

The St. Thomas Episcopal Church

Evangel

A Publication of
St. Thomas
Episcopal Church,
Isle of Hope, Georgia

June/July/August 2009

Deadline for the next issue: August 25, 2009

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HOSPITALITY AS SACRAMENT

If you remember your Confirmation catechism, you will be able to recite the definition of "sacrament": *"The sacraments are outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual grace, given by Christ as sure and certain means by which we receive that grace."* (BCP, page 857)

Although hospitality is never mentioned specifically as a sacrament in our BCP, the catechism goes on to outline God's activity in our lives as unlimited to the rites of the church. For instance, *"God does not limit himself to these rites; they are patterns of countless ways by which God uses material things to reach out to us."* (Page 861)

I maintain, for the sake of this article, that the outward and visible signs of the sacrament of hospitality are: warm welcome to the stranger; invitation to participate in the community; attention to the needs of others; and frequent coffee, cookies and other "fellowship foods"!

The inward and spiritual grace of this sacrament of hospitality is the means by which, through the power of the Holy Spirit, we make Christ's love known to the stranger through our chosen behaviors to welcome and serve.

OK, you may think this is a bit of a stretch of my imagination. But reaching out to others is important. Most of us want the kind of human touch which represents welcome and acceptance. According to Webster's Dictionary, hospitality is "giving generous welcome to guests; the act, practice, or quality of being hospitable." The idea of hospitality being an "act or practice" is very intriguing and rings true. For most people, I think it may be a challenge to be outwardly inviting to the stranger among us. We must step outside our safety zone of familiar friends and reach out to the other. Perhaps we have never done it before...or perhaps we have reached out only to have our invitation ignored or even rebuked. Regardless, the idea of "practicing" hospitality really appeals to me.

So, what I suggest is that each of us makes a renewed, personal commitment, that for the next three months we shall use the first 15 minutes of any gathering at our church (coffee hour, Wednesday night suppers, picnics, church services) to scan the crowd for the faces of visitors in our midst. Then, we will go to that stranger and offer them a sincere welcome to our church family. If the clergy are nearby, call one of us over and introduce the guest so that we may interact with them, too.

Another suggestion is to invite that person, (you know at least one!) who does not yet have a church home, to come to a service at St. Thomas and sit with you!

I'm eager to learn how it goes, so let us know!

- Deacon Geri

Clergy and Staff Comings-N-Goings

Deacon Geri is away Monday, June 8th, attending a Search Committee Meeting for the election of our new Bishop.

Fr Richard is away midday on Thursday, June 25th, celebrating the Holy Eucharist at Diocesan House in downtown Savannah.

SUMMER VESTRY MEETING DATES

6:30pm in the Library:

June 15 ☞ July 20 ☞ August 17

Congratulations High School Graduates:

**Julia Carpenter, Taylor Edgar, Katie Green,
Toni Paruso, Morgan Roberts. Sam Stuber
and Mac Woo**

Hospitality – Get Involved

As Deacon Geri notes in this month's lead article, the ministry of Hospitality is so important to the life of a faith community and to one's own spiritual health. We can really use some more Greeters at both Sunday services: what a great way to practice Hospitality. Contact Bill Friend at wfriend@bellsouth.net or 598-0946 to get involved.

“Hot town, summer in the city; back of my neck gettin' dirt and gritty...”

Baby-boomers will remember that lyric from The Lovin' Spoonful (groovy, man!). Regardless of your generation we hope you will remember to keep your pledge up-to-date over the long, hot summer. Our expenses remain constant over the course of the year, and certain expenditures – such as for Vacation Bible School and ordering Christian Education curricula for the fall (not to mention air conditioning costs!) – actually place additional demands on our operating budget. So, your continued and prompt gifts are very much appreciated. When going on vacation, think about paying your pledge ahead; then you don't have to worry about it when you return home. Thanks!

St. Thomas will host Candidates'

“Walk-About”

On Thursday, August 27th, the Candidates for Bishop of Georgia will be at St. Thomas, Isle of Hope. Subsequent meetings will be held in Tifton and Augusta, so that the Candidates may see as much of our Diocese as possible and field questions from as large a cross section of parishioners as possible. Details of the evening are being determined by the Diocesan Standing Committee, Search Committee and Transition Committee. Watch our website and the Evangel-Lite weekly bulletin for details.

EfM - Education for Ministry

EfM is a four year program to equip lay people for ministry (in family, church, community, etc.). Bible study, discussions, theological reflection and worship are the primary components of each session. EfM will be starting up again in September and the group has room for 3 or 4 more people. So,...please prayerfully consider whether this is something you want to be a part of. What a great group and great opportunity. For more information contact Pattie Wainright 692-1090 or Vicky Posey 354-6818

Pastoral Care

Your Pastoral Care Committee would like to hear your suggestions for how we might better serve the people of our parish. Gayle Crawford is the chairperson of this committee and you may communicate directly with her by calling her at 598-9254.

