

THE BRANCH

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2008

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."

John 15:5,8 NIV



Our Mission:

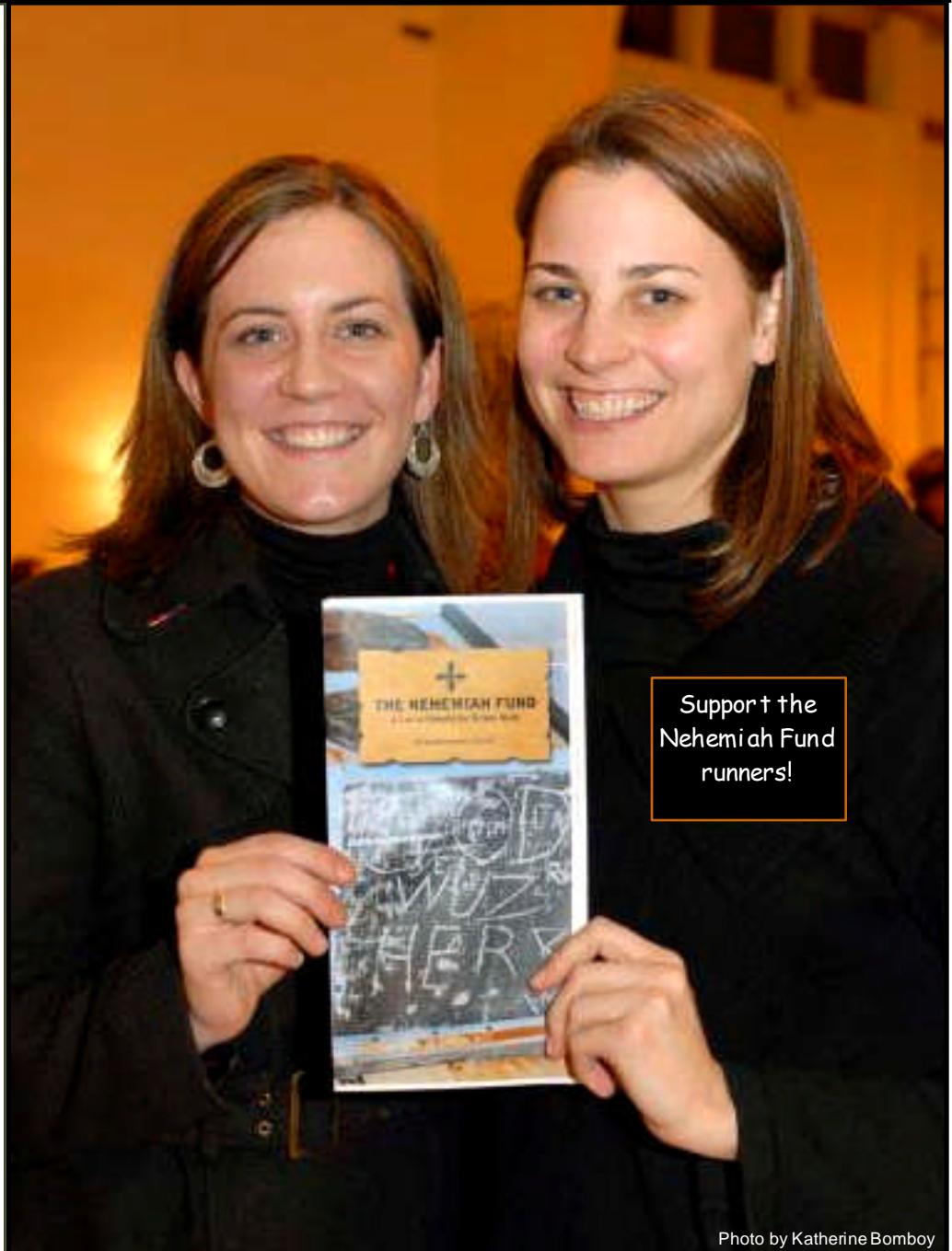
We are a family of believers (kingdom community), on a journey to the fulfillment of our God-given purpose.

Our mission is:

- 1) To bring people to know Jesus Christ;
- 2) To provide clear and life-changing discipleship training;
- 3) To help people discern their life's purpose and provide opportunities for them to fulfill that purpose in ministry and mission. The fruit of our endeavor is that God be glorified in all the world (worship).

Page turner: Picture shows Fr. Dixon Kinser and supporters at his

ordination to the diaconate. He will be ordained priest on March 30.



Support the
Nehemiah Fund
runners!

Photo by Katherine Bomboy

Runners support Nehemiah Fund

Brittany Lassiter and Meredith Pharaoh are heading up a group of runners training for the Music City Marathon. They are trying to raise money through sponsorship to support the Nehemiah Fund. (More on the fund inside)

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The Rev. Randy Hoover-Dempsey, *assistant rector*
The Rev. Dixon Kinser, *dir. of youth discipleship*
The Rev. John Awan, *Sudanese ministry*
The Rev. Albino Gur Maror, *Sudanese ministry*
The Rev. David Wilson, *pastoral associate*

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Andy Valentine, *junior warden*
Len Harrison, *treasurer*
Whit Smyth, *vestry clerk*

Greg Daniel, Mavis Harrop, Tom Howard, Dick Jewell, Denise Kemp, Jud Laughter, Ashley MacLachlan, Paul Miller, Charlie Reasor, Harry Xanthopoulos,

Diocese:

The Rt. Rev. John C. Bauerschmidt, *bishop*

Photo: Don Cason, who completed his term on vestry and as senior warden, chaired the annual meeting.



Photo by Katherine Bomboy

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Articles and announcements
for the April issue of *The Branch* are due no later than March 20, 2008.
Please e-mail your information to: branch@stbs.net.

Thanks to Sarah Bell Earley for assistance with copy editing.

Rector's Annual Meeting address

We are called to be a people of conviction and commitment

"Therefore since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith..."

I am sure that everyone has noticed that the theme for St. B's Annual Meeting was "Rhythm of the Saints." All accurate indications are that we do not exist in a vacuum as a parish church. There have been thousands, if not millions, that have gone before us.

The gospel message, a message that brings the power of God for salvation, has been faithfully handed down from generation to generation since the time of the apostles. Like a baton in a relay race, the gospel has been passed on, and this evening we celebrate, first, that our forefathers received it and, second, that they were faithful in passing it to us. Now it is our responsibility to be faithful to the claim of Christ on our lives.

I would like to share with you my understanding of our future: where God is calling us and what he is calling us to be.

Let me remind you that the church is not a democracy. We are not here to vote as an attempt to ascertain God's will. We are here to wait on the chief shepherd and to collectively move as he leads. My responsibility as pastor/priest is to assemble, teach and pastor the community toward becoming a people ultimately capable of following. This is not as easy as it sounds, because we North Americans are an independent people, often more anxious to strike out on our own than to listen to the voice of the shepherd.

This is how I believe we have been called to pass the baton of the gospel on; Here is what I understand God's call on us to look like for the months (and years) ahead.

God is calling us to be a people of conviction and commitment.

- We need to be convinced that the gospel is true and allow its claims to fully own our lives;

- We need to be convinced that God has not abandoned the church as we have received it, and to be committed to live in this tribe to fulfill his goals for us;
- We need to be convinced that God needs to have his way and that this can only happen when we abandon our agendas and surrender to him (Glory only comes with surrender.);
- We need to be convinced that God's purposes will only be accomplished when his people are being transformed into his image and likeness;
- We need to be committed to stay for the long haul and abandon temptations to give up and seek to serve God elsewhere, after all he uses community to form us more than anything else;
- We need to be convinced that God does have a plan; that he is sovereign and that when we are cooperative with him it will be win /win / win – God will win; we will win; and the world (hearing his message) will win.

God is not interested in St B's becoming yet another mega-church

The only advantages to a mega-church are that clergy egos are stroked and that it becomes easy for members to get so lost that they can miss out on engaging in authentic transforming relationships.

I have said many times and I will say it again: I believe that every congregation has an optimum size. At this size, the engine purrs on every cylinder and all members know their place. When a church is too small people get burned out and when it is too large they get lost.

When your vestry has determined the optimum size it will be necessary for us to begin to plan our next step and this will be to hive. This means that one of the clergy with a small community of equipped volunteers and the blessing of our bishop, will be sent from here to plant a new church

(Continued on page 9)



Kingdom Talk

by Fr. Jerry Smith

Rector,

St. Bartholomew's

Our Vision Statement

To imitate Jesus Christ and develop maturity in him

- In knowledge
- In character and lifestyle
- In devotion to God
- In relationships
- In ministry and mission



Rick Wood: RITI volunteer



Getting to know ...

by Marjie Smith

"Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?"

And the king will say to them in reply, 'Men, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me'."
... Matthew 25:37-40

For more than a decade, baseball has had Alex Rodriguez ("A-Rod") as one of its MVPs. For more than two decades – since January 1986 – St. B's Room In The Inn (RITI) program has had Rick Wood ("L-Rod") as its undisputed MVP. Rick, a long-time member of St. B's, earned the "L-Rod" moniker by being the host and the "lightning rod" on many of RITI's most unusual and memorable evenings over the past 22 years.

