

The Parish Call



St. Thomas' Church,
WHITEMARSH
Come with us on a journey with Christ

The mission of St. Thomas' Church is to know Jesus and to make Him known to others.

OCTOBER 2008

"The Church is the only institution in society which exists for the sake of those who are not members."
-- Archbishop William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1942-1944

Dear Fellow Parishioners,



Greetings from the Stewardship Commission! My name is Pem Hutchinson and I recently agreed to be chair of the Stewardship Commission for St. Thomas'. In the scheme of a three hundred year old parish, I am a relative

newcomer. I met Marek Zabriskie, our rector, when my brother-in-law, Don McLean passed away. Subsequently, my wife Pam also passed away and I interacted with and depended on Marek. He was so good to me and we became friends. I decided to leave St. Paul's, Chestnut Hill, where I had belonged for my entire adult life, teaching Sunday School and participating in Christian fellowship. I am a life long Episcopalian, confirmed at Trinity Swarthmore, followed by six years at Westminster School in Simsbury, CT. My wife Pam is buried here and that, in part, is how St. Thomas' became a major part of my life.

The Stewardship Commission includes: **Kevin Canavan** - Vestry Liaison, **Gus Carey**, **Cynthia Cheston**, **Lewis Hatch**, **Geoff Jackson**, **David Junkin**, **Russ Kaller**, **Rob Kurz**, **Maria Lucci**, **Randy McDowell**, **Bertrand Wache**, **Rick Ward**, with support from consultant **Pat Voigt**, of Schultz Williams, and **Lyn Simensen** - Stewardship Coordinator. The commission meets monthly to focus on year round giving and communication with the parish.

When it is time for church fundraising and we talk about stewardship, what our parish hears is "open your wallets". To me it has a different and broader perspective. The heart of stewardship is the joy of giving!

Hopefully St. Thomas' is the number one and largest gift among your gifts to the community. As our spirituality matures and we become more dedicated to living the word, our stewardship commitment also matures. My spiritual maturity moved from being a rote response in school to an active, fully involved faith as an adult.

In looking at the last year, we experienced a significant increase in our annual pledge through the generosity of the parishioners at St. Thomas', receiving **\$1.02 million dollars** in undesignated and designated pledges from 403 parishioners. This, however, was \$80,000 short of our goal for the year. If the remaining parish families had pledged \$1 per day to the church we would have raised an additional \$36,500 bringing us closer to our goal. St. Thomas' is involved in over 60 ministries on our beautiful hill, in the local community and in the world at large through outreach projects in Honduras and Malawi, church school and youth group, carillon concerts and so much more. Each of these ministries needs to be funded and supported by our community. In 2009 we will face the added challenge of high fuel costs, adding approximately \$25,000 to our budget just for fuel oil. Additional costs for 2009 are going to be incurred for the music program and the New Member coordinator position. A third priest would also represent an increased need in the budget. The Vestry hopes to move to a more proportionate share of our diocesan giving as well.

In the last three years we have seen a significant increase in the average gift to the parish, with the 2008 gift average being \$2522 from 403 families. Three years ago the average pledge was \$1891 from 390 families. We currently have 600 families who are members of our parish.

This year, the Stewardship Commission invites you to participate in an "EVERY

MEMBER" campaign. Our goal to meet increased expenses is \$1.2 million. This is an ambitious goal given the economic times and the challenges faced by some in our parish, but we feel it is important to reach this goal to continue the many wonderful ministries offered at St. Thomas'. Each, and every, gift makes a difference in the life of St. Thomas'. For those of you who give through the plate, which we of course appreciate, we ask that you prayerfully consider making a pledge this year. Our Vestry can only use pledged income in determining the budget for the year. Pledging also allows us to acknowledge your gift and give you a tax statement.

As we move to **Stewardship Sunday** on **November 2nd**, we invite you to join the committee in pledging to our **EVERY MEMBER** campaign "Praising God, Thanking God, Putting God First!" The past campaigns have been very successful - certainly a winner by any standard. We wish to further strengthen that effort by continuing the average gift increases and our effort to receive a pledge from EVERY one of our parishioners. Thank you for supporting the many wonderful ministries at St. Thomas' Church!

Pem Hutchinson
Chair - Stewardship Commission

Inside...