Please let Gayle know of sudden illness or injury, admissions to the hospital, Hospice, nursing home or home confinements. However, please immediately contact your *clergy* in the event of the imminent death of a loved one or if your loved one dies.

If you would like to participate as a member of this wonderful and valuable servant-ministry, do not hesitate to contact one of your clergy or Gayle Crawford.

**Deadline for the September Edition of
our Evangel Newsletter is
August 25, 2009**

Interfaith Hospitality Network News—It did not go as planned but it was a good week! IOH United Methodist Church planned to host Interfaith Hospitality Network guests in their new building the week of March 15. An occupancy certificate was received at the last minute, but hosting was moved to the older educational building anyway. It caused some scrambling by volunteers, but 12 persons were given food and shelter in a caring environment in spite of the changes in plans. Three adults and nine children received a lot of love, attention and support.

St. Thomas acted as a support church for the week, supplying volunteers to give families an opportunity to regroup and begin again. Those who participated agree it is a worthy effort. Cooks for the week were Betty & Jim Jeffers, Tommy & Pat Martin, Phyllis Posey, Carole Tutan, Carole & Andy Giles. Carole & Andy also acted as evening hosts, along with Tabitha and Cayla Caldwell, Geri Nelson, Lynn Wright and her two children. Laundry for the week was done by Claudia Welch and friends.

The next hosting week for IOHUMC, begins June 14, in the new building. If you would like to be a part of helping homeless families become independent, please join us. A sign up board will be posted in early June. - Irma Steel, Coordinator

Thrift Store—Thanks to a record turnout and tireless efforts of all, the April 29 Thrift Store Fashion Show and Silent Auction netted a record \$4,000 plus. This gives the Thrift Store a whopping 25% greater power to help than last year. Just as importantly, it clearly demonstrates to all of us who work with the Thrift Store how important our ministry is in the eyes of the St. Thomas family at large. Thank you all so much.

I also need to call for your help in a growing aspect of our outreach; clothing and other practical items to distribute to disadvantaged members of the Savannah community. Since the beginning of the year, we have received many calls from local agencies to help groups of people impacted by cold, fire and our latest, child abuse. We are always glad to assist, but this puts an even greater strain on our clothing and household supplies.

I know well that many of us scour and prune our wardrobes often, but we need to look again for seasonal clothing in good condition, household items, and books no longer needed. Further, it is vitally important to mention our needs to relatives, friends, neighbors and parishioners of other Episcopal churches who are not fortunate enough to run a thrift store.

God, through all of you has blessed us abundantly. Many more blessings are needed. - Candy Baxter,
Thrift Store Co-Chair

Unseen Guest— Seasons? We don't have any!

While most of the activities at St. Thomas are gearing down for the summer, we are again reminded that the Unseen Guest Ministry knows no seasons! The sick and needy are here with us always and provide a wonderful opportunity to share God's love and our many blessings.

There are seasons for food. Thanksgiving turkey; Easter ham; Winter, yams; Spring, Vidalia onions, fresh Summer veggies; late Summer pears, Fall fresh pork—you name it. For meals for our Unseen Guests we use anything that comes our way whenever it comes. Our donors are many and varied; we love and thank them all. Two years ago a friend from Alabama brought 5 bushels of rock-hard cooking variety pears, and our volunteers peeled, cored, stewed and packaged them for freezing until exhausted.. The last bushel was made into 24 pints of pear chutney. Next month this will be served on 40 pounds of pork patties, also a gift. The breads and desserts donated by Fresh Market twice monthly add a wonderful touch to an otherwise simple meal.

Weather, too, is seasonal but the recent "monsoons" have not slowed our offerings, neither will summer heat. Winter type soup, still delights our sickest "guests" who must have it year round. Eight lovely ladies from Southside Baptist Church help us provide a generous amount.

Sharing God's love though this ministry has far-reaching effects. Not only does it accomplish our primary mission of providing meals for HIV/AIDS victims, but has made the volunteers a close-knit group. Two of our talented cooks come from Ellabell United Methodist Church, and there are the "Super Soupers" from Southside Baptist. Relationships with other churches and businesses demonstrate that we are reaching out. Attitudes toward a previously "hush-hush" condition have been changed. The ladies from the Southside Baptist Church tell me their group now has a purpose and camaraderie that was previously lacking. Unseen Guest has also provided an opportunity for those with health issues to participate in a meaningful way.

Some of you who read this may have altered work schedules for the summer. If you can spare a couple of hours on the second Friday morning of the month or the last Monday evening, please contact the church office. You will be most welcome even if your time is seasonal!