As one of the individuals who regularly over-nights with the roster of homeless guests who eat supper and sleep at St. B's on Saturdays, he is accustomed to the unique needs of the ever-changing group of guests. Usually, they are simple. Occasionally, they are extraordinary.

He recalls most vividly the evening where he had to call his wife, Sandy, a nurse, three times. Two of the calls concerned possible interactions between prescription medicines and over-the-counter medications. The third call was even more out of the knowledge realm of this laid-back mechanical engineer. It involved pregnancy. One of the guests, who was seven months pregnant, wasn't sure whether her water had broken. With Sandy's coaching, they determined that the problem was due to incontinence.

"(Jim) Pichert never told me there would be questions like that," says Rick, of his long-time fellow RITI volunteer, who recruits, organizes and provides training information to volunteers.

On another occasion, many years ago, when, as Rick puts it, "church management was an oxymoron," weddings and RITI occasionally shared space. On one occasion, one of the homeless guests volunteered his and Rick's skills as clean-up crew in the kitchen follow-

ing the reception. The mother of the bride, thinking Rick was one of the RITI guests, offered to pay him. He didn't accept.

Rick, who puts his mechanical engineering skills to work designing hospital air conditioning systems for his employer, Smith, Seckman, Reid Inc., feels that RITI is a "concrete way in which I can do what Jesus said to do": take care of those in need. As he has continued with the program, he has experienced an increased sense of God's grace in his life. That and twice encountering former guests working in the community have reinforced the importance of the program.

The Campus for Human Development, which coordinates the Room In the Inn program, does not just provide food and shelter through the participating churches, but, along with other services, provides training so that participants can enter or re-enter the job market.

There are many reasons why people find themselves homeless, says Rick, including being one paycheck away from disaster. In those instances, "they lost a paycheck," he says, simply. There are those who pass through because times are temporarily tough and those who, for various reasons, are long-term. Whatever the reasons, Rick feels compelled to be there for them.

"Eat, sleep and drive – my three spiritual gifts; I don't want to brag, but if you've got it, flaunt it," he says with his customary sense of humor.

As he has travelled back and forth driving the church vans with the Saturday guests, who are primarily men but also women and children, he learns about them. Conversations sometimes unfold during the drive and often during the meal. "I'm not forceful. I'm better one-on-one, but you get to talking," he says. He doesn't ask why they are in the program, although they sometimes volunteer it. He prefers



Nicknamed Lightning Rod by Jim Pichert

"equal-opportunity" conversation topics such as sports. On recent RITI nights, he has met a very young couple trying to make their way to relatives in Arkansas, as well as a truck driver who has been to all 50 states.

If he was nervous at one time – "It has been so long, I can't remember" – Rick doesn't worry about things going wrong or getting it done right.

Friendships have been formed with co-volunteers at RITI, or in the case of someone like Steve Thorne, with whom he has been involved in Scouting, further strengthened. It is an early morning, so when they roll out their mats to sleep, chat isn't always on the agenda for the volunteers.

"Some want to chatter more than others. As I've gotten older, I'm more inclined to turn the lights out," he says.

His wife, Sandy, who is a nurse with Vanderbilt (she was with the children's hospital but recently moved to medical research), doesn't spend the nights at RITI, but does get involved with preparing and serving meals.

Rick started attending St. B's in 1981. He met his wife, in a convoluted way, through playing on the St. B's softball team. Bert Hardwick was the team leader and pitcher. He took a liking to Rick and told him, "Hey, we don't have much for singles here, but my daughter goes to Christ Presbyterian." He gave Rick her phone number and asked him to call her. He did. The rest, as is often said, is history: they were married in 1983 and have a daughter, Katherine, 21, and son, David, 19.

Along with his long-time involvement with Room in the Inn, Rick has volunteered in other capacities, some of which were more of a fit than others. "I like to usher. I have taught various levels of Sunday school with varying degrees of success. I pitched in, but it's not my calling," he admits of his teaching stints.

He guesses that he has been working RITI for about 17 or 18 years, to which Pichert, who thought it was more like 22 years, responds in his bantering fashion, "Either Rick has been serving much



Photo by Marjie Smith

Rick Wood: AKA Lightning Rod, feels compelled to help the guests who arrive at St. B's through Room In The Inn.

longer than he admits, or all the lightning strikes are affecting his memory."

St. B's was one of the churches that responded in 1986 when RITI was formed under the leadership of the Rev. Charlie Strobel, a Roman Catholic priest. St. B's members, Jim Stranch and Randall Ferguson, heard about the new program through a Bible study/lunch group at First Presbyterian.

Says Pichert, "Saints Stranch and Ferguson brought St. B's (and card-playing friends like Saints Kown, Weems and Hoover-Dempsey) into the program in January 1987, making this our 22nd year of unbroken service."

Anything you may have heard about the rip-roaring times (and card games) in those early days is probably absolutely true, but we'll let Fr. Randy tell those stories in a future column.

Room In The Inn facts

The program currently provides food and shelter for up to 225 people each night in over 150 area congregations from November 1 to March 31. At St. B's, families, individuals, supper clubs and other church groups rally to provide food and hands to minister to the 12 individuals to stay at the church on Saturday evenings.

The program is operated by the Campus for Human Development, a religious non-profit organization, which was formed in 1995 by the merger of three other organizations: Room In The Inn, The Guest House, and FOCUS (Faith Organizations in Covenant for Understanding and Service). All three provided services to the homeless in Nashville.

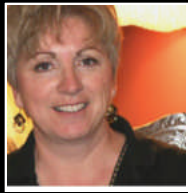
In the past year, 28,522 beds were provided to 1,033 different individuals (46% first-time guests).

More than 150 congregations served 72,217 meals 16,804 snacks and offered 12,658 showers.

29,373 volunteers provided 11,030 hours and drove 155,242 miles in order to offer safe shelter for the homeless in Nashville.



Baxter, the family ghost



Ruminations

by Marjie Smith

Richard Baxter was imprisoned for his belief in ecumenism. An Anglican priest and fiery preacher who turned the community of Kiddeminster, England, on its ear during his 19 years there as a cleric, he suffered persecution throughout his life. He was a moderate nonconformist, disillusioned with the episcopacy, and the founder of a dergy association that went against church/state edicts.

Spending time in jail did not deter this Anglican evangelist. Nor did it drive him from the church. He fought from within, creating such influence that he was referred to, in a *Christianity Today* article, as "the most prominent English churchman of the 1600s."

The only reason I know all this is because he is plunked in our family lineage, right along, undoubtedly, with highwaymen, tinkers and slimy politicians. However, the Baxter line is the one in which my father takes great pride. I've never known whether to be amused or annoyed at this singling out of one drop in the gene pool.

Perhaps I did inherit his nonconformity. My family would be the first to agree, and not at all in a judgmental way – we love each other dearly, differences and all.

Most of my family members attend a denomination where they do not believe that women should teach men – a concept so foreign to my makeup as to make me wonder how I was born into this family. Only Christian grace keeps my siblings from making public their own wonderment on

the subject.

One day, years ago, several of us were chatting inside my parents' cottage. My father was reiterating the somewhat thinned connections to this long-ago ancestor. I piped up as I have on various subjects since I was born the youngest of five, "Well, dad, I suppose inheriting his preaching gifts would only be good news to male members of the family."

Two of my brothers who were sitting with us, turned like synchronized swimmers, and queried, "You do believe the Bible don't you?"

My sentiments have never varied to that question: "Ah, yes, but in its entirety and undissected."

It has seemed unfair to me that the female relatives in that particular church only have the option of inheriting his nonconformity, his droopy English eyes and his gallbladder disease.

Fortunately, I am Anglican. However, the opportunity is wasted as I have not one bit of genetic inclination towards preaching. That gift resides on the other side of the marriage. And I'm pretty sure he didn't get it by osmosis.

When His Collarship and I were in England several years ago, my sister flew over to join us. Of course, we had to go to Kiddeminster. We struck a pose beneath the statue of Baxter. But our next stop was much more mischievous. Figuring that the paternal side of our lineage had received more attention than the maternal side, we tried to follow up on our mother's maiden name: Whittington. In a small town of that name near the Welsh border, we found an old castle ruin. We returned with a wonderful fabrication about how we'd found mom's long-lost family estate. No one, of course, bought it, not even our mom, who was sliding into dementia, but we had a lot of fun eating our boxed lunch in the ruins.

And related to him or not, familiarity has bred admiration for Baxter, the family ghost. I admire his unwavering determination to stick with preaching the gospel. A church-packing preacher, he reformed the church and community of Kiddeminster. He was a prolific writer of books and hymns, still in use today.

I have watched so much time spent over the past several years by clergy fretting about the national church; endlessly blogging about the evils of others; treating people in congregations like possessions rather than a responsibility; and sowing seeds of discontent within congregations rather than leading, comforting and encouraging. It is time for clergy to turn that energy into missionary zeal. It is time to present and live the gospel in such a way that it draws people into the pews and the church community.

They'll get more than a statue out of the deal.