John Wesley: A Faithful Steward	2
Monastic Retreat	2
The Chorister Program	3
Small Group Opportunities	3
Children's Ministries	4
Youth Ministry	4
Bonds of Friendship and Music	5
Congrats to Rob Davidson	5
October Conferences	6
Nursery School News	6
Dear Friends	7
Sunday Forums	7



As we celebrate our theme “*Unabashedly Anglican*,” our Rector will write an article each month about a great Anglican. We hope that these articles enrich love for our Anglican heritage and strengthen your faith. To learn more about Anglicanism we recommend reading *Glorious Companions: Five Centuries of Anglican Spirituality* by Richard H. Schmidt. Copies may be purchased by contacting Anita Burke at 215-233-3970 ext. 121.

Perhaps no man did more to further the mission of the Church among English speaking people than John Wesley, who was born in 1703. Wesley was one of 19 children, 10 of whom survived into adulthood. At Oxford, Wesley and his brother, Charles, a great hymn writer, joined a group known as “the Holy Club” that was soon dubbed “the Methodists” because of their rigorous method of study, prayer and good works.

The Wesleys were fervent about spreading the Christian faith. They participated in a preaching mission to Savannah, Georgia, where they encountered disinterested listeners, mosquitoes, malaria and scorching heat. Their mission was unsuccessful.

A turning point in Christianity history came on May 24, 1738 when John Wesley attended a prayer gathering in Aldersgate, located not far from the Museum of London today. The group was studying Luther’s preface to the Epistle to the Romans when Wesley underwent one of the most famous conversions in Christian history. He wrote,

...I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.

Fellow Anglican George Whitfield, who had launched the Great Awakening and was Benjamin Franklin’s favorite preacher, urged Wesley to preach outdoors. On April 2, 1739, Wesley preached his first outdoor sermon. Thus began a 50 year career of preaching outdoors three or four times a day, never repeating the same sermon as he preached in fields, at street corners, in town greens and in churches when invited. Wesley rode 250,000 miles across England on horseback to deliver

40,000 sermons to eager listeners.

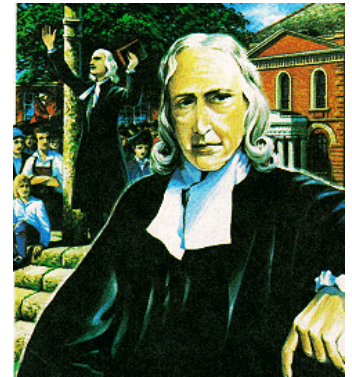
England was changing. The Industrial Revolution was approaching and the population was migrating from rural regions to urban centers. Agriculture was declining, and factories were opening. The Church of England was slow to address the socio-economic changes, urban poverty, upheaval, loss of family roots, transformation in society and values. Wesley’s preaching spoke to new realities and lifted the worker’s spirits.

Wesley had great organizational skills. He created small societies of dedicated Christians and identified capable lay leaders to carry on his work of fervent prayer, Bible study and Christian outreach. Wesley had a lover’s quarrel with the Church of England but never desired to divide the Church. His method of deepening one’s commitment to the Christian faith gave birth to the Methodist Church and influenced the Salvation Army and Pentecostal Church movement.

Wesley had enormous impact on Methodists and Anglicans. Today, both parties claim him as their own. In this season of stewardship, I close with words from Wesley’s sermon “On the Use of Money” preached in 1760:

Gain all you can, without hurting either yourself or your neighbor, in soul or body, by applying hereto with unintermitted diligence and with all the understanding which God has given you. Save all you can, by cutting off every expense which serves only to indulge foolish desire; to gratify either the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eye, or the pride of life; waste nothing, living or dying, on sin or folly, whether for yourself or your children. And then give all you can, or in other words, give all you have to God.... Render to God not a tenth, not a third, not a half, but all that is God’s, be it more or less, by employing all on yourself, your household, the household of faith, and all mankind, in such a manner that you may give a good account of your stewardship when ye can be no longer stewards.”

Mavel +



Monastic Retreat: Opportunity for Spiritual Renewal, Prayer and Growth

St. Thomas’ is offering an exceptional opportunity for 13 persons to go on a retreat at the Holy Cross Monastery in West Park, New York from **Friday, February 6 to Sunday, February 8**. We will depart from St. Thomas’ at noon and return by 6:00 p.m. on Sunday. We welcome retreat members who are willing to volunteer as drivers and will carpool.