Baby Rockers

May 31 will be the last Sunday until September for the Baby Rockers to be in the church nursery. We would like to thank all the parents who allowed us to enjoy caring for your precious children. It has been a joy to watch each one of them grow and become charming little people. Our goal is to provide loving care for your children so that you can have a peaceful time of worship and renewal. We are looking forward to “Rocking” again next fall.

With love,

Kitty, Angela, Rene, Irma, Nancy, Nona, Sue, Peggy, and Linda

St. Thomas Youth Summer Activities:

Sunday, June 7 **11:30am** Sunday School Picnic for ALL AGES at Camp Villa Marie, Isle of Hope

Sunday, June 14 **6:00-7:30pm** EYC meets in Youth Room

Sunday, June 21 Father’s Day, No youth meet this afternoon

Sunday, June 28—Thursday, June 1st **5:30-8:pm** **Vacation Bible School**

Sunday, July 5th Fourth of July weekend (no youth meet tonight)

Sunday, July 12th EYC will not meet tonight. We will leave on Tuesday for NC.

Tuesday, July 14th **9:00am** EYC’ers leave from church parking lot for white water rafting trip to NC.

Sunday, July 19th **4:00 - 5:30pm** JAM’ers in the youth room

Sunday, July 26th **4:00 - 5:30pm** PJ’s

Sunday, July 26th **6:00 - 7:30pm** EYC

Sunday, August 2nd **4:00 - 5:30pm** JAM'ers

Sunday, August 9th EYC will not meet tonight

Sunday, August 16th **4:00 - 5:30pm** JAM'ers

Sunday, August 23rd **4:00 - 5:30pm** PJ’s

Sunday, August 23rd **6:00 - 7:00pm** EYC

Sunday, August 30th **6:00 - 7:30pm** dinner in the Parish Hall for all youth, PJ's, JAM'ers, and EYC

High School EYC, mark your calendars, July 14-16th, for a white water rafting trip down the French Broad River in NC. We will be staying in Saluda, NC and driving to the French Broad Outpost on Wednesday morning for a half-day trip of white water rafting. The house and the meals are paid for, and the cost for the rafting is \$50.00. Reserve your spot by paying the \$50.00 by June 14th.

From the Parish Register

Birthdays: June

- 1) Donna Dunn, Kendra Dunn, Amy Graham
- 2) Judy Macolly
- 3) Khang Nguyen
- 4) Jameson Hall, Dale Hendrix
- 8) Shelly Compton
- 10) Becky Milmine
- 11) Jim McClure
- 13) Cathy Joyce, Jack Kinzie
- 15) Betty Jeffers
- 16) Viola Bairas, Kelley Marshall
- 17) Diedre Dorn, Lynn Wright
- 20) Anna Mullings, Vernon Nelson, Bunny Outlaw
- 21) Ruby Gray Buckingham, Jim Joyce, Julie Schwartz
- 22) Chris Tower
- 23) Elsie Clark, Mary McClure
- 25) Lake White
- 26) Joan Connelly, Alan Dunn, Suzanne Waller
- 29) Dennis Hall, Kathryn Ann Waller

Anniversaries: June

- 2) Jack and Laura Kinzie
- 4) Bob and Claire Harrison, Joe and Lizann Roberts
- 6) Ron and Gayle Crawford, Dan and Ingrid Poppell
- 7) Wendell and Catherine Buckhaults
- 8) James and Jane Shuman, Carlton and Jennie Thompson
- 9) Richard and Geri Nelson
- 10) Jeff and Lea Anne Wallace
- 15) Andre and Lynn Dyers
- 17) George and Will Quaile
- 25) Jim and Mary McClure
- 29) Mark and Susan Gonzales, Jay and Lisa McCaslin
- 30) Jim and Cathy Joyce

Birthdays: July

- 1) Liesl Tanner
- 2) Landon Shore
- 3) JJ Haley, Joe McCaughan
- 4) Trey Ochsner
- 5) Eliza Bass
- 6) Mark Edgar, Blake Everard, Pam McCaslin
- 8) Anna Ruth Clark, Cliff McCurry
- 9) Marilyn Benting
- 10) Billy Groves
- 11) Usher Gay, Mike Mullings
- 12) John Knopf
- 13) Ingrid Poppell
- 14) Megan Roberts
- 15) Catherine Buckhaults
- 16) Debilynn Friend, Richard Nelson
- 17) Paige Case, Carl Quante
- 18) Sarah Figuerido, Nancy Young
- 20) Al Kennickell

- 21) Morgan Anderson, Ellen Bradley
- 22) Debbie Friend, Clegg Roberts
- 28) Eve Bartlett, Ron Crawford
- 29) Lee McCury
- 30) Mattox Hall, George Malone

Anniversaries: July

- 6) Gage and Judy Ochsner
- 8) Gus and Betty Anderson
- 18) David and Gail Knopf
- 25) Bruce Nichols and Judy Macolly
- 26) Mitch and Millie Green
- 29) Paul and Jennifer Meyer