You may contact Marjie Smith at: msscribbler@bellsouth.net

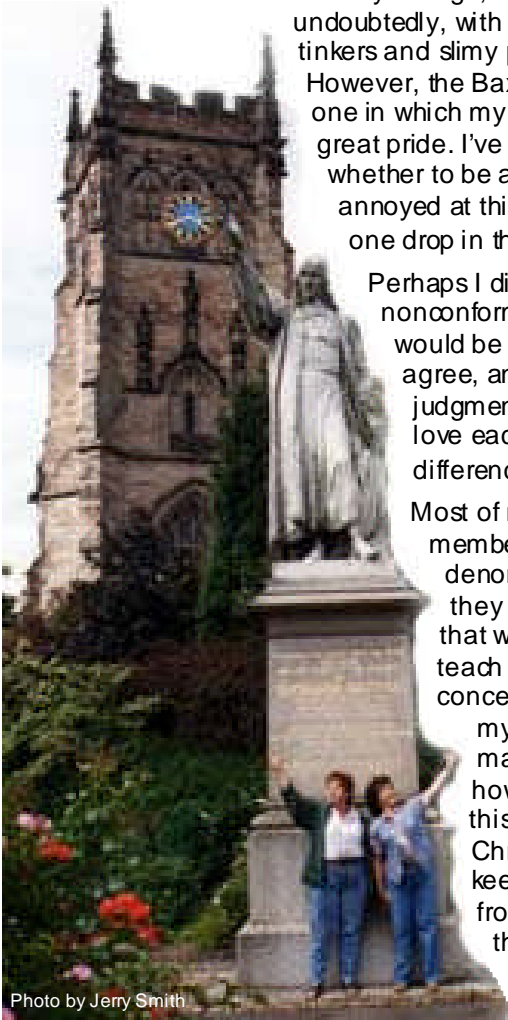
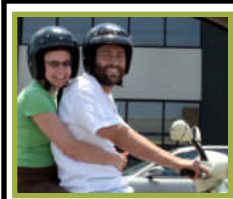


Photo by Jerry Smith

Food: From farm to fork



Live green or die

by Laura and Jud Laughter

What do obesity, hunger, poverty and sustainability have in common? They are all issues that are being tackled by Food Security Partners of Middle Tennessee (FSPMT), a project of the Vanderbilt Institute for Public Policy Studies. Last month, we attended the 2008 Food Security Summit put on by FSPMT.

What is food security, you may ask? It is “a condition in which all community residents obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes community self-reliance and social justice.”

Talk about a lot of work! In just one sentence, these folks state that they are working to heal poverty; improve dietary health; respect cultural diversity; create oases in local food deserts; promote environmentally sustainable growing and support local farmers. If that is not enough, they bind these issues together with the promotion of self-reliance and social justice. At first glance, you may think that this partnership bit off more than it can chew – but when we begin to look deeper, these food issues are intricately woven together and must be treated as a system. First, let's look at the “all community residents” part of the mission statement.

We've talked before about the effects of food miles on our environment, specifically the negative effects of shipping so much of our food from distant places to our plates. On average, our food travels 1,500 miles from where it's grown to where it's eaten. This modern system of centralized industrial farming and commercial supermarkets contributes to “food deserts” in urban environments, areas without access to fresh and healthy food at fair prices. Even in Nashville, food deserts compound the scourge of poverty by restricting the availability of food to what's found in a convenience store or gas station.

There are people working to change this reality in our area. Darcy Freedman, a founding director of FSPMT, has investigated the food deserts in Nashville by researching 106 “food sources” in five neighborhoods surrounding Boys and Girls Clubs. Of the 106 stores, only four were supermarkets. The rest were local markets, convenience stores and fast food restaurants. 25% of these 106 stores had fresh bananas, the most highly represented fresh fruit. By comparison, 80% sold tobacco and 90% sold alcohol.

The purpose of the study, according to Freedman, is that

by finding patterns you can disrupt those patterns, patterns like how food insecurity affects 36% of people below the poverty line, 22% of black families, and 20% of Hispanic families, as compared to only 11% of all people.

One exciting and common sense project that seeks to defeat this unjust trend is led by Sandra Goodwin, a professor at TSU, and Sean Siple of Good Food for Good People. Their project, “Increasing the fruit and vegetable consumption of limited resource individuals through a food gleaning and distribution project,” collects ‘distressed’ food from the Nashville Farmer's Market and delivers it to communities identified as food deserts.

Last year, they distributed 44,453 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables to over 1,000 individuals, the equivalent of \$33,339. “Distressed” refers to food that is not cosmetically perfect but still edible. The project included a laboratory study of the “distressed” food and found that only the tomatoes differed in microbial content from the food being sold at full price (which means you've got to cook the tomatoes). The project will continue this year. If you're interested in volunteering or supporting the project, call Sean at 585-1294.

One of our favorite ways both to promote locally grown food as well as defeat nutritional deficiencies created by food deserts is through urban gardening. Community gardens provide access to nutritionally dense foods, allow immigrants to grow ethnic foods that may not be available for purchase in Nashville, create opportunities for employment through the selling of excess produce, and just generally bring folks together who may not have otherwise met. There are several of these projects growing in Nashville, including the Edgehill Community Garden and Nashville Urban Harvest (<http://nashvilleurbanharvest.org>).

What does this mean for us? As Father Jerry said last month, children of God have hope for the future. We are convinced that the Kingdom of God is dotted with pockets of green, luscious gardens where people of all walks of life, skin color, and background work side by side to grow both food and social justice. Check out some of the links in this article. Get your hands dirty this spring. Take your children to a garden where they can work alongside other children to bring about change.

And we would be remiss if we didn't remind you — this is the time of year to sign up for your Community Supported Agriculture (CSA). Send your hope to a local farmer by partnering with him or her. You'll reduce your food miles, enjoy absolutely delicious foods and help FSPMT promote food security. For a list of CSAs serving Nashville, check out <http://nashfof.wordpress.com/csa/>.



Visit by the bishop of Rumbek



Sudanese

by Fr. Randy Hoover-Dempsey
Assistant rector

Bishop Alapayo Manyang Kuctiel of the Diocese of Rumbek in Sudan visited Saint Bartholomew's in January. Bishop Kuctiel (pronounced kutch'-tee-el) is 48 years old and has been a bishop for four years. The bishop has been traveling throughout the United States visiting Sudanese refugees.

Bishop Kuctiel was invited by Bishop John Bauerschmidt to be an observer at the Diocese of Tennessee's annual convention held on January 25 and 26 at St. B's. Henry and Deborah Martin, our translation and reconciliation missionaries among the Sudanese, facilitated the bishop's visit. He was hosted by Bob and Shirley Garth.

What does Christianity look like in the bishop's diocese? Rumbek diocese, the second largest in Sudan, has 273 parishes. All of these parishes meet "under trees." There is not one church building. However, there are substantial trees that serve as geographic landmarks for each of the parishes.

The bishop has 178 pastors serving his parishes. Of these only 23 have received training. In meeting with Father Jerry Smith, the bishop asked for help from St. Bartholomew's in training his pastors. (More on this in future articles.) The scriptures available to these pastors are Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. They work exclusively from the four gospels.

Imagine what it would be like to have only the Gospels. Without Acts you would not be able to read about the work of the Holy Spirit in the formation of the church. How would you learn about the great debates in the early church, about the place of law and grace? There are over 100 tribal dialects in Sudan. St. B's Henry and Deborah

Martin have dedicated themselves to developing a common alphabet that will facilitate the translation of the scriptures for the Sudanese.

For over 21 years, the Diocese of Rumbek has been in the midst of war. Many of the bishops in Sudan have had to flee their dioceses to save their lives. Throughout this time, both as a pastor and a priest, Bishop Kuctiel has remained with his people. War and economic hardship have isolated Rumbek from the rest of Sudan and from the rest of the world. There are no paved roads, bridges are in poor repair and communications among the parishes is sometimes limited to word of mouth.

The bishop travels among his parishes by bicycle. Not long ago, he and some of his pastors took a 53-day bike trip to visit throughout the diocese. During worship at St. B's on January 27, the bishop unexpectedly asked everyone in the congregation who had car keys in their pocket to raise their hand. While all the hands were in the air, he said, "I only need one of these cars." Several people spontaneously contributed to our newly established Bishop Kuctiel Auto Fund. Check next month's Branch for an update.

The bishop says, "With all these (problems), the word of God is going very well. Many people are coming to the churches every day. The diocese wants to bring the vision and mission of the church closer to the people ... so that all people thrive in relationship with God and keep their praise as God intervenes in each day's suffering."

Report from Vidalia, Georgia

Steve Garth, son of long-time St. B's members Bob and Shirley Garth, attends Georgia Tech. His major is nuclear and radiologic engineering. As he was finishing up the second semester of his junior year, Steve traveled to Vidalia, Georgia, the home of the world's best onions. He went there to co-op with The Southern Company, the second largest electricity provider in the U.S.

While Steve was settling into his work environment, he met a late-arriving co-op student, Phillip Garang Alier, from the

(Continued on page 9)



St. B's Sudanese congregation participates in worship during the Diocese of Tennessee's annual convention.

