so wonderful, with great music, beautiful decorations, and a great response from our young people and their Christmas pageant.

Please remember that the Annual Meeting will be January 26th after the 10:30 a.m. service. We meet so that as a family we can determine the mechanics and business of the church, and to determine what direction we desire to go. We meet so that we can be a family and make decisions that are important to all. Please mark your calendars and please make this a priority in your plans for the month of January. I really need all of you to come and join in this important meeting.

The Annual Meeting will be a pot luck, the meat, drink and dishes will be provided, and could A-M bring deserts, and N-Z bring rolls, veggies, and hot dishes.

Just a reminder: if the Charlotte Schools do not have school then Christian Education on Wednesdays will be cancelled as well.

We still need persons who are interested in being in the Choir. Please let Vickie, our organist, know if you are interested. NO prior experience needed.

If anyone would like to be on the vestry please let the Rector know. We need to know by the 19th of January.

We will be having an adult and young people chime choir. If you are interested, please let Katie Gibson know. You need only have the will -- everything else will be taught to you!

Notes from St. David's library

Dancing At My Funeral by Maxie Dunnam (1973).

This is a book that grows on you in the reading. Maxie says, " I wanted to systematize the work of God. In the personal area, I felt quite capable of molding my own channel for the spirit to flow through, and I would let it flow in my chosen way and at my chosen time. " (p.37)

"Freedom through surrender seems a paradox, but it should not appear so strange to us. Death and resurrection are written into the whole scheme of nature and life... There is life after birth! (p.41)

Being real, choosing life is what Maxie is discussing. Unfortunately, "staff kill the soul of the gospel and deaden the dynamic of the spirit-life when we confuse Christianity with a decent, safe, and comfortable life which the church sometimes mistakenly labels "Christian". Too many children are brought up in a sterile Christianity-culture... when what they see is middle-class morality tied up with a ribbon of mistaken piety." (p.47)

"Lovely dangers" are ahead in reading this book.

THE PHANTOM LIBRARIAN

The Healing Corner

By V. Dianne Ulibarri

Prior to discussing the healing power of forgiveness, the words "forgive" and "condone" need to be clarified. According to Webster (1983), the word forgive means "1. to cease to feel resentment against (an offender); pardon (~ one's enemies) 2a. to give up resentment of or a claim to requital for (~ an insult) b. to grant relief from payment of (~ a debt)" (p.484). When we condone an action, we voluntarily overlook the hurt, treating it as if it were trivial, harmless or of no importance. Condoning implies passing over an action without censure or punishment. Often, forgiving and condoning are used interchangeably, resulting in their meanings becoming one. Forgiving someone does not mean that we condone, nor forget what has happened.

Throughout our lives, we have all been hurt and have hurt others, intentionally or unintentionally. Sometimes we have hurt others by omission. Regardless of the cause, by holding on to the emotion that hurt invokes, we allow the resentment to fester, resulting in anger and bitterness. These emotions of anger, bitterness and resentment become bigger and more problematic for us than the original injury. These emotions eat at the person who was hurt and do not affect the person who hurt us. So, we end up punishing ourselves for someone else's act toward us. Not forgiving causes us to be separated from God. When we do not forgive ourselves, or others, we carry a resentment/anger with us which only increases, further separating us from God. From the aspect of healing, the emotions of anger and resentment block the channel to God's healing. By forgiving, we free ourselves from resentment toward that person or situation. We forgive when we give up all claims to requital and to resentment or vengeful feelings. Once we forgive, we are able to view the situation from a different perspective, from some level of understanding; perhaps from the understanding that we need to see God in each and every person we meet. Forgiving is not easy, in fact, it may be one of the hardest things we do in life.

Consider two prayers said every week in which forgiveness is mentioned: in the Confession of Sin, we ask for God's mercy and forgiveness, and in the Our Father, "...and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us..." Jesus taught us to forgive. If we are to follow God's path, *we* need to forgive because God has forgiven each and every one of us all of our sins. Divine forgiveness comes with a price, follow the Lord God.

Recall the people that Jesus forgave as he was betrayed, abandoned, tortured, crucified, and as He died on the cross: Judas, the soldiers, Peter, Pilate, Herod, Annas, Caiphas, members of the Sanhedrin, His disciples, the crowds, and the list goes on. Although we may have felt that all of these things have happened to us, were we, or are we, as forgiving?

So, why don't we forgive? Why do we choose to hold on to that resentment, the anger, the bitterness? Perhaps we see forgiveness as a sign of weakness, or as condoning the action. Perhaps we think that the person we hurt will forget what happened. Perhaps it is the misconception of forgiveness that keeps us from forgiving. What would people think if I forgave _____ for _____?" Perhaps the more important question becomes, "What will God think if I don't forgive?" Other questions come to mind, too: "What kind of role model am I?" "What am I teaching others if I won't forgive?"

When forgiveness comes from the heart, it allows us to experience inner peace giving us the freedom to be more tolerant, accepting and gentle when dealing with others. Forgiveness allows God's love to shine through us in all we do. From the healing perspective, forgiveness removes blocks to healing on the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual levels of our existence.

Why should we forgive? We know that God's Love is unconditional. We have faith that God's unconditional Love includes forgiveness for our sins. Jesus died on the cross so that the kingdom of heaven would be open to us – if we choose to

follow in God's path; if we choose to accept God as our Savior. Forgiveness is part of that path. There is a story with roots in Native American history about a man who told his son two wolves were fighting within him. When asked which one would live, the reply was, "The one I feed." We have a choice of which "wolf" to feed. Think about a time when you were hurt. How did you feel? Have you forgiven that person? Or, do the events still replay like an old, worn out movie?

Next month, a brief summary of the body's physical responses to stressors will be presented, as well as a summary of the Ten Commandments of Forgiveness found in To Forgive is Divine by DeGrandis (1981). ☩

Watermen's Corner

By Jim Thurston

Happy 2003!!

For February, we plan on making pancakes for the pancake supper. Please stay tuned for ticket sales and sign up sheets.

Recruit, Recruit, Recruit ...Men - don't be shy come on by and be a part of us.

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

God Bless. ☩

To the young people of St. David's

By Andrea Flitton

I have been teaching in the Worship Center for many years, so most of you know me as one of your teachers. I am writing this to all of you to let you know that I feel such a sense of pride when I see you, whether you are in class, serving as an acolyte, reading the lesson, working on the coffee hour, or simply sitting with your family or your

classmates. You are all wonderful people, and we are lucky to have you as members of our parish.

Be proud of yourselves for what you do at St. David's. Remember that you are an important part of the church, and that you are one of God's special children.

God Bless All of You, and your families.

Mrs. Flitton
Worship Center ☩

St. David's Christian Ed notes

By Debbie Davis

We want to thank all the children who participated in the Christmas Program. The props, the program and singing was just super. The children did a great job!

January 2003

Teacher's meeting Sunday, January 12, 2003, after the 10:30 am church service.

Mark your calendar, **Sunday, January 19, 2003**, after the annual meeting, the high school students will have their 2nd Annual Dinner. The theme is The 1950's Hop "N" Bop Dinner. So, get those clothes out and join the fun!! Be sure to come in your authentic dress and receive a ticket for prizes given away!!! Look for posters and tickets starting January 5, 2003!!

Thursday, January 23, 2003, is Christian Roller Skating Night, at Edru Roller Rink in Holt. Registration forms will be given to your child(ren). This will be a fun night for all parents and kids, see you all there. ☩

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Annual Meetings are called to order!!

St. David's: January 19th

St. John's: January 26th

Both meetings will start after the 10:30 service.