The monastery is located approximately five hours from St. Thomas’ on the banks of the Hudson River. It offers a magnificent contemplative setting and fabulous view of the river and surrounding countryside. Retreat members will be able to worship with the monks, share meals with fellow retreat members and have ample free time to take walks, rest, read and write in their journal.

As part of our “*Unabashedly Anglican*” theme our Rector, who will lead the retreat, will help us explore Anglican spirituality. He will offer brief meditations on the centrality of the Eucharist, the use of the Daily Office, the rhythm of the liturgical year, the importance of the Psalter, great Anglican devotional writers, the spirituality of Anglican hymnody and Anglican poets. The cost of the retreat is \$200 per person and includes room and board in a wonderful and unforgettable Anglican monastery. Please contact **Anita Burke at 215-233-3970 x121** to sign up. All deposits must be received by **December 1, 2008**. Space is very limited.



The church has long been considered a preserver and promoter of the arts. Such a dedication of our creative selves to the Divine has made possible wonderful windows, carvings, silversmithing, embroidery, paintings and music. When people participate in art in the church, they participate in the stories of scripture in all new ways. This is why I am SO EXCITED ABOUT THE CHORISTER PROGRAM here at St. Thomas'!

Music opens up an area of our brain and an experience of our bodies that is not attended to in traditional learning environments. The way a word is sung, in its pacing and its note, communicates something that mere words can't convey. Think of the Hallelujah Chorus written by Handel or the Pentecost piece sung by the choir last May. This is why I am SO EXCITED ABOUT THE CHORISTER PROGRAM here at St. Thomas'!

And music commits things to memory that would otherwise be hard to remember. How did you learn the fifty states of this great

country or the list of presidents? Well, if you can still recite them in less than a couple of minutes, it is probably because you learned them through song. Church music sets scripture to song. This is why I am SO EXCITED ABOUT THE CHORISTER PROGRAM here at St. Thomas'!

When Marek first started talking about the Royal School of Church Music, I had no point of reference. Throughout the year, and now with Cindy's arrival, I see what good things are in store for my children (and yours). And it is FREE! The RSCM Chorister program will offer my kids a chance to sing their faith, learn the fundamentals of music, and achieve skills in music that will be recognizable beyond this church environment. This doesn't matter much to them. But they are excited about being with their church friends. They are excited about receiving medals and ribbons for accomplishments in music. They are excited about being a part of something that is good that is beyond anything that they could do on their own.

Last year, on one of the days that the cleaning service cleaned our house, I found myself humming while I made my lunch.

Much to my surprise I was humming "How Lovely is Thy Dwelling Place" by Brahms. I got a great laugh out of that association. It came to me because I had sung it in high school as part of a choir. There are many times that scripture comes to support me through the ups and downs of my life. I would say that 90% of those times it is through song. I am delighted that my children will have the same Divine support through scripture as it taps into their innermost selves through song. This is a gift of faith made possible only through the church. And I am so glad that St. Thomas' is offering this to our young people as part of our commitment to help them grow, as we stated at their baptism, in their new life in Christ.

How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD of hosts! My soul longs, indeed it faints for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God." Psalm 84:1-2

Whitney +

Small Group Opportunities

Sunday mornings after church. The mission of the **Adult Spiritual Formation Commission** is to foster spiritual and personal growth through Christian study and fellowship. We believe that Small Groups are a wonderful way to do this! We invite you to join us this fall.

Prodigal Sons & Material Girls: How Not to Be Your Child's ATM, by Nathan Dugan

Group Leaders: *Chris and Amy Roak*
September 21 – October 26
"Part expose and part survival guide, Prodigal Sons and Material Girls addresses the nagging issue faced by many parents today – why do their children have such unrealistic expectations about money? The book is divided into two comprehensive parts. Part I outlines the disturbing facts about America's possession-crazed youth and the society that has distorted their views. In Part II, Dugan offers creative and convincing examples on how to leverage his highly success-

ful "Share-Save-Spend" approach to money – critical elements for you to help your children break free from the materialism that has become ingrained in our society." (Taken from Google Book Search.)

Glorious Companions by Richard H. Schmidt October 5 – October 26

This book study will follow a presentation by The Right Reverend Fred Borsch on "Poets, Mystics & Theologians" at the Rector's Forum on September 28. The group will meet in the weeks following his presentation to read and discuss some of the people within the book that will not be covered in the lecture. Participants will become more aware of the theological and spiritual contributions made by devoted Anglicans throughout history. This book has also been recommended by our Rector for the "One Book, One Parish" program.