Photos by Katherine Bomboy

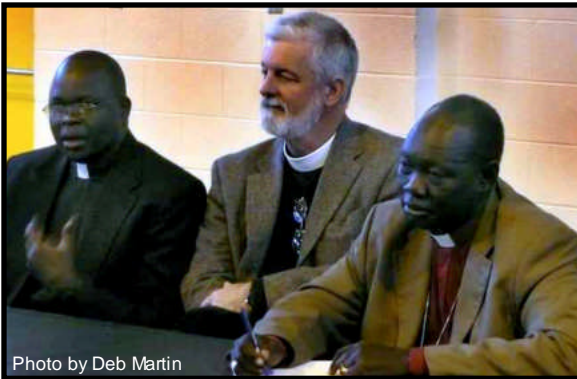


Photo by Deb Martin

Fr. Gur Maror, Sudanese priest at St. B's, Fr. Randy Hoover-Dempsey, assistant priest at St. B's, with Bishop Alapayo Maryang Kuctiel, of the Diocese of Rumbek, Sudan, during the Diocese of Tennessee's annual convention, held at St. B's in January.

Sudanese (Continued from page 8)

University of Tennessee. They began to learn something about each other, and the following conversation ensued.

Steve: I'm from Nashville, Tennessee.

Phillip: I'm from Smyrna, Tennessee.

Steve: I go to church in South Nashville.

Phillip: I do too. I go to St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church.

Steve: So do I.

(At this point, the story begins to sound like a joke I heard about two Irish twins, but I will refrain from discussing that.)

Phillip's journey to Vidalia began in 1991 when he walked to Kenya to escape the ongoing civil war in Sudan. His father and his 1 ½ year old twin siblings died during this trip. In 2004, after years in refugee camps, he arrived in America with his mom, his brother and his three sisters. After graduating from high school, Phillip began his studies at UT in the fall of 2006.

What an amazing turn of events. Two men from St. B's end up getting to know each other and working together in Vidalia, Georgia. Oftentimes, when people learn about the Sudanese presence at St. B's they ask, "What can I do to help?" The answer is: "Walk up to a Sudanese and say hello." Get to know that person. Ask them to have a coffee with you. Maybe go to lunch. Or, maybe you'll meet them in Vidalia, Georgia.

You may contact Fr. Hoover-Dempsey at: randyhd@comcast.net

Kingdom Talk (Cont'd from page 3)



in the diocese.

Some will argue that this will leave a hole in our community. Precisely. With the loss of this many people, St B's will need to be in active evangelism mode yet again. Filling the empty pews will give us something to work on rather than simply sitting back and relaxing. Don't get me wrong, we are not there yet, but this does need to be part of our conversations even now.

God is calling us to be a community of influence

We have been called to influence our immediate community of Nashville with the life transforming gospel and all of its ramifications. It is my hope that our regional Simply Following Jesus (SFJ) groups will begin to look at how they might both study and serve in their specific regions of our city. The vestry needs to be asking similar questions about the parish's sphere of influence in the county.

We have been called to influence our diocese. I am personally thrilled at the leadership many from our community are taking in many different areas of our diocesan life and I believe that their example is one that we are all called to follow. We are part of the Episcopal church and this tribe does need our help, for God's sake.

Some of us have been called to influence our national church. There are both formal as well as informal ways to be accomplishing this and it is important that we rise to the call. I ask you to pray for Scott Kammerer, who has been elected a deputy to General Convention, the national assembly of our church that meets every three years.

All of us have been called to influence our neighbors. None of us is immune ... sorry! This

means that God wants us to be as Christ to them.

I would like to suggest that we faithfully bear the baton of the gospel when we are a people committed to good stewardship of all of God's resources.

As a congregation, we need to be becoming increasingly 'green.' After all, "the earth is the Lords" and, consequently, we are responsible for faithfully representing this truth by being good stewards of what has been loaned to us. I am anxious that we be taking steps to reflect our understanding of environmental stewardship.

We need to be a community that is evidencing faithfulness (stewardship) to the full gospel. Let us leave no stone unturned when it comes to discovering the truths of stewardship that are contained in Scripture.

We need to be a people growing in financial stewardship. Do you practice biblical tithing? Our congregation's leadership prepares a budget based on our parish tithing to the mission of the church. We assume that every member believes in and practices this principle as well. If you don't, please consider implementing the practice of this biblical truth.

Finally, we need to be good stewards of our resources for the sake of the next generation. To pass the baton to the faithful that comes after us demands that we firstly bring them to a level of repair that will not saddle them with our negligence.

July



HOW DO YOU WANT TO DIE?



A Missional Life

by Fr. Dixon Kinser

Director of youth ministries

NO, it's not just a title; I'm asking you to actually contemplate this question: How do you want to die?

It may seem like a strange question, but for those engaged in the Christian spiritual discipline of dying well, we will do well to answer. This is because our deaths should be commensurate with our lives: the kind of death one dies, should reflect the kind of life one has lived. If you have lived a good life, you should die a good death. However, if you've lived a poor life ... well, perhaps you shouldn't be expected to die better than you have lived.

Last spring, I led the youth ministry community through a "death retreat" where we reflected on these very same questions. In my research for the weekend (and in watching the finale of the impossibly good HBO series *Six Feet Under*), I discovered something called green funerals.

Green funerals are earth-friendly, natural alternative burial practices that decrease the amount of carbon and chemicals released into the atmosphere and soil in traditional burial, and keep very much in line with the aforementioned Christian discipline of dying well. While I am energized by both these wonderful outcomes, it is the latter that continues to spark my imagination.

Green funerals eschew embalming (the corpse can be kept cool and does not need to be embalmed by law) and favor biodegradable pine boxes or burial shrouds to the industry standard steel casket and concrete vault.

Likewise, a green burial doesn't take place in a cemetery, but instead scatters burial plots in random places along a secluded woodland or nature preserve marking them with natural shrubs and trees (as well as a GPS tracker) instead of a tombstone to ensure that future generations can find the site. Furthermore, the fact that human remains have been interred on the land virtually guarantees

it will not be developed into suburban track homes or a shopping mall down the road.

However, the most attractive thing about this practice is how it maintains a close connection between the living and the dead. This is a

profoundly Jesus-centered (not to mention Hebraic) connection, and for Christians who choose it, green funerals can be subversive.

This is because in our world death is sanitized and scary. We don't want to think about, touch or smell it. Indeed, part of the pain of death in our culture involves the very awareness that we're dying. (Which is why so many people want to "go in their sleep" – how did you answer that title question?)

Green funerals invite both the dying and their families to walk through the death well, awake and in the presence of each other and their creator. This is unmistakably Christian and, I believe, demonstrates a good way to die.

There is some great literature on this topic not the least of which is Lisa Carlson's book, *Caring for the Dead: Your Final Act of Love*.

So, in closing, let me encourage you not to shy away from this kind of reflection during Lent. Instead, embrace it. Because even though it is dust to which we will return, our formation in the image of Jesus requires we think awhile about how we get there.

Peace in the Resurrected One,

You may contact Dixon Kinser at: dkinser@stbs.net

March 30, 2008

**Dixon Kinser
to be ordained priest**

at St. Bartholomew's
at 7 p.m.

Please celebrate with Dixon and the St. B's community, as Dixon, St. B's director of youth discipleship, is ordained to the priesthood.

Reception following in parish hall.



Pew 2 U briefs



Members of the Nehemiah Fund running team, pictured after a run in downtown Nashville, hope to raise sponsorship that will go directly towards St. B's church upgrades. Look one of them up and offer your support! See below.

Sprinting the Nehemiah way

If you are considering running in the Music City Half Marathon on April 26 or are simply wishing to get in better shape, sign up for the St. B's training team! Runners will each pay his or her own entrance fee for the race, but the team will be running to raise funds for St. B's Nehemiah Fund. Group runs started the week of January 20. To sign up, e-mail Meredith Pharaoh at meredith.pharaoh@gmail.com

Chapman benefit concert and reception

Make plans now to attend The Chapman Benefit Concert on Sunday, March 9, at 6:30 p.m., to help raise money for St. B's long-term missionaries, Keith and Kristin Chapman, and the Trinity Dental Clinic in Liberia, West Africa. More details to follow.

Anglicanism 101

Wednesdays, April 2 - May 21, 6:30-8 p.m.

If you are interested in formalizing your membership to our community here at St. B's and being confirmed, sign up in the narthex. Classes will be led by Fr. Randy Hoover-Dempsey and Fr. Dixon Kinser. Meals will be provided at minimal cost. Childcare will also be provided.

Lifebuilders topics varied

The Lifebuilders class (formerly known as the Homebuilders) meets Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m. and provides an opportunity for adults of all ages to enjoy

fellowship and study a variety of topics including books of the Bible, church history and Christian living. Visitors are welcome to drop in, and doughnuts are served every week!

