

THE GOOD NEWS LETTER

Vol. 8 No. 10

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

November 2002

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St. David's

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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 Iverson, 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

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
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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.
Evening Prayer: M, T, Th, F 6:00 p.m.

St. John's Episcopal Church

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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

Have you ever noticed how Paul begins his letters to the various churches?

.....To God's people at Corinth
.....To the Christian congregations of Galatia
.....To God's people at Ephesus
.....To all those of God's people at Philippi
.....To God's people at Colossae
.....To the congregations of Thessalonians who belong to God

Some people would simply say this was the writing style of the time and was a formula Paul used. Others might even point out that Paul most likely did not even write all the letters ascribed to him. Yet others would not even pay attention to how the letters began, choosing rather to jump right into the heart and the "meat" of the letters. What truth does this teach? What can I learn from this? How can I apply this to my life and my spirituality?

I believe how we begin has an important bearing on how our actions continue and ultimately how our actions end. This is why we make such careful plans. You don't want to begin a trip or project, only to discover half way through that you cannot continue or complete the task.

When I read the beginning of the Epistles, I feel Paul's deep love for those to whom he is writing. These are people Paul truly cares about and with whom he wants to share his belief in Christ. For Paul, these are people who need to be loved, guided, corrected, encouraged and taught. There are God's newly chosen people. They are precious in God's sight, as well as Paul's.

These are the saints of the early church.

Because they are recorded in the HOLY BIBLE, we tend to think of them as being "super-Christians," beyond reproach. In truth, they were ordinary, everyday people with the same struggles, joys and sorrows as we experience. Were they living today, they would be our neighbors, co-workers, friends and fellow church members. They would look like us, sound like us, and without a doubt make the same kinds of decisions and possible mistakes that we make. In many ways, their faith would be like ours.

As we near the end of the church calendar year, we are blessed with several important celebrations. The first is All Saint's Day. Together with All Soul's Day, these call us to give thanks to God for all Christians in all times, living and dead, who spread and are spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ and God's unending love for the world He created.

We finish the year with the celebration of Christ the King. This serves as a final reminder to each of us of the true nature of Christ and his willingness to die that we might live.

Jesus did not come to save the "super-Christians." He came to save all the saints of the church: those who are remembered in the Book of Common Prayer, and Lesser Feasts and Fasts; those who are passed on from one generation to another in the teachings of the church; those who are important globally; those who are remembered locally; and those who are known to God alone. All are God's chosen and God's saints.

May God always richly bless and keep you.

With deepest affection,
Fr. David

INQUIRER'S CLASS AND CONFIRMATION CLASS

Fr. David will be starting classes to teach more about the Episcopal Church. The adult class will last about ten weeks, meeting for two hours once a week. This class is open to everyone and is especially good for those people new to the Episcopal Church. It is also an excellent refresher class for those who have been members of the church for years and years. All questions are acceptable and the class follows a relaxed discussion and answer format.

The Youth Confirmation Class for 10th graders and up will follow the school year throughout the winter and spring, also meeting once a week, but for one to one and a half hours at a time.

Time and day for both classes is determined by those attending. If you have any questions or are interested, please see Fr. David after church or call him at the office.

Reverend Carol's message

What we say

It isn't easy to say exactly what we want to say, much less to say it with the right tone of voice. Words are very powerful things, and I believe that our Lord knew just how important they were, because that is all he used to get this message out. He did not fight, nor did he encourage others to fight, he simply used words to communicate everything he wanted to say. Jesus had a very interesting way of putting words to work, he was able to use them in ways that would not confuse nor hurt anyone. Even when the disciples asked him what he meant, he show them how to listen and how to apply what he taught.

I find that young people are very good at using words, and they have a very direct way of expressing themselves, but there is also one thing they have picked up on, and that is, words are also a turnoff for them. They hear what is said, but they do not respond to the words nor the message. They have learned, probably through a variety of means, the ability to shutout what they do not deem

necessary, or important to their immediate lives. I find this especially true of any thing that will make them think or realize, they may have to make a change in what they want to believe. When one starts to speak to the young people about Jesus, they get a little edgy, in fact one can see them try to find another place to be, either physically or mentally. They find it difficult to talk about their faith. And why is this? Maybe because we as adults are not talking about ours to them. We are not being the model Jesus was to his disciples. He was able to tell and show them, might it not be a good thing if we did the same for you young people, in our churches and our homes.

Let's follow in Jesus steps, and use words to tell our children about our Lord, and show them the wonderful life there is in listening to the words of Jesus.

God Bless You All,
Rev. Carol

Notes from Carol's Corner!!!