More Small Group info at:
www.stthomaswhitemarsh.org

IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

In your prayers at home during the month of October, please remember those on our parish Prayer Chain list.

**Jane Beadle, Jo Ann Beistline,
Joyce Bishop, Nancy Bowers, Don,
Lyn Peasley, Meredith Pratt, Al Powell,
Wilson Prichett, Gail Simmonds,
Jason Wilmont**

FOR ALL MEMBERS OF THE ARMED
FORCES AND ESPECIALLY THOSE OF
OUR PARISH FAMILY:

**Jordan Clay, Robert McClean,
Pat Scardino, Tom Shaw, Robert Texter,
Nicole and Jeremy Ussery and for their
families who serve through waiting.**

FOR SAINTS DEPARTED:
Henry MacAdoo

FOR ALL EXPECTANT PARENTS

FOR OTHER BLESSINGS
For those who were married:
Janet Wolf and John Ambos
on September 27

GROTON HOUSE BOOKS AND GIFTS...

...is closing its doors — **50% off all merchandise!!**

Last shopping day is **Saturday, Oct. 11, 8:00am – 3:00pm**



Increased emphasis on ministry to children Proverbs 22:6 makes this observation: "Train children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray" (NRSV).

In his book *Transforming Your Children Into Spiritual Champions*, George Barna presents research that confirms this timeless principle. That research indicates that a person's lifelong behaviors and beliefs are generally developed when they are young—particularly before their teenage years. More specifically, Barna notes the following:

- 1) A person's moral foundations are generally in place by age 9. After that age, most people simply refine their views.
- 2) A person's response to Jesus (and the gospel concerning his life, death and resurrection) is usually determined before age 18. For most Americans, the response is set by age 12.
- 3) A person's spiritual beliefs are set in

place when they are preteens. Those beliefs include the nature of God, the existence of Satan, the reliability of the Bible, the afterlife, Jesus Christ, the means of gaining God's favor, and the influence of spiritual forces in a person's life.

"In essence," the book notes, "what you believe by the time you are 13 is what you will die believing. Of course, there are many individuals who go through life-changing experiences in which their beliefs are altered, or instances in which a concentrated body of religious teaching changes one or more core beliefs. However, most people's minds are made up and they believe they know what they need to know spiritually by age 13. Their focus in absorbing religious teaching after that age is to gain reassurance and confirmation of their existing beliefs rather than to glean new insights that will redefine their foundations."

4) Adult church leaders usually had significant involvement in the church when they were children. Thus, those who will become the church's leaders 20 years from

now are probably active in children's church programs today.

This research should be a wake-up call for all parents of children and for the church at large. The spiritual education of our children must be a top priority—with parents and the church working in partnership.

The most important role in this partnership is that of the parents. This was underscored in a survey of 10,000 young Christians who were asked to identify the influences in their lives that helped them deepen their commitment to Christ. While they listed such influences as friends, church youth leaders and personal struggles, by far the most significant influence was that of their parents.

Because parents are the strongest influence in a child's life, the church must support and otherwise partner with parents in ministering to children. And this is best accomplished when parents take an active role in the programs provided by the church.

Sister BJ



Youth

We are off to a great start this year. The Cell Phone Pool Party that was held in September was a great success with more students participating this year than last. We had a barbecue for our first Jr. High Youth group event where the parents were able to meet each other and get to know the members of the Youth Commis-

sion. Of course we had to have some games where the youth took on the adults, and I must say it was fun to be on the winning team.

I would like to thank all of you who came out to support us for the youth presentation in the Rector's Forum when we discussed our mission trip (right, the team poses after a hard days work). The questions that were asked of the youth helped them to grasp an even deeper understanding of the trip. Your support of Mission Possible trips helps to transform the lives of the youth who participate. Last year we had twenty two youth from St. Thomas' involved in Mission Possible. Next year we may need to break into two trips to accommodate the number of youth who have expressed an interest and would like to volunteer to go on the mission trip.

Our first Sr. High Youth group meeting went well. We painted ceiling tiles in the youth room and now most of them are painted with a Youth Group member's name. It is really amazing to see so many stop in the youth room and check it out. We also played games and had our normal food (hoagies and pizza), and had a good group discussion on group norms.