Cooking classes

A new set of cooking classes will begin in late spring. We introduced the St. B's cooking classes in the summer and fall of 2007 and they were a huge hit. We will be kicking off a new series of classes at the end of March. Here's a "taste" of what will be cooking in our kitchen:

Cooking French Country Cuisine: No fancy sauces or scary terms, just wholesome, heart-warming food from the French countryside;

Easy Entertaining: Entertaining a crowd of six or thirty shouldn't leave the hostess out. Easy and tasty dishes will let you be a guest at your own party and will put guests at ease. We'll prepare a Mediterranean feast and an easy Italian dinner that work for large and small crowds. We'll also have several classes to choose from in April and May. Be on the look out for the spring and summer brochure heading your way in March.

Supper Clubs

St. B's supper clubs are a great way to meet new people and develop lasting friendships. They are an informal way for individuals and families to connect. The spring club sign ups begin Sunday, March 2. Spring and summer supper clubs begin in April 1 and continue through September 30.

Backdoor to Your Teen's Heart

"Backdoor to Your Teen's Heart" will be held in the parish hall at St. Bartholomew's church on April 6 from 6-8 p.m. Registration will be available in March. The program is provided by Daystar Ministries — Sissy Goff, Melissa Trevethan and David Thomas.

The back-door approach, is a disarming way to connect with adolescents. We hope you will join us for a day of teaching, laughing, talking and encouraging each other on our journey to helping our teens become who God has created them to be. Areas covered:

- 1) development: what to expect during the teenage years;
- 2) softening: what relationship does and can look like with teenagers;
- 3) shaping: how to love, discipline, and instruct teens;
- 4) strengthening: how to help the teenagers in our lives feel a sense of purpose and discover more of who God is creating them to be.



E-mail has its etiquette points



From the Loft

by Susan Houston

I remember when the first e-mail system was installed at my first job as the secretary for the Department of Literature and Language at Belmont University. As a joke, I sent out a message to the faculty giving the proper verb conjugations: I e-mail; you e-mail; he/she/it e-mails; we e-mail; you e-mail; they e-mail.

The point here is that in the beginning of any new technology, there is a season of developing accepted practices for its usage. With computers and e-mail becoming commonplace, as a society we're still working out the best way to use it. But we're not all on the same page yet; some people have been working with e-mail for years, while others have just gotten their first taste of it. It bears repeating that e-mail is nothing like postal mail. The note that you jot down hurriedly on a card will probably disappear into a desk drawer or eventually the trash, unlikely to be seen again, certainly not by anyone but the recipient. But e-mail can live on forever, and mutate over time, spreading like a virus. It behooves us to be thoughtful in our sending and receiving of e-mail, and especially, in our forwarding.

1) Virus warnings. I really, really hate these things. If I had a nickel for every one of these I'd received that was bogus, I would be redecorating my charming cottage in England now. First of all, most bogus virus warnings are, by their very nature, viral — they threaten dire consequences, and beg you to warn your friends and family. And so, with all good intentions, you forward them along, exactly as they wanted, like flu gems! It's innocuous — no real danger is attached — but they are unnecessary and a nuisance to the recipients.

So it is important to DO YOUR HOMEWORK. There are endless resources online to check the validity of viral warnings; snopes.com and urbanlegends.about.com are both reliable sites. And I guarantee you that 99.99% of all virus e-mails are fake. There are plenty of real viruses out there, but virus software updates constantly, and catches or blocks the real threats without you even noticing.

2) Inspiring stories. These can be irresistible, especially if they make you teary-eyed. I still have fond memories of the story of a plane diverted on 9/11 to Newfoundland where the local population took them in and cared for them like family. But again ... DO YOUR HOMEWORK. These stories may or may not be true. There's nothing wrong with a moving fictional story, but



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when it's claimed to be real life, "from a friend of a friend," that's spreading an untruth. Type a significant phrase from the story into Google, and you can usually find the origin.

3) Political accusations. Messages like these that tell stories about "How Hillary treats her Secret Service detail" or "Lies from John McCain" can be of dubious accuracy. You can generally count on them being written by someone from the opposing party, and therefore they are certainly biased, and potentially full of lies or distortions of the truth. The danger in this is that there are no ethical considerations as there are in established media outlets. You can slander anyone in an e-mail, and it will spread like wildfire, with no way of stopping or correcting it. It works the same way with support e-mails. There are any number of e-mails circulating that praise George Bush to the skies, and I am fairly certain that none of them were written by an objective, unbiased author. So do your homework on these too - search for key phrases online, and find the origin.

4) Photos. So someone sends you a photo of a new baby. After admiring it, you send it off to a mutual friend to enjoy. She sends it over to another friend, and then who knows where it's gone. But did anyone ask the photographer if they could? Photos are copyrighted media — they belong to the photographer and/or the photographed subject — and, as such, may not be reprinted or shared without permission. Most amateur photographers don't mind or care, but it is still best to ask permission before forwarding or posting images online.

5) Prayer requests. I'm one of the first to send these, and I've been guilty of indiscriminately forwarding them on as well. But as well intentioned as the forwarding of a prayer request may be, it may be against the wishes of the person who initially sent it. Now, many people will say in a prayer request e-mail, "please send this on to any friends who will pray" and that's just fine, and some of those asking for prayer may be delighted by the thought of even more prayers on their behalf. But imagine:

- a prayer request from someone about trouble with their job starts making the rounds, and it accidentally reaches his employer;
- someone who has a medical condition they'd rather not have widely known finds out that everyone who greets her has heard about it.

If permission to share a prayer request is not included in the original e-mail, it is important to ask first before forwarding it on.

E-mail can be a blessing, in that it can gather members of the body together, but it can just as easily become a tool for gossip and lies. The point of all etiquette is to protect the dignity of individuals; to respect their rights and privacy, and to be truthful in our dealings with others.

ANNUAL MEETING

Called to be witnesses



Warden's report

by Sarah Bell Earley

Senior warden

"Thousands ... millions have gone before us...and now witness our time..." said Fr. Jerry Smith in his address to the gathering at the St. B's Annual Meeting and Family Feast on February 10. Fr. Jerry shared his vision of our role and responsibilities as we faithfully receive, bear and in turn pass on "the rhythm of the saints," the legacy of our Christian forebears. He urged us to be "people of conviction and commitment" — to God, to the gospel, to the church, to personal transformation, to steadfastness, to faith. We are to be multipliers: as we continue to grow, he encourages us to anticipate and prepare for a time when, rather than becoming a mega-church, we will send out a group from our midst to establish a new church in the diocese. Fr. Jerry senses

we are being called to be "a community of influence," individually and collectively, in our neighborhoods, city, diocese and even in the national church. And lastly, he feels we are to increasingly be "good stewards" of God's resources entrusted to us: God's word, the earth, our personal and corporate finances and our church buildings and grounds.

The last point was reinforced by the official kickoff of the "Nehemiah Fund," our parish's initiative to restore the church properties that have fallen into serious disrepair over the decades. Treasurer Len Harrison and vestry member Andy Valentine gave a brief slide presentation of the many areas of need and a summary of the

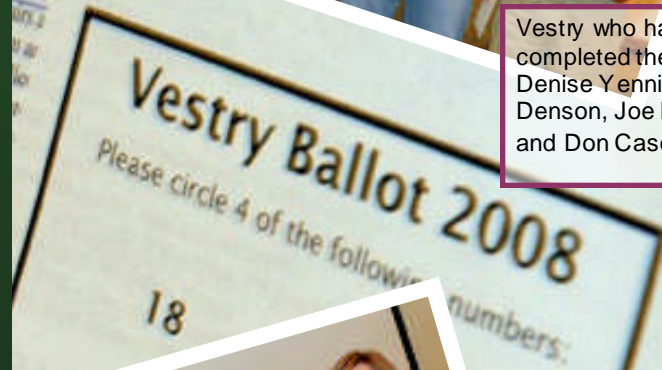
(Continued on page 14)



Vestry who have completed their terms: Denise Yennie, Ann Denson, Joe Flynn and Don Cason.



Your new vestry members: Charlie Reasor, Paul Miller, Denise Kemp and Ashley MacLachlan.



ST. B'S ANNUAL MEETING



Warden's report *(Continued from page 13)*

finances involved. As detailed brochures and pledge cards were handed out, they reported, to applause, that one third of the \$633,000 needed has already been given or pledged!

The congregation was treated to an inspiring presentation by St. B's missionaries Keith and Kristin Chapman who, after four years on board with Mercy Ships, will this year be starting up a land-based dental clinic in Liberia, West Africa.

The clinic will provide dental treatment, basic oral hygiene education, and training of dental workers in a country that has only one dentist per 1 million people. St. B's is the Chapmans' home parish and where they discerned their calling to this mission work about five years ago.

For the third year, St. B's elected new vestry members using our unconventional "drawing of lots" process. The four chosen this year were: Denise Kemp, Ashley MacLachlan, Paul Miller and Charlie Reasor. Appreciation was given to outgoing members Don Cason (senior warden), Ann

Denson, Joe Flynn and Denise Yennie by junior warden Sarah Bell Earley.

The financial report for the parish by treasurer Len Harrison showed that 2007 ended with a budget surplus of about \$70,000 which the vestry voted to apply to the Nehemiah Fund. The 2008 budget is for \$1,316,000, a 5.7% increase over 2007.