Birthdays: August

- 1) Mary Hill, Callan Papy, Jane Quante
- 2) John Gooch
- 3) Anne Keese Wallace
- 4) David Slatinsky
- 5) Ansley Edgar, Reed Lotter, Erin Nelson
- 6) My Nguyen
- 7) Elizabeth Johnson
- 8) Charles Belin, Linda Garner, Kathy McCurry, Taylor Summerell
- 9) Arthur Peagler
- 10) Courtney Dunn, Charles Waller
- 11) Hawkins Gay, Kitty Hill, Mary Page McCaslin, Leigh Powell
- 13) Stacie Kurinij, Linda Southerland
- 15) David Knopf
- 16) Bill Burke, Shelby Rovolis
- 17) Hiram Tanner
- 18) Ashley Glover
- 19) Linda Kelly Fleming, Phyllis Posey, Gary Smith
- 20) Polly Paruso, Pam Smith
- 21) Grace Carpenter
- 22) GenaSue White
- 24) Jacqui Belcher, Henry Nichols, Devin Woo
- 26) Stewart Marshall
- 28) Peg Varnedoe
- 29) Jackson Thompson
- 31) Brian Clemons

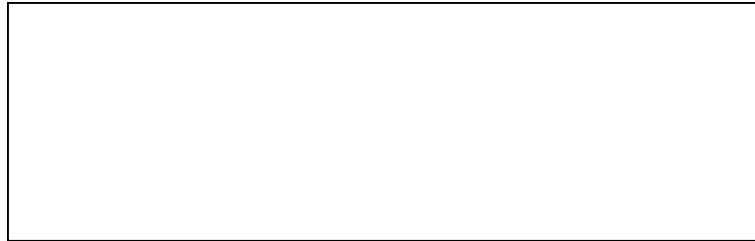
Anniversaries: August

- 2) Jamie and Kendall McCurry
- 4) Lake and Jennifer White
- 14) Tim and Linda Garner
- 16) Dan and Elizabeth Biggerstaff, Frank and Marion Stapp
- 21) Kelly and Andrea Epting
- 23) Carl and Jane Quante
- 25) Joe and Sarah Wyant
- 27) Bill and Betsy Franklin

ST. THOMAS EPISCOPAL CHURCH
2 ST. THOMAS AVE.
SAVANNAH, GA 31406

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Rock-On at the "Crocodile Dock" Vacation Bible School at St. Thomas June 28th—July 2nd!

THE CLERGY & STAFF

BISHOP THE RT. REV. HENRY I. LOUTTIT, JR.
RECTOR THE REV. RICHARD NELSON
MINISTER OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION—
THE REV. DEACON GERI NELSON
DEACON THE REV. DEACON KIRK DUFFY
YOUTH MINISTER TRACY EDGAR
ORGANIST/CHOIRMASTER PAM MCCASLIN
PARISH ADMINISTRATOR FRANCES CONNER
SEXTON NICOLE KING

THE VESTRY

SR. WARDEN, DON FOWLER
JIM CHAMBERS, MARK GOMPELS - JR. WARDENS
MITCH GREEN, TREASURER
MARIANN CHAMBERS, CLERK

BARRETT BENTON BECKY MILMINE
HUGH PAPP ARTHUR PEAGLER
DEDE ROBERTS JUDY OCHSNER
BRUCE NICHOLS BILL FRIEND
PAM SMITH

MINISTRY GROUP CONTACTS

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CHOIR PAM MCCASLIN
COUNTERS FRAN CONNER
DAUGHTERS OF THE KING -
LAURA KINZIE
EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN
ST. MARY'S GUILD JANE WERTH
ST. MARTHA'S GUILD DEDE ROBERTS
JAM'ERS, EYC TRACY EDGAR
FLOWER GUILD JUDY OCHSNER,
LIESL TANNER
GREETERS FLORENCE SLATINSKY
LAY MINISTERS BILL FRIEND
MEN'S FELLOWSHIP HUGH PAPP
UNSEEN GUEST SELINA JOHNSON
USHERS DON FOWLER
THRIFT STORE CANDACE BAXTER

ADULT CHOIR

STETSON FLEMING, KEVIN FLEMING,
ELAINE HODGKINS, PHIL HODGKINS,
EMORY HEIDT, JACK KINZIE, LAURA KIN-
ZIE, RITA LEWIS, KATHY MCCURRY, ANNA
MULLINGS, JOLYNN BENNETT, MIKE MULL-
INGS, DEBORAH BOWEN, PHIL HOPE,
LAURA LAWTON, PAULETTE FIGUERIDO,
BARRETT BENTON, PAM BENTON, DEIDRE
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WELCH, DEBBIE FRIEND, BILL FRIEND,
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