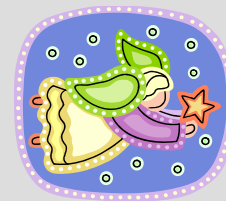
Coming up in October, we will have the **Sr. High Harvest Festival Retreat** and the **Harvest Festival** on October 18 and 19. The Sr. High will be meeting on October 12 and 26.

The Jr. High will be meeting on October 10 and 24. Please keep an eye out for more information on the retreat. It will be a fun-filled weekend. Also don't forget about Second Saturday Sales on October 11. We need all the youth to come out and lend a hand to sell toys and to help work the snack bar. Until next time my friends, may the peace of Jesus Christ, our risen Lord and Savior, be with you and your families.

- Andrew



SAVE THE DATE



2008 Be An Angel Christmas Party

The parish will host its fourteenth annual *Be An Angel Christmas Party*, **Sunday, December 14th**. Our guests at the party will be the mothers and children from an Episcopal Community Services (ECS) program called FAST. This program assists chronically homeless mothers receive and maintain permanent housing, as well as intensive case management involving life and parenting skills.

The party festivities on **December 14th** will include craft activities, music and family togetherness at a sit-down, served dinner. The afternoon ends with the distribution of family bags of gifts that have been purchased and wrapped by our parishioners. Watch for more information or call Laura Archer (215-643-3971) or Rosella Hague (215-643-3766).



The parishioners of St. Thomas' Church and the community have an outstanding opportunity to hear the glorious music of our Anglican tradition in the nave of St. Thomas' on **Saturday, October 24 at 7:30 p.m.** when we host the **HEREFORD CATHEDRAL CHOIR.**

There has been a choir of men and boys singing at Hereford Cathedral since the 13th Century. The current boys, ages 7 – 14, and lay clerks (the gentlemen who sing alto, tenor and bass) continue in that 600 year tradition of magnificent music-making. During the regular school year, they sing for eight services each week, as well as singing special concerts, and performances on BBC radio and television.

It will be a treat for me to welcome them and introduce them to you. I met the director, Geraint Bowen, and his wife Lucy 12 years ago when they brought the choir of Girls and Men from St. David's Cathedral, Wales to the cathedral in

Atlanta. I anticipate that new bonds of friendship will be formed between the people of St. Thomas' and Hereford during this visit in 2008.

How can you support this wonderful event for our community?

- Plan to attend the concert and invite your family and friends
- Offer to be a host family
- Become a **Patron** of the concert

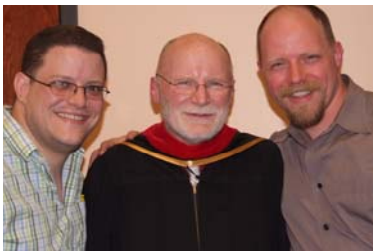
Concert Patrons help to make this event possible by their generous support. For a \$100 donation, patrons receive two tickets, reserved seats, names listed in the program and an invitation to a Post-Concert Reception with the Director.

You will not want to miss the opportunity to hear this fine choir. I look forward to seeing you on the 24th of October for a splendid concert. (NOTE: Donations are partly tax-deductible).

Cindy DeDakis,
Minister of Music



Parishioner in the News... Congrats to Rob Davidson!



Parishioner **Rob Davidson** was awarded a **Master of Divinity** degree from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia this past spring. He has been approved for postulancy and expects to be ordained as a vocational deacon next June.

Asked why he wanted to be a clergyman after a career as a computer consultant, Rob said that ordination is an indefinable calling. As a parishioner at St. Thomas', he was involved in parish and diocesan stewardship. He received a calling and was sent to Camp Kanuga, where he met other clergy, including the Rev. Ron Reed, who formerly served at St. Thomas', and was impressed by them.

He spent six summers at the University of the South at Sewanee, where he was trained as facilitator and trainer for its continuing educa-

tion course, Disciples of Christ in Community (DOCC). He completed Education for Ministry, another of Sewanee's continuing education courses, in 1990.

During his years at the seminary, Rob did field work at the Episcopal Cathedral, where he helped organize a dinner for parents at Ronald McDonald House, participated in services and gave a sermon. As part of his clinical pastoral education requirement, he was a chaplain at Abington Memorial Hospital.

Until the end of this summer, Rob served at St. James Church, Downingtown, where the Rev. Tim Steeves, former associate rector at St. Thomas', is rector. While at St. James, Rob was a pastoral care visitor, was involved in services and gave sermons.