Other highlights of our annual meeting were Don Cason's senior warden's report which highlighted the many activities and notable accomplishments of our parish in 2007 (see details in January Branch) as well as some events to look forward to in 2008; the always popular St. B's family video, compiled this year by Heather Childs, and a report by Scott Kammerer on the diocesan convention, held this year at St. B's.

Thanks went out to Pam White, Allison Hardwick, Jane Long, Heather Childs, Donna Easter, Becky Hornsby and others who put together the details of the annual meeting, our largest ever, and to all who attended and provided the abundant meal.



RHYTHM OF THE SAINTS



Random notes

by Marjie Smith

These are random notes from the annual meeting (for details, see the reports of Don Cason, Sarah Bell Earley, Andy Valentine and Fr. Jerry Smith)

The fervor of the St. B's Annual Meeting 2008 was fuelled by a hunger for community and a desire for service and excellence. The wonderful food provided in potluck form, also fuelled the event and served notice as to how easily and magnificently the congregants can work in tandem, even when it is something so simple, yet so potentially disastrous as a shared supper. The staff of St. B's worked laboriously at setting up a community-building setting and, under the Rhythm of the Saints theme, decorated the walls with musical emblems and photos of some of St. B's community of saints. Somehow, Fr. Randy Hoover-Dempsey and retiring vestry member Ann Denson earned the enviable position of overlooking the dessert tables – but only in two-dimensional effigy.

During an informal moment following an informative presentation by Keith and Kristin Chapman concerning the new dental clinic they are es-

tablishing in Liberia, Kristin addressed the question of how they ended up with Mercy Ships, the mobile dental clinic ministry that precipitated this permanent move. It started as a joke, she said.

Keith had put his years in at dental school, but after attending St. B's and becoming spiritually "revitalized," he realized he wasn't happy in the job. That's when they toyed with the idea of going out with missions. A casual comment became their life work as the Holy Spirit inserted his dreams into their searching.

Vestry member Andy Valentine (and, as of the last vestry meeting, junior warden) made a presentation on the Nehemiah Fund in tandem with St. B's treasurer Len Harrison. In presenting slides of defunct and near-defunct infrastructure, he referred to a picture of the archaic air conditioning system housed on the roof of the parish hall. Rusted and obsolete, it sports the graffiti comment, "God wuz here."

Said Andy, God truly was here. "If it hadn't been for the grace of God, these would have given up years ago."

(Continued on page 16)



RHYTHM OF THE SAINTS

Called to restore God's house



Random notes *(Continued from page 15)*

(Continued from page 15)

Andy also pointed out that the windows in the church are not anchored properly. "If we have a gale-force wind, these windows could fall out," he said.

Now, the parish is being asked to help restore God's house of worship and service. The leadership has set the example by folding its budget surplus from 2007 into the Nehemiah Fund and by having the vestry and leadership pledge according to the guidelines recommended by the project committee.

Don Cason, outgoing senior warden, said during his presentation that St. B's is going against its long-standing policy of not using pledge cards because the parish needs to know its prospective finances in order to schedule repairs. "We don't want to go into debt. We are not trying to manipulate you in any way," he stated. "We simply want to be able to know how best to schedule these repairs as the contributions are given."

During a brief question-and-answer period, a parishioner commented that she would like to see "a Nehemiah-Fund mindset from hereon in to deal with needs." She said she feared St. B's would fall back into complacency, rather than ongoing fiscal responsibility. The questioner also wondered about the priorities in terms of special projects undertaken when there were outstanding repairs.

Don Cason, outgoing senior warden, said that (in recent years) there have not been enough givings to "go beyond the budget."

He also noted that special projects are often funded by "designated gifts." People don't tend to give designated gifts for things like air conditioning, he added. As an example, he pointed to the church walking path, where generous gifts included a \$20,000 donation from an area resident who is not a member of St. B's.

He also said that the projected repairs and upgrades budget was based on "guesstimates" as actual costs cannot be configured until the work is ready to be done and quotes received.

Commended at the meeting were innovative fund-raising efforts such as one headed by Brittany Lassiter and Meredith Pharaoh to create a sponsored St. B's running group for the upcoming Music City Marathon. The group practices faithfully and is looking for sponsors.

Both outgoing senior warden Don Cason and junior warden Sarah Bell Earley pointed out that vestry members put in hundreds of hours over their three-year terms of appointment, attending meetings and acting as liaisons for specific ministries. At the Monday vestry meeting following the annual meeting, Sarah Bell was asked to serve as senior warden and Andy Valentine as junior warden.



We work on a Holy Ghost building

Nehemiah Fund

by Andy Valentine

Junior warden



Read the third chapter of Nehemiah. At first glance, this chapter looks suspiciously like the begat chapters that I suffered through during Sunday School Bible readings. You know: Shem begat Itchy, who begat Whatzit, who begat Thingamabob, who begat so on and so on ... only occasionally broken up by ... and he lived in the time of King Whozat. The third chapter of Nehemiah is not really like that. It is a listing of the rebuilders of the wall. Each family is named and a brief description of that family is made.

Interestingly, the building started with the priests. It's important that the appointed and elected leaders in the church lead the way in a building project. You will be pleased to note that the vestry and ministers of St. Bartholomew's were 100% committed to the Nehemiah Fund before they asked anyone else to

commit to this building project.

Reading down to the fifth verse we discover the Tekoites repaired but their nobles did not "put their necks to the work of the Lord." I don't know what the repercussions of their not working were but reading their name 2,500 years later and thinking "What slackers!" may be their historical punishment. In verse 12, we learn of Shallum who was apparently the "vice-mayor" who worked on the wall with his daughters. This entire passage sums up a normal congregation: people doing what they can, with God's help, to repair and maintain a place of worship for themselves and their families.

So what can we do? We can pray and sincerely ask God what part we should play in this rebuilding. St. Bartholomew's is a blessed congregation. We are growing quickly. And a lot of this growth is young families, many of whom, despite the

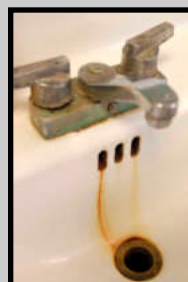
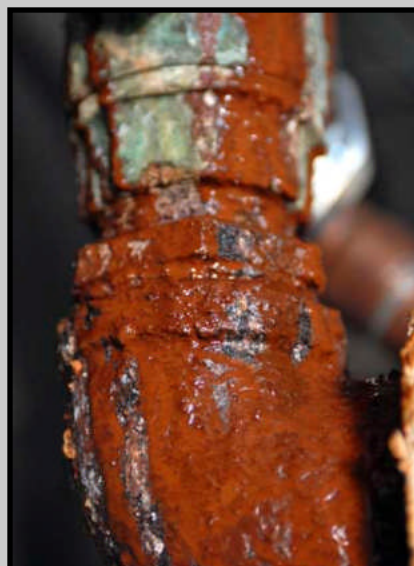
demands of children, mortgages, schools and careers, give generously. Older members, who have supported St. B's for years, are giving stock and inquiring about planned giving. The vision of the rebuilding is coming into focus and it will be done. Now is the time to look at how blessed we are and how God would have us return to him a portion of what he has given us.

A couple of items to note: Although we at St. Bartholomew's are a giving congregation, if you assume everyone in the congregation tithes, the annual church income we receive currently would indicate that the average income for a family at St. Bart's is \$18,000 a year! Even at this rate, if everyone would increase their current giving by half and spread this half over the next two years the walls will be complete. And in all this "working on a building" let's not forget that the building we are working on is a "Holy Ghost building!"



Pictured are some of the areas around the church property that need urgent upgrades: hence, the Nehemiah Fund.

Photos by Katherine Bamboy



A heart for Kenya

Share International

by Emily Huff

Writer and photographer



"We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us." 1 Thessalonians 2:8

This is the theme verse of Share International, Inc., which ministers to the Turkana people in northwestern Kenya, and which I joined five years ago, after starting a children's ministry in the same area nine years earlier. The verse describes my involvement with and love for Kenya over the last 14 years. The relationships with Kenyans have been so rich; we have shared the gospel with one another through the years as our journeys have become intertwined. These friends have become so dear to my heart.

In 1994, after my junior year in college, I had the opportunity to go on a seven-week mission trip to Kenya with InterVarsity's summer Global Projects. Our team was made up of Kenyan and American students. Our projects involved working on a construction site building an orphanage, ministering on a college campus and living with local pastors and their families in villages all over Kenya. One of these pastors, Samwel Kaaleng, was a Turkana living in Lodwar. I spent three weeks with his family. It was a tremendously influential time in my life as the Lord made a deep impression on me and gave me a heart for the people and deepened friendships. In one of the conversations with Pastor Kaaleng, I asked him how we could continue to support the Turkana people in Lodwar after we returned to the U.S. He told me that this area was unable to be served (for reasons pertaining to jurisdiction) by another international agency. If we were to provide support to the people of Lodwar it would have to come through a new source.