PLEASE, IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY, TURN IN YOUR PLEDGE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT TO OUR TREASURER, SO WE CAN PLAN FOR NEXT YEAR.

St. Nickolas Day will be on Dec. 9. a Saturday at 4 p.m. Come and see St. Nick. All children are welcome and please bring a friend. A party follows with goodies in your shoes.

Thanksgiving Service will be the Wednesday evening before Thanksgiving at 6:30 p.m. Please plan on attending.

We need more Sunday School teachers. Please pray about this and see if God is leading you into this ministry.

Your rector will be away for six days, she is going to go back to General Theological Foundation to take a course. Please call Fr. David Pike if a priest is needed.

We are having a **guest preacher on the 10th of November**, a classmate of mine from the doctoral program from Notre Dame, at the Theological Foundation there. The Rev. Dr. Donald Meloche will be our preacher that day. Please come and hear him speak, he a very good preacher.

The Church mouse heard ...

I have been traveling all over the place this summer and fall. I hope everyone is doing well. Lots has been going on around St. David's.

Church Camp was a lot of fun, according to those who attended. As always, we had a large group of youth acting as leaders and counselors, as well as a good number of campers. Fr. David and his family had their seminary friends here this year, and it was great having Fr. Gary Schindler and Fr. Terry DeForest helping Fr. David celebrate. It sounds like they have a good fun visit. The summer was too short and in September, we had a super visit from our new Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Robert Gepert. It was a great way to kick off our 40th anniversary. The potluck was great and Bishop Gepert and his wife Anne had a good time meeting members of St. David's. There will be more special events during the yeid's. Kay Paff, Dawn Sonnenberg, Jim Tolsma, Nancy Pike, Elaine Tolsma, Bill Paff, Faris Howrani, Carolyn Schavey, Tami Varricchio and Mike Wils were members of the weekend team, and Tom George, Nancy George and Gail Donovan attended as candidates. It's really busy around here!

There have been several births around the church lately. Eileen Newhouse had a great-granddaughter. Her name is Alyssa Eileen Greagor. Reece and Elizabeth (Sherman) had a son, Jacob Douglas Robins. Char and Doug Sherman are the proud grandparents. Mary Benoit and David Searles had a daughter, Mara Broughton Lee Searles. The proud grandparents are Deb and Mike Benoit. Larry Byers is great-grandfather to both Jacob and Marry, and Larry's mother Elizabeth Byers is great-great grandmother. Dave and Janie Byers are also great-aunt and -uncle to both children.

Robert and Shirley Bailey are home after extensive travels this summer. Clarence Burgess is home recovering from surgery. Rose and Ray McNab are doing better health-wise. Bob and Glennis Muncie traveled south to Bob's annual Pilot's Reunion, stopped to see Peg Spitler, and visited with their children. Lorayne Otto is recovering from a hip replacement. Kay and Bill Paff had a wonderful House Blessing and Open House. Harold and Betty Payne have gone south for the winter. Dick Schmidt is recovering from shoulder surgery. Gretchen Smith was named Ingham Regional Medical Center's

St. David's November Birthdays

3	Eric Root
3	Connie Fisher
7	Jeanne Fraas
8	Abby Leinbach
9	Kelly Zaske
10	Laura McNeil
10	Alexa Brewer
11	Robert Nostrant
12	Jarred Brabon
12	Walter Reynolds
14	Gary Mugnolo
15	Blake Stamper
16	Char Sherman
19	Kari Hartwick
19	Sarah Ostrom
19	Krista Stanton
20	Fred Bundy
23	Lorayne Otto
23	Rob Oleson
24	Kara Langenberg
26	Shirley-Anne Smith
26	Conner Brewer
29	Nicholas Reynolds

November Anniversaries

9	Jim & Elaine Tolsma
16	Robert & Shirley Nostrant
21	Kent & Marjorie Allemeier

October Volunteer of the Month for her work as a lay chaplain assistant in the Pastoral Care Program. Dawn Iverson and David Sonnenberg were married early this fall. Rita Stanton is recovering from eye surgery. Rhoda Swift is home recovering from surgery. Russ and Pat Vine took a two-week tour of the Branson MO area, and had a great time. Beverly Jean Ware is home recovering from surgery.

The Order of St. Luke had a dinner gathering at which fourteen people were present. John Post was elected Convener, Jerry Williams was elected Secretary, and Carol Williams was elected Treasurer. Cursillo held Weekend #51 at St. David's that was well-attended and well-received.

The Healing Corner

By John Post

THANK YOU, GOD!