He and his wife Pam have been members since 1978. They have four sons and five grandchildren. Rob was born in Philadelphia and grew up near Pittsburgh. He earned a BA in economics from Lehigh University and served two years in the U. S. Army. He worked for IBM for 10 years before opening his own business.

Second Saturday Sale Wraps Up 2008 Season

Please come join that fun on **Saturday, October 11** when we wrap up the 2008 Second Saturday Sales. Clothing for everyone from infant to adult will be sold for a **\$10 per bag sale**. Jewelry, toys, books, china, glassware and collectibles will also be sold. Food will be offered by the youth group. The Second Saturday

Sale will take place from 8:00am—12 noon, rain or shine, on the church grounds at the barn and its immediate surroundings on the church grounds. Proceeds of the Second Saturday Sales benefit humanitarian projects that assist children, families and education; hunger and housing, and global ministries. Primary recipient of this sale will be our **Ministry of Meals**, in which parishioners prepare meals for **Aid for Friends**, a nonprofit organization which distributes them through the Philadelphia area, and the Church of the Advocate's Soup Kitchen.

October Conferences



Theologians, Mystics and Poets
OCTOBER 1, 15, 22 and 29
7:00—9:00pm
MacColl Auditorium
Cost is \$80 for four programs;
\$25/class
(wine and dinner included)

Bishop Fred Borsch, professor of Anglican Studies and New Testament at the Lutheran Seminary in Mount Airy and former Episcopal Bishop of Los Angeles, former Chaplain at Princeton University and Dean of the Church Divinity School of the Pacific and author of numerous books, will offer a series of Wednesday evening lectures on the great spiritual writers and thinkers of the Anglican tradition.

We will study important figures such as Thomas Cranmer, Richard Hooker, Lancelot Andrewes, John Donne, George Herbert, Hannah More, Christiana Rossetti, William Temple, Evelyn Underhill, C.S. Lewis, Desmond Tutu and many more. Bishop Borsch shall help us explore important themes in Anglicanism including comprehensiveness, modesty, the Bible, tradition, reason, mysticism, the poetic imagination, evangelism, worship, the sacraments and ecumenical concerns.

This program costs \$80 and includes four catered dinners and wine (\$25/class). **RSVP:** All participants in this program must register by **September 29** by calling the receptionist at St. Thomas' at 215-233-3970.



Grant Them Wisdom:
Reflections on Building a Great Love in Christian Marriage
OCTOBER 4
9:00am—Noon
MacColl Auditorium
Lunch from Noon until 12:30 p.m.
Cost is \$30 and includes lunch
(Renewal of wedding vows in the church afterwards for those interested in doing so.)

How often do we give ourselves the time, the privilege of stopping for a few hours and reflection on what it is that most of us can do to honor better the vows that marked the most important moments of both our wedding day and, arguably, our entire lives?

The Rev. Mark S. Anschutz is the former Rector of St. Michael and All Angels in Dallas, Texas, Christ Church, Alexandria, Virginia and St. James' Church, Madison Avenue, New York. He is well known throughout the Episcopal Church as an educator and, particularly, for his programs on Christian marriage.

In a lively, fun and informative fashion he will offer an opportunity for married couples from one year to seventy years of marriage to engage new and penetrating ways in which their relationships can be enhanced. For married persons this is a not to be missed opportunity both to enjoy oneself and grow in the knowledge of what true Christian marriage implies. This program will conclude with lunch served at noon and a renewal of wedding vows for those interested in doing so in the church. **RSVP** to 215-233-3970.



Celtic Christianity:
Ancient Lessons that Can Shape Our Lives Today
OCTOBER 18
9:00am —Noon
MacColl Auditorium
Cost is \$15

What is it about Celtic Christianity that has become so appealing to Christians today? Who were the Celtic saints and what did they bring to the Church as models of holiness? The answers to these questions can be painted with broad strokes, with opportunity for dialogue and lively participation.

Sister Barbara Jean Brown, Director of Children's Ministries at St. Thomas' Church, has studied Celtic Christianity extensively and has led pilgrimages throughout Britain to many ancient Celtic holy sites. Join us as we explore the cultural tradition of the Celts before Christianity and study how the Christian faith was embraced by the people of the British Isles. Experience the poetry and prayer of ancient Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Learn about the importance of pilgrimage and the influence of the Celtic saints.

RSVP to 215-233-3970.