The Rev. Kaaleng and I officially started a partnership in 1995 to help needy children in the Turkana region. We established Children of the Kingdom (COK) as an organization through which caring people could sponsor these children. Sponsorships provided benefits, including food and clothing, education, shelter, health care and Christian training. We also spearheaded a micro-loan project for the parents of children in our program. I applied for non-profit status in Washington state and COK was officially granted the 501(c)(3) non-profit status until 2003. I



relied on a small Kenyan and American board of directors to provide some direction for the program at the time, but for the most part, I tried my best to navigate this path and chart the unknown in running a non-profit organization and being a good steward of the funds that we raised for this project.

In 2003, COK merged with Share International, Inc. (SI), a non-profit missions organization founded by Sammy and Mary Murimi (Kenyan nationals who now live in the United States and lead SI ministries in the Turkana region), to further the children's ministry under the SI vision. SI was started around the same time that we began our work there. Merging with SI allowed us to coordinate our support efforts for Turkana children, and it connected me with Kenyans who understand the region and its needs more deeply than I do. With the merger, SI Scholarship Program (SISP) and COK began to provide more educational benefits to the children in Turkana. I now serve as coordinator for all the SI children's program and as part of the leadership team.

It has been a gift to be a part of Share International since 2003. The Murimis and their leadership team (both Kenyan and American) are a group of committed people who have similar hearts for this region of the world. Together, we have been able to accomplish far more than what we could have done alone. After starting with three sponsored children in 1995, we now have over 180 children enrolled in our program.

In his book "Beyond Duty," Tim Dearborn asks the question, "What is God doing in the world in which he is calling us to participate and with whom we can partner so as to manifest signs of the coming kingdom?" I am humbled by the answer that I believe God has given me in regard to a distant region of Africa: along with others in this ministry, I have longed to be working among and partnering with the Turkana people of Kenya to manifest signs of the Kingdom of God.

Sponsorship in this ministry focuses care on a specific person in a specific place. It is hard to pray for or connect emotionally with raw statistics. However, a face, a name, and a place can be brought before the Lord with passion and conviction. Sponsors have the opportunity to identify with their assigned child, then love, pray and send messages of encouragement to the child through letters. Children in our program are connected to a caring local church and have the chance to get an education, better

Photos: At right is Joshua Lemuya, COK coordinator in Kenya, with his wife and children, and foster children. He and his wife have opened their home to 10 orphans.

Top left of previous page: Emily Huff with Pastor Samwel Kaaleng's children, in 2000.



health and nutrition. Most important, they learn about Jesus and discover how to develop a lifelong relationship with God. One way that our program strives to disciple the students is by involving them in COK's outreach missions each year. Students and their parents also gather for worship and prayer throughout the year, praying for the work of God and the sponsors committed to this ministry.

We have expanded our program this year to include the following:

K-12 program It is our goal to provide kindergarten through high school education to as many Turkana children as funds will allow. The scholarships are granted through government-sanctioned day and boarding schools. It costs \$25 a month, or less than a dollar a day, to sponsor a child.

College program Those who do excel at the high school level are considered for college education.

Sponsors who have followed a child through 12th Grade may decide to sponsor another child on the K-12 waiting list, or elect to continue to sponsor a student through college. Fees for colleges vary depending on the focus of study, but in general college tuition support is \$50 a month.

SI foster-adoption (SIFA) program: In response to the great need of orphans in Turkana land, SI established a foster-adoption (SIFA) program in 2007. Ten families that had taken in a total of 45 children already were identified. By opening their homes to orphans, these families set an example of servanthood and generosity for the community. For just

\$10 a month, you can help provide basic needs for a child in our SIFA program.

Let us continue to pray that God would enlarge our hearts. Bob Pierce, the founder of World Vision, prayed, "Let my heart be broken with the things that break the heart of God." If we do pray this prayer, God will open the eyes of our hearts and plant seeds for change. May God give us ears to hear and eyes to see so that we would not miss one thing that he would have for us in this journey ahead.

If the political situation in Kenya gets to be more stable, I am planning on returning to Kenya this summer on a two-week trip with SI, and the plan is that Anna, my 5 ½ year-old daughter and my mom, Jane Haynes, will also be a part of the mission team. It will be a huge gift to get the chance to go back and see with my own eyes the fruit of our labor there, but it will also be a joy to share my family with friends there.

We will be having a banquet in the parish hall at St. B's here in Nashville on Thursday, April 17. Sammy Murimi, the Director of SI, will be with us to share more about the ministry, and Matthew Perryman Jones along with Michelle Sudduth will be our special guests to lead us in worship. We would love to share this vision and adventure with you when he comes.

For more information, contact Emily Huff at emilyjasonhuff@aol.com or (615) 298-4863.

Children of the Kingdom, A Ministry of Share International, Inc., 908 Halcyon Avenue, Nashville, TN 37204. Our Web site is: <http://www.shareinternationalinc.com>

Day of Reconciliation

March 12, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. & 4-6 p.m.

Our Anglican theology and liturgy recognize the need for the healing of our relationship with God and with our neighbors. Each week we confess our sin and brokenness during our corporate worship. And each week we receive God's forgiveness.

However, sometimes we need more. During Lent and Advent, St. B's offers the rite of The Reconciliation of a Penitent. This is an opportunity for an individual to sit one-on-one with a priest and confess sins against God and neighbor that are particularly troubling. The priest may offer spiritual counsel and encouragement, and will pronounce absolution.

All are welcome to take part in this rite, being assured that the secrecy of confession is morally absolute for the confessor and that the content of confession is not normally a matter for subsequent discussion.

The Rite of Confession may be found on Page 446 in the Book of Common Prayer.

Your vestry at work

What kind of advice do they give each other?

Christ comes first; unity follows

By Marjie Smith

It's a tradition, of sorts: the departing members of vestry hand down their wisdom and vision to the new members coming on board. It takes place at the first vestry meeting following the annual meeting.

Some give formally-prepared tidbits of advice, others roll off the cuff. Some are matter-of-fact, while others are more tongue-in-cheek. It works much like vestry itself: there is a core of common wisdom and then there are the specific insights and forms of delivery that are unique to the personalities involved.

This first meeting after the annual meeting is the only time that the departing vestry members and newly appointed ones are together in a formal capacity. It is also where the new senior and junior warden are appointed by vestry.

Don Cason, who has completed his term on vestry and as senior warden, reminded everyone that they are on vestry because God has called them, so they should have confidence that they are there with purpose.

He noted that the vestry is "a wonderful group with which to serve" and even though there are differences in opinion, "know that others who serve with you are also called to this work." Both he and Denise Yennie stressed the need to work at (indeed, wrestle with) being "like-minded," as Don called it and setting "aside self for the bigger picture," as Denise put it.

Joe Flynn, who enjoyed being a member of this "other" community, said he learned much from the other 11 members.

Joe noted, "When you live in community with 11 other personalities, it is unreasonable to expect everyone to be on the same page on every issue. When we are not all in agreement is the time when the greatest potential exists for learning how to live in kingdom community with others."

So, he advised, "Enjoy the different opinions, respect the differences, stay engaged and be willing to jump in with your perspective even if it means challenging the

prevailing sentiment. At a recent men's retreat I heard Fr. Jerry say that in community *every voice is required.*"

Of course, decision-making being a major part of being on vestry and given the need to seek unity and

fellowship, those leaving stressed the need to avoid being pressured but, rather, to wait on God and pray through it.

"If you sense or feel confusion about a matter, stop and wait. God is not the author of confusion, the enemy is; if you feel rushed; wait. God through His Holy Spirit woos and draws, he does not rush and push," said Ann Denson.

Both Ann and Joe stressed the need to make one's voice heard, no matter how frightening the prospect. Just because one's reactions differ doesn't mean one should be intimidated or overwhelmed.

"Some think that serving on the vestry makes you pull your hair out," said Denise. "for me it was different – it was hair raising. I came in with none (a reference to her treatment for cancer just prior to joining vestry) and now look! It has truly been a blessing to serve on the vestry. We have come a long way in three years: From 350 average attendance to 560 and a budget of \$796,000 to now \$1.316 million."

The Learned Departing Ones also stressed the importance of enjoying fellow parishioners on vestry and in the congregation and, paramount, respecting the privy position of having access to special information.

Said Don, "Confidentiality is a must. Though the actions and decisions of the vestry may be public, your conversations and your access to confidential information must be held in strict confidence. If that trust is ever broken, it is hard to regain."

He stressed the need to honor the spiritual leadership of the church and to support the leadership and staff in prayer and action.

Denise warned that the church must learn from the history, good and bad, of the past. "We are certainly at a different place today, though similar to some of the 'good' places we've been in the past. But do not be complacent. Just because you come to a place that's comfortable and you're content and happy doesn't mean it's the right place. History, unfortunately has shown us that time and time again. ... The evil one likes complacency. It's a way to get in and destroy things. Always be on your guard that you're really listening to God and not humans."

Ann stressed the need to retain a strong life of prayer and study and that Jesus is pre-eminent. Don echoed the need to make Christ the head of vestry.

"Remember that the work of this body and the mission of our church is not about you, but about God and his kingdom," he wisely advised.