Some of you reading this article may recall that a year ago at this time I was limping and had a lot of pain in my back, thighs, and legs. About the only time I was somewhat comfortable was when I was sitting or lying down. I had been seeing my family doctor about this situation for over a period of several months. Medications didn't seem to help, nor did several weeks of physical therapy. Finally I had an MRI and it was determined (as I understood it) that there was pressure on the nerves within my spinal canal which was caused by arthritis and disc herniation—a condition known as “spinal canal stenosis.” I was sent to a neurosurgeon who looked at the MRI pictures, and told me that “this type doesn't get better by itself.” However, before we set a date for surgery, he wanted me to have a few more tests.

As you might guess, all during the time of my disability and pain I had been having many talks with God. I told him I didn't like all the pain and discomfort and the prospect of surgery, and that I would really like to be miraculously healed—and, the sooner the better! But I also told Him that I knew that He loved me, and that I trusted Him in this situation. If He could use me for his purposes in pain and/or in a long convalescence—then I would be willing to endure it. Also during this time I continued to receive “laying on of hands” prayers from my brothers and sisters—especially those in our Order of St. Luke Chapter, and I continued to hand the situation over to God day by day—although I wasn't seeing any improvement. And, I also reminded God that if He was going to do something miraculous, he was running out of time—fast.

During the time before my second appointment with the neurosurgeon—the time when a date for surgery was to be set—my daughter, Mary, came home for Thanksgiving. She was looking through some of the medications which I had tried and then abandoned, and discovered one she was taking for fibromyalgia. She was taking a larger

does than what had been prescribed for me, and she suggested I increase the dosage a little and try it again. I did, and I started to feel relief! I kept taking the medicine and was feeling better and better every day, but as the time approached for me to revisit the neurosurgeon, I thought to myself, “This medicine is only masking my symptoms and I don't like some of its side effects—I probably still need to have the surgery to get the situation permanently corrected.” So, a few weeks before my appointment I stopped taking it. But instead of the intense pain returning, I kept feeling better and better. When I went to the doctor, he smiled and said “I guess I can't cut you, after all. Go home and don't shovel any snow this winter.”

I don't know exactly what happened to make my condition go away. Perhaps there is a medical answer. However, I choose to give the credit to God who answered my prayers, and the prayers of many others on my behalf—in a way I wasn't expecting. I continue to have a few aches and pains in my legs and back, but they are so greatly diminished from what they had been that I hardly notice them. In fact, in a strange way, I'm glad I have them because they help me remember how bad things were before—and they help me to remember to thank and praise God for His mercy and faithfulness! ✠

A night to remember

By Francis Jacobs

On Veterans' Day, Monday, November 11th, the Watermen and ECW of St. David's will be hosting a night of “Military Veterans”. Come support and listen as veterans share their experiences and memories. Everyone is welcome, including all family members and friends of St. David's, especially those who are veterans. If you have any questions, please contact Francis Jacobs at 622-1983. ✠

Watermen's Corner

By Jim Thurston

Make sure you mark your calendar for Monday, November 11, 2002. The Watermen and ECW are hosting a very special speakers night program. Be sure to watch the church bulletin for future announcements.

Keep Tuesday, December 3 open as well. Duane Vernon from the Greater Lansing Credit Bureau will be our guest speaker and will be discussing credit reports and other items relating to the Credit Bureau.

Last month we had a very good turn out for the special event that Faris Howrani hosted. I hope everyone came away with a bit more knowledge regarding finances, insurance and investing. Thank You Faris and a big Thank You to all the attendees.

We had another satisfied customer that placed a request for assistance in the Job Jar. Thank you and we hope more requests will be forthcoming. Our best wishes to all the new Cursillista's that attended the Cursillo weekend at St. David's October 17-20.

Be good and God Bless. ✠

What is a sabbatical?

By Carol Williams

What comes to your mind when you think of that word? Most of us would say a sabbatical is when a professor at a college or university takes a leave of absence from teaching. He or she goes to some place that is conducive to studying and writing. There is that saying which is related to this period of time "publish or perish".

What comes to our mind when we think of a clergy sabbatical? Do we think of that time period as a long vacation or do we think of this time as one of being rejuvenated in spirit, soul and body?

After doing some reading, it appears that different parts of Christ's body have different criteria in determining what the amount of time for a clergy leave will be, who will take over the responsibilities of the clergy and how will this leave be financed. Those are just a few in a sea of many questions.

Because we have been blessed with Fr. David as our priest for the past ten years, there are many of us who believe that his clergy leave is way over- due. It is very vital for all of us to understand that a clergy leave is not a time to be dreaded but a time which, when given to God, will not only bless the clergy and his or her family but will also bless the church family.