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For a listing of Conferences for **November 2008—May 2009**, please visit www.stthomaswhitemarsh.org.

Nursery School News

On **Tuesday, September 9, 2008**

St. Thomas' Nursery School opened its doors to begin its 57th year. In addition to finding the classrooms prepared and the playgrounds ready for action, the nursery school families found another surprise awaiting them...the first phase of the **Memorial Children's Garden** within the confines of the larger playground was under construction. The plan for the Memorial Children's Garden was created to remember and honor the numerous families

that have been a part of St. Thomas' Nursery School as well as teachers, parents, children and others close to the school who have sadly departed this life.

The children's garden focuses on bringing sensory experiences and love of nature into the already colorful and vibrant playground. A steppingstone pathway winding through a little grove of birch trees interspersed with touchable, fragrant plants will lead to a story ring of little tree trunks organized into a seating area for an outdoor classroom. There will also be a musical pathway featuring elements which

include bamboo rain tubes, wooden triangles and wooden bells. Quiet and contemplative play spaces are proposed as well as a hummingbird garden, bird feeders and train whistles with pull chords to accompany the children shouting "TRAIN" when the train roars past.

This garden is being made possible by the generous donations of parents, families and friends of St. Thomas' Nursery School. Contributions are still being accepted. Please call **Caroline Hauser** at **215-233-2923** for more information. —Caroline Hauser, Director



I am writing to you from Oxford, where I am attending a course on Christianity and culture at St. Stephen's House one of Oxford's three seminaries. By the time that you read this I will be home, but for now two weeks remain in my sabbatical. This has been an exciting time of learning and meeting

wonderful Church of England leaders, theologians and authors.

Over the years I have accrued nine months of sabbatical and have chosen to use two months this summer along with my vacation and a week of continuing education. I am so grateful to have had this time and have cherished each moment to attend to the things that I can so easily neglect.

I have read a great deal of Anglican theology and have begun writing a book on Anglicanism. I have sent sample chapters to two editors and am waiting to hear from them. Writing a book is more challenging than I had imagined. It gives me great respect for authors.

Because of our family schedule, I saved my travel time for the final three weeks of my sabbatical. Thanks to some careful networking I have met with some old friends and made new friends. These visits have included meeting with the Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, Ken Kearon, who will visit St. Thomas' on Sunday, March 15, 2009.

I have met the Secretary to the Windsor Report, Westminster Abbey's Canon Theologian, the former Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey and his wife Eileen and many more. I learned today that I will be able to meet next week with Archbishop Rowan Williams, who has just returned from his sabbatical. What a privilege! I look forward to it.

I hope to arrange a parish pilgrimage to England sometime during the next two years. If you are interested in visiting England, seeing the sacred sights, the cradle of our Anglican heritage and meeting with church leaders, theologians and authors, please let me know. We can shape this pilgrimage together.

Last weekend I visited the cathedrals in Salisbury and Winchester and had lunch with the Dean of Winchester in his ancient deanery, where King Charles once slept in a room which is now the

family kitchen. Author Jane Austen is buried in the cathedral along with Isaac Walton, father of fly fishing and author of *The Complete Angler*. This was truly a sacred shrine for fisherman!

I meet tomorrow with the Rector of St. Mary's Church, Oxford, where John Keble preached his famous "Assize Sermon" in 1833, which launched the Oxford Movement. John Wesley, John Henry Newman, Desmond Tutu and C.S. Lewis have preached from this pulpit. The oldest library at Oxford University was housed in a room at St. Mary's with books chained to desks. Several decades ago Oxfam was started in this same room.

Earlier this week I met with the Dean of Christ Church, who showed me the tree in his garden that author Charles Dodgson, better known as Lewis Carroll, described in *Alice in Wonderland*, and the door which Alice tried but could not enter. Dodgson was a Christ Church College mathematics professor. The current dean offered marvelous wisdom about the Anglican Communion.

This weekend I travel to Hereford Cathedral, whose choir will visit St. Thomas' on Saturday, October 25. What a great moment that shall be! Next week I visit Cambridge and meet with Terry Waite, the former captive in Beirut, and John Polkinghorne, the distinguished scientist and priest. Both men have visited our church. While in London, I will be the guest of Clare Cross, a former St. Thomas' parishioner.

