



# Open Doors

The Newsletter of St. James Episcopal Church

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January 2008

FROM THE



RECTOR

As I sat down at my computer to write this, I noticed in my email inbox the daily summary of headlines from the New York Times. What caught my attention was the

headline, "Mob Burns Church in Kenya, Killing Dozens." Later in the evening, I saw a TV report on the fire, accompanied by a photo of a baby's blue sandal dropped on the ground in front of the burned out church.

It's one of those things that you hope never to hear about. Church should be a refuge, a place of safety. But there in Kenya, as in Rwanda a decade or so ago, church was a place of danger, a place of death. And even here in the U.S., just a few weeks ago, two teenage girls were killed at a church in Colorado.

Faith doesn't protect us from violence. At this time of year, we remember the time when King Herod ordered all babies in Bethlehem to be killed, in the hope of destroying Jesus, the King of kings. John the Baptist was executed by Herod, and his head served up on a plate. And of course Jesus himself was the victim of violence, dying a horrible death on the cross.

But Christians have been perpetrators as well as victims of violence. The Crusades, fought in the name of Christ, were brutal; during the Reformation, Christians frequently executed those whose beliefs differed from their own. Today, violence is less often perpetrated by Christians in the name of Christ, but we can still get caught up in it.

Later this month, I will be attending Trinity Institute's annual conference, this year with the theme "Religion and Violence." Too often, religion becomes entangled in violence. Sometimes the violence is directly related to religious faith; other times, churches are simply, almost accidentally, the sites of violence. And recently I've noticed a disturbing trend in our denomination, to use violent imagery to speak of those with whom we disagree.

All this makes me wonder, what does it mean to follow someone who was called the "Prince of Peace"? How do we live out the peace of Christ in what seems like an increasingly violent world?

There are no easy answers. But as we begin the new year, I invite you to pray for peace, to live in peace, to work for peace, as we follow our Savior, the Prince of Peace.

- *Raewynne*

## **A WORD FROM THE WARDENS**

Once again this is a time to reflect on the past year and look ahead to the new one. Our parish family has responded to our new Rector, and already we can see signs of growth – not only in numbers, but also in spiritual depth.

- \* We have new families joining us – both young and not as young.
- \* Sunday School is vibrant, with a new curriculum that is popular with the students and teachers.
- \* This past year we had the largest and most motivated Confirmation class in several years.
- \* The Christian Education and Formation Committee initiated an ongoing book study of “Christianity for the Rest of Us,” which will continue this year.

There were many other positive events last year: the Strawberry Festival, Pig Roast, the most successful Harvest Festival ever, and the Lenten and Advent programs, to name a few.

This past year took us from “preserving what we had,” to the beginning of “discerning whom we can be.” This will be a thoughtful, gradual, and prayerful process, resulting in growth in members and spirituality; with God’s help.

We invite you to invite others to join us in this journey, while continuing to care for our own. As you reflect on the joy of the birth of Christ, consider how you can have a positive impact on our parish family; all in the name of Christ.

Have a happy, healthy, and blessed new year!

*- Pat and Ron*

## **EPIPHANY BRUNCH**

Reminder (if you get this in time): St. James’ annual Epiphany Brunch will be held on Sunday, January 6, following the 9:30 A.M. service. The Vestry, which is hosting the event, is preparing delicious treats for all to enjoy. Please join us!

## **BOOK GROUP CONTINUES THROUGH EPIPHANY**

Our Book Group discussion of Diana Butler-Bass’ *Christianity for the Rest of Us: How the Neighborhood Church is Transforming the Faith*, will resume on Sunday, January 13, 8:50 to 9:20 A.M., in the Parish Hall. With this book as a starting point, we are looking at our identity as a parish and how God may be calling us, both personally and as a parish community.

During the fall, we explored ten characteristics (“spiritual practices”) of vital churches. Between Epiphany and Lent, we will examine the implication of these practices for our individual lives, our parish, and the world in which we live. Childcare is provided in the nursery during each of these sessions.

If you’ve not been part of our Sunday morning group, you may wish to visit our class blog ~ <http://stjamesstudy.blogspot.com> for brief discussion summaries.

Questions? Please see any member of the CF & E Committee: Les Bengtson, Chris Mauro, Jack Schultheis, and Kathy Sides.