What are the opportunities and surprises that God has in store for the congregation that obeys God's Word? Yes, that's right, the word sabbatical comes from the word Sabbath. I would encourage you to do some reading and studying about God's Sabbath and how we are to keep it holy. The Sabbath is a time of renewal and refreshing, a time to hear and listen to God. Isn't it time for Fr. David, his family and the family of St. David's to take that adventure of a sabbatical leave?

A sabbatical committee has been formed. Please keep this committee in your prayers. We need to know what God has planned for all of us. Please feel free to express your thoughts and ideas concerning this clergy leave. All input will be greatly appreciated. Members of the sabbatical committee are Fr. David, Bill Fleener, John Strickler, Gail Donovan, Charles Henley and myself.

ECW Make and Take

By Andrea Flitton

The Annual Make and Take is scheduled to take place on November 18, 2002 at 7 p.m. There will be a sign up sheet posted in the hallway. Margaret Yeager will be back again to help us make gift boxes and Christmas cards. Any questions can be directed to Andrea Flitton at 517-321-2219.

St. David's Christian Ed. notes

By Debbie Davis

Hallelujah Party, was a great success!!! We had a treasure hunt, donut on the string game and dunking for apples, along with making scare crow cookies. We then headed to the Corn Maize, all the students and parents had a grand time, walking, some running through the corn maize puzzle of one of the characters

from the Wizard of Oz: If I only had a brain.

We then followed with a wagon ride to the pumpkin patch. Everyone went in all directions for their just right pumpkin. Thank you everyone for all your help and support. Operation Christmas Child is under way. Please return filled gift-wrapped shoe boxes are to be returned to the church by Sunday, November 17, 2002, will be dedicated that Sunday. Back by popular Parish request, the students will be selling Pepperidge Holiday cookies. More information will be forthcoming. The Christmas Pageant will be underway starting November 10. The Christmas Pageant is Christmas Eve at 7:00 p.m. Thank you for your support on the calendars. The funds are helping the children in upcoming events. ☩

CROP Walk thank-you

By Maria Leiby

A big thank you to everyone who participated in this year's CROP WALK or supported those who did. St. David's had 6 walkers and (due to injury) one rocker on a chilly, but bright, Sunday afternoon. We walked to share the experience of sisters and brothers around the world, who must walk long distances to meet basic needs. Gerry & Pat Purol, assisted by Jean Dooley, had a delicious supper waiting for us back at the church. Pledge envelopes are not all collected as of this writing, so we do not yet have a figure for the amount raised.

Did you ever get a dinner?

By John Post

"...And He Never Got A Dinner"

Bob Muncie tells about the comedian Red Buttons talking about various persons and saying, "...And he never got a dinner." Did you ever get a dinner?

The St. David's New Person Committee is going to reestablish the tradition of having dinners for new persons who are attending our church. The purpose of

these dinners is to give them the opportunity to meet and talk with other new persons, as well as several parishioners, staff members, and certain parish leaders. As near as the Committee can recall, the last dinner of this type was held approximately three years ago. So, if you started attending St. David's within the past three years, and you "never got a dinner," contact John Post (323-1825) and you'll be invited to the next New Person Dinner which will be held early in December--the final date has not yet been determined.

The program will be kept simple, with introductions of the new persons, and brief remarks by selected parish leaders. It should end in plenty of time to get the children home for homework and bed. ☩

Notes from St. David's library

So, what kind of books are you interested in?

This month I recommend When Religion Becomes Evil by Charles Stanley. It is perhaps the best book I have read concerning current world events and relating to our personal religion. Why do we judge, criticize, feel superior to those who neither agree with us or have a different understanding of Scripture. The onus Jesus placed upon us was to love and forgive. This book engenders relevant social concerns with personal religion.

The second miniature tome I love is The Day, John Donne. How can we not love him. This tiny poem can be read in 3 minutes and lived for a lifetime.

We all know and love Donne's "For Whom the Bell tolls" sermon and, perhaps less widely known, his 17th Century poems "Batter My Heart Three-personed God," which I often pray. NO ONE HAS READ THIS BOOK IN 34 YEARS!

I close with his words, a man who fought and won against the Plague,

" O Eternal and most glorious God,

....

Yet never leave us without the knowledge

That precious in the sight

Is the death of the saints..."

THE PHANTOM LIBRARIAN



Still Need a Vestry Clerk!!

St. David's Vestry still needs someone to fill the position of Clerk of the Vestry. This person would need to attend all vestry meetings and take the minutes. Copy-ready minutes then need to be delivered to the office no later than two weeks following each Vestry meeting. The office staff will be responsible for copying and putting the minutes in each Vestry members' mailbox. Vestry meetings take place on the third Tuesday of each month beginning at 7:00 p.m. If you feel this is a ministry you would like to take on, please contact Fr. David or John Strickler.

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