I am grateful for the opportunity to read, learn, pray, rest, renew and expand my vision so that I can write, preach and teach over the coming years based upon what I have learned during this sabbatical. I very grateful to Whitney for her wonderful leadership in my absence and to our fabulous staff who lead our church confidently while I am away.

I look forward to seeing you, being home with my family, sharing ministry together and exploring our theme for this coming year "Unabashedly Anglican." It has never felt so exciting to be an Anglican and an Episcopalian. We have a great faith tradition! With cathedral choirs from Hereford and Canterbury and fabulous Anglican speakers joining us it is bound to be an exceptional year.

May God's blessings richly abound in your life and in your hearts.

Faithfully yours in Christ, *Marek +*

SUNDAY FORUMS

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OCTOBER 5

The Grace and the Reason We Give of Ourselves



The Rev. Dr. Mark S. Anschutz

OCTOBER 12

Town Hall Meeting with Our Clergy and Vestry

OCTOBER 19

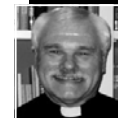
What's Working in the Diocese of PA and Why



Bishop Allen Bartlett

OCTOBER 26

A Vision for Future: Rebuilding, Reforming, Recasting the Diocese of PA



The Rev. Glenn Matis and Bill Powell

Upcoming Guest Preachers...

October 5 : REV. DR. MARK ANSCHUTZ, former Rector of St. Michael and All Angels in Dallas, Texas

October 12: PEM HUTCHINSON, former CEO of the Westmoreland Coal Company, parishioner and community leader

October 26: CANON ANDREW PIPER, Canon Precentor at Hereford Cathedral in England

November 9: MILLARD FULLER, founder of Habitat for Humanity International and the Fuller Housing Center

For a listing of Guest Preachers please visit www.stthomaswhitemarsh.org.



St. Thomas' Church

WHITEMARSH

Come with us on a journey with Christ

St. Thomas' Episcopal Church, Whitemarsh
P.O. Box 247 Bethlehem Pike & Camp Hill Road
Fort Washington, PA 19034-0247
Phone: (215) 233-3970 Fax (215) 233-2893
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WORSHIP SERVICES

8:00am: Rite I in the church
9:00am: First Steps to Worship
Parish Hall Living Room
9:30am: Second Steps to Worship
MacColl Auditorium
(1st & 3rd Sundays, only)
9:30am: Rite II in the church
10:45am: Spiritual Formation
Church School
Rector's Forum
Adult Small Groups

The Parish Call is published 10 times a year.
Please submit articles for upcoming editions to:
lisaw@stthomaswhitemarsh.org.
Articles must be received by the first of the
month for next month's newsletter.

"FYI" e-Newsletter — Go to:
www.stthomaswhitemarsh.org and click
on the "FYI" icon to be added to our weekly
email distribution list.

ST. THOMAS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH, WHITEMARSH

Bethlehem Pike and Camp Hill Road Fort Washington, PA 19034-0247 Phone: 215-233-3970 Fax: 215-233-2893 www.stthomaswhitemarsh.org

SUNDAY SERVICES: 8:00 a.m.: Holy Eucharist, Rite I; 9:00 a.m.: First Steps to Worship (Holy Eucharist for Families with children under 5; Parish House Living Room); 9:30 a.m.: Holy Eucharist, Rite II (Little Disciples' Worship Time (ages 3-6) at the 10:00 a.m. service); Sunday Nursery: Available for infants age 6 –36 months from 9:15a.m.—11:30 a.m. in MacColl Auditorium (Lower Level). (See above for Summer Worship times).

WEEKDAY SERVICES: Holy Eucharist is celebrated in the Church at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesdays. A Service of Healing is offered on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month during the Eucharist.

COLLEGE OF INTERCESSORS: To request prayers or to join the College of Intercessors, please call the Parish Office at 215-233-3970.

CLERGY VISITS: Please notify the Parish Office of any parishioners who are ill, shut-in or hospitalized and who would like to receive Holy Communion and/or a visit by a member of the clergy.

THE VESTRY: Pam McKernan, Rector's Warden; Ted Brown, Junior Warden; Phil Anspach, Accounting Warden; Steve Bitterman, Kevin Canavan, Dianne Crookenden, Charles Horter, Carl Jameson, Anne Klinger, Joyce Lawson, Nicole Riter, Tom Morgan.

THE STAFF

The Entire Congregation, Ministers
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The Rt. Rev. Edward Lee, Assistant Bishop

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		Lisa White, Communications and Publicity	ext. 115