*- Kathy Sides*

## **STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE CAMPAIGN**

To date, we have received 72 pledges. As we are still receiving pledges, with the promise of more to come, the publication of names of those who have pledged for 2008 will be in the February issue of *Open Doors*. We have stressed that we would like our entire parish family to be a part of this and we do not want to leave anyone out.

If you intend to pledge and just haven't gotten around to it, please do so right away so it will be included in the 2008 Budget presented to the parish at the Annual Meeting in February.

We are blessed to have so many faithful givers and we look with anticipation for the remainder to be in kind.

*- The Stewardship Committee  
Chris Mauro, Edna Rousseau,  
Jack Schultheis  
Ron Tebbutt, Chair*

## **2007 PLEDGES**

There are still a number of parishioners who have not completed their 2007 pledge payments. In this season of celebrating the birth of Christ, God's gift to us all, this is the perfect time to fulfill our commitment to Him. Even though we are in a new year, please make every effort to fulfill your 2007 pledges. Be sure to mark your check "2007 Pledge" in order for it to be accounted for accurately.

*- Ron Tebbutt*

## **PLEDGES**

Do you find it difficult to remember to pay your pledge? Many banks offer a bill paying service, which will automatically send a check to the church at whatever frequency you prescribe. Check with your bank to see if they offer this.

*- Raewynne*

## **SAVE THE DATE!**

The Annual Meeting of the Parish will take place on Sunday, February 3, 2008. We will gather in Mills Hall following the 9:30 A.M. service. All members of the parish are encouraged to attend (children included). There will be nominations for one Warden position and three Vestry positions. Following the nominations there will be a simple brunch, elections, and reports from the Rector, Wardens, and committee chairs.

*- Pat Westlake*

## **SNOW**

People often wonder if church activities will be canceled when there is a snowstorm. The Vestry has decided to make it a policy that if a state emergency is declared and people are asked not to drive, all church activities will be canceled. This includes services. A message will also be left on the answering machine. If it is snowing but there is no state of emergency, non-essential activities will often be canceled – again, check the answering machine. On declared snow days the office may not be open, depending on the severity of the weather, or it may open late.

*- Raewynne*

## SNOW LOTTERY

We need your help. During the winter months we need parishioners to sign up to help with making sure the walkways to our church are clean and safe. We have a company that will plow the parking lots and clean the sidewalks, however, we need to have someone at church before the 8 A.M. service on Sunday to make sure that everything is cleaned off and that there is enough ice melt and /or sand down. Please volunteer to help. It will be great if we can have 2 or 3 people here on a snowy day. Please call the office to sign up for a day or call the person listed below if you can give them assistance. THANK YOU!

### January

6 Ron Tebutt  
13 Edna Rousseau  
20 Debbie LaMano  
27 Donna Wachter

### February

3 Chris Mauro  
6 (Ash Wed.  
noon & eve)  
10 Chris Mauro  
17  
24 Chris Mauro

### March

2  
9  
16 Brian & Chris Noack  
20 (Maundy Thurs  
evening)  
21 (Good Friday  
noon)  
22 (Easter Vigil  
evening)  
23 (Easter Day)

- Pat Westlake

## ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY'S NEW YEAR MESSAGE: God 'doesn't do waste'

Watch it online on Youtube at  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D6qGu4vQJFA>, or read it here:

By this stage of the holiday season, I imagine you might be looking with dismay at your overflowing rubbish bin, or the mountain of debris piling up outside your back door. Food, drink, presents – they all come with more and more packaging. Even the most eco-conscious of us is likely to have a bit of a bad conscience after Christmas.

Despite constant talk about recycling and thinking “green” – we’re still a society that produces fantastic quantities of waste. From the big issues around toxic industrial and nuclear waste to the domestic questions of managing day-to-day waste and the build up of stuff around us that can’t be recycled, it’s not something we can ignore. Look at the number of plastic bags flapping around by the roadside, in town and country alike – and you see what I mean.

What I wonder is – how much this influences attitudes in other parts of our lives?

In a society where we think of so many things as disposable, where we expect to be constantly discarding last year’s gadget and replacing it with this year’s model – do we end up tempted to think of people and relationships as disposable? Are we so fixated on keeping up with change that we lose any sense of our need for stability?

One of the buzzwords of recent years has been ‘sustainability’ – and, like all buzzwords, it tends to be used annoyingly all over the place,

often for things it doesn't really fit. But what the word points to is the sense of obligation that most of us share at some deep level – the obligation to hand on to our children and grandchildren a legacy that helps them live and flourish. Building to last is something we all understand.

And if we live in a context where we construct everything from computers to buildings to relationships on the assumption that they'll need to be replaced before long – what have we lost?

Christians, like Jews, and many other religious people too, talk a lot about God as "faithful". God is involved in 'building to last', in creating a sustainable world and sustainable relationships with us human beings. He doesn't give up on the material of human lives. He doesn't throw it all away and start again. And he asks us to approach one another and our physical world with the same commitment. The life of Jesus, the life in which God identifies completely with our flesh and blood, is the supreme sign of that commitment.

God doesn't do waste.

He doesn't regard anyone as a 'waste of space'. As not worth his time – from the very beginnings of life to its end, whether they are successful, articulate, productive or not. And so a life that communicates a bit of what God is like, is a life that doesn't give up – that doesn't settle down with a culture of waste and disposability – whether with people, or with things.

Perhaps a good resolution for the New Year would be to keep asking what world we want to pass on to the next generation –indeed, to ask whether we have a real and vivid sense of

that next generation.

A lot of time, we just don't let ourselves think about the future with realism. A culture of vast material waste and emotional short-termism is a culture that is a lot more fragile than it knows. How much investment are we going to put in towards a safer and more balanced future?

A big question. But too big to avoid.

And if we feel a bit paralyzed by just how big it is – well, we can at least start by a visit this week to the nearest recycling bins.

God bless you all in this New Year; may you have patience for the long view – confident that God takes the long view of you and isn't going to give up.

Happy New Year  
+ *Rowan Cantuar*

## **BYO COFFEE MUG**

Coffee hour is a great time to spend time together as a church community – but we go through a lot of disposable cups! And if your kitchen cupboard is anything like mine, coffee mugs seem to breed in the dark corners. Get rid of those extra mugs, help the environment, and also save the church some money by donating your unloved coffee mugs to church for use at coffee hour!

- *Raewynne*

## CHURCH CALENDAR

Wondering what's happening? Find yourself trying to be in two places at once because multiple church activities are scheduled simultaneously? Remember the chaos the week we had 10 different things happening on a Sunday morning?

With worship, Sunday School, food pantry, committee meetings, adult education, weddings, baptisms, YPF, fundraisers, and numerous other things happening here at St. James, we need to try to develop a master calendar to keep track of it all and try to avoid conflicts. For the next few weeks, we will have a large calendar in Mills Hall. Please help us by adding the church activities that you're involved with to it.

And, as the year progresses, if you are planning something, please call the church office to check/schedule/confirm activities and events. Thank you!

- Raewynne

## NEW BOOK

Former organist/choir director, Nancy Neal, has written a book: *A United Empire Loyalist Family: the Life and Times of Thomas Hooper of Bedeque, Prince Edward Island, Canada, and his Descendants 1734-2004*. Copies are available through your local library.

- Alden Neal

## JANUARY CALENDAR

- 1 New Year's Day
- 6 Epiphany brunch 11:20 AM
- 7 Buildings & Grounds 7:30 PM
- 8 Recovery group 7:30 P.M.
- 10 Choir rehearsal 8 P.M.
- 13 CF&E Book Group 8:50 A.M.
- 14 Vestry meeting 7:30 P.M.
- 15 Recovery group 7:30 P.M.
- 17 Choir rehearsal 8 P.M.
- 20 CF&E Book Group 8:50 A.M.
- 21 Martin Luther King day
- 22 Recovery group 7:30 P.M.
- 24 Choir rehearsal 8 P.M.
- 27 CF&E Book Group 8:50 A.M.
- 29 Recovery group 7:30 P.M.
- 31 Choir rehearsal 8 P.M.

## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Donald Scott  
Jerilyn Glogg  
Felicia Van Praagh  
Polly Neyssen  
Rebekah Sides  
Marge Cobb  
Willy Bataller  
Stan Schubel  
Elizabeth Schultheis  
Julia Quinn  
Brian Noack  
Samantha Celano  
Sara Barry  
Matthew Petschauer  
Claude Deal  
Melanie Cozzolino

## JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

Ian and Felicia Van Praagh