Women's ministry

DuBose retreat on April 25, 26

By Jane Harrison

The women of St. B's will have a rare opportunity to hear Phyllis Tickle, a nationally renowned author and lay Eucharistic minister in the Episcopal Church, when they attend the Episcopal Church Women's Spring Conference at DuBose Conference Center, on April 25-26. (Web site: <http://insider.net/ecw/>).



Phyllis Tickle

Long-time St. B's member, Suzie Woolwine, has participated in the planning of a wonderful retreat that draws together ECWs from across the state. Ms. Tickle, one of America's most celebrated authors, will be the keynote speaker. Suzie says it is "thanks to the grace of God, divine timing and a leap of faith" that Ms. Tickle is able to address the conference, Saturday morning. Her topic will be, "Glimpses Ahead: Following Christ in the 21st Century."

She is the recipient of the Mays Award for her lifetime contribution to "focusing needed worldwide attention to the specialized area of religion within publishing" and is the author of over two dozen books in religion and spirituality, most notably the *Divine Hours* series of manuals for observing fixed-hour prayer. Her two newest books are: *This Is What I Pray Today: The Divine Hours Prayers for Children*, and *The Words of Jesus*.^{*} There will be a book signing on Saturday for those attending the conference.

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Mrs. Tickle is currently the senior fellow of Cathedral College

of the Washington National Cathedral. She received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Christy Awards "in gratitude for a lifetime as an advocate for fiction written to the glory of God." She is the mother of seven children and, with her physician husband, makes her home on a small farm in Lucy, Tennessee.

Another highlight of the weekend is that the bishops from all three Tennessee dioceses will be joining us at the opening service at Otey Memorial Parish in Sewanee and for a reception and dinner at DuBose. This will be followed by music, led by St. B's member Sherry Paige, and our Conversation with the Bishops, a fun and popular question-and-answer time with the bishops. The evening will end with Compline.



Sherry Paige

Walker House at DuBose will be reserved for St. B's and will house eight women. Claiborne Hall has abundant space for everyone else. Bishop's Hall has limited rooms. We hope the women of St. B's will participate in this opportunity to get to know each other and the other women in ECWs across our state. It is a chance for us to partner with and support women in many Episcopal churches that do not have the size or support which we enjoy at St. B's.

Our invitation is: Women, pamper yourselves and take advantage of this rare opportunity to hear a nationally acclaimed author and enjoy fellowship, worship, fabulous food and song in the intimate setting of Dubose, when the mountain's beauty is at its peak.

^{*}*The St. B's Bookstore carries several of her books.*

Breakfast on Sat., March 15

Men's ministry

By Whit Smyth

AN exciting new phase of men's ministry at St. B's begins on Sat., March 15, in the parish hall with the first of monthly get-togethers designed to increase fellowship among men of the church and possibly lead to new and creative ways to serve St. B's.



Sean Root

All are welcome to this kick-off breakfast at 8:30 a.m. under the direction of Sean Root, who has stepped up to head the men's ministry. He will be assisted by Chad Moore. Former leaders, Gary Mumme and Whit Smyth, are now serving in advisory capacities. Saturday's meeting is planned as the first of these monthly get-

togethers.

"This is an amazing time in the life of our church, and I envision a ministry with men getting together on a regular basis at these Saturday morning gatherings and possibly in the evenings outside church," Sean explains. "We have a great group of men here, and good things will continue to happen the more we get to know each other."

For March 15, Sean promises a surprise speaker. He is also seeking feedback and ideas from all men in the church.

"This is a total team effort with the men united and everyone involved," he says. A special e-mail address has been established for the men's ministry: stbsmens@aol.com.

A project the men will tackle in the very near future is to repair the parquet flooring in the sanctuary. This will be done under the supervision of St. B's facilities liaison Dick Jewell.

As the men's ministry looks ahead to March 15, it has found an energetic and enthusiastic leader in Sean, who works as a local account manager for Fleet One, a Division of Sun Trust.

A Boston Red Sox fanatic, the 34-year-old Nashville native is a cradle Episcopalian who attends St. B's with his wife, Larissa, and their three-year old daughter, Maggie Grace.



**Mark your calendars for
Saturday, March 15 at
8:30 a.m.**

THEBRANCHMARCH2008-21

He is risen indeed, hallelujah!!

Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday: Liturgy of the palms, 8:30 and 10:30 a.m.

Holy Wednesday: Holy Eucharist, 7:30 a.m. and 12:15 p.m.

Maundy Thursday: Institution of the Lord's Supper, 7 p.m.

Good Friday: Good Friday liturgy, 12 noon; Stations of the Cross, 5 p.m.

Holy Saturday: Easter vigil, 7 p.m.

Easter Sunday: Celebration of the resurrection, 6 a.m., 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

April 12

Jambalaya and Jazz Fest

Due to St. B's hosting the 76th Annual Diocesan Convention in January, we were unable to have our traditional Chili Cook-Off and Epiphany celebration. In lieu of this, we are planning JAMBALAYA and JAZZ FESTIVAL on April 12.

This event will be held outside on the church grounds and will be an event for the entire family to enjoy.

ST. B'S ART EXHIBIT

SAT., APRIL 5

5 to 8 p.m.

An evening of
gazing *feasting* *toasting* *music*

St. Bartholomew's art exhibit
we're "painting the town red!"*

St. Bartholomew's Church parish hall

Please join us as we showcase the works of our congregation

Co-chairs: Donna Easter and Mimi Heldman

For questions, call: (615) 377-4750

**"engaging in a riotous spree"*

Simply Following Jesus

The Simply Following Jesus neighborhood Bible studies, based on zip codes as a source of regions, are intended to provide easily accessible studies and a local community for its members.

Below are meeting times and current locations.

37027

Second and fourth Sundays, 6:30-8 p.m.

Location: 6403 Waterford Dr.

Contact Pat Bowlby: patbowlby@comcast.net

37064

Tuesdays, just started up, 7 p.m.

Location: 312 Julianna Circle

Contact: Tamara and Bob Rowland:

tam_rowland@bellsouth.net

37204

Second and fourth Friday, 7 p.m.

Location: 4036 Albert Dr.

Contact: Steve & Zena Thorne: 385-2657

37206 / 37214 / 37138

(north & east)

Second and fourth Tuesday, 6:30 p.m., dinner, 7-8:30 p.m., study

Location: 1300 Holly St.

Contact: Jerry: 969-7273 or Marjie 969-6838

37209 / 37212, 37203

Second and fourth Wed., 7-8:30 p.m.

Location: 3613 Pilcher Ave.

Contact: Dave and Dana Mennen: 292-2426 or

Whitney Stone: whitneystone@bellsouth.net

37215

Wednesdays, 10:45 -11:45 a.m.

Contact: Fr. Randy Hoover-Dempsey

Location: St Bartholomew's Church

37221

Second and fourth Tuesdays, 7-8:30 p.m.

Location: 7809 Haydenberry Cove.

Contact: Robert Smith at 406-3152 or Kirk Smith at 584-2805

Coming Soon: Zip Code 37205

www.simplyfollowingjesusblogspot.com

From Glory to Glory

The title "From Glory to Glory" comes from Paul's revelation into God's eternal destiny for each of his children. "And we...are being transformed into his likeness with our ever-increasing glory."

II Corinthians 3:8



March

Anniversaries

Bill & Maggie Ward
3/24/72
Malcolm & Pamela White
3/23/96
David & Kathy Edwards
3/5/77
Jim & Nancy Hyer Russell
3/25/89
Jerry & Jan Minshall
3/16/63
Everette & Belle
McFadden 3/14/86
Ryan & Lisa Marcus
3/20/88
Nathaniel & Abigail Tylor
3/24/07

Birthdays

Marc Byrd 3/1
Lisa Craig 3/1

Eric Wyse 3/1
Graham Ferguson 3/3
Catie Granbery 3/3
Kristi Hunter 3/3
Jordan Insani 3/3
Jason Huff 3/5
Joshua Batarseh 3/6
Glenn Guidry 3/6
Yvonne Poindexter 3/6
Ethan Powell 3/6
Nita Andrews 3/7
Pat Bowby 3/7
Jason Ingalls 3/7
T. Richard Rust 3/8
Michelle Alcott 3/9
Ava Buxton 3/9
Carla Schober 3/10
Trevor Holt 3/10
Anna Wyse 3/10
Claire Combs 3/11
Adam Lipshie 3/11
Kristin Chapman 3/12
Matthew Miller 3/13
Owen Myatt 3/13

Alexandra Thornton 3/14
Peter Woods 3/14
Quinn Kinser 3/15
Caitlin Quinn 3/15
Zayne Spencor 3/15
Emily Huff 3/16
Karen Daniel 3/20
Laura Wilhoite 3/20
Joe Dinwiddie 3/21
Naomi Daniel 3/22
Chuck Kown 3/22
Paige Lundgren 3/22
Tamara Rowland 3/22
Michael Castellon 3/23
Barbara Bowman 3/24
Andrew Bauchiero 3/24
Parker Flynn 3/25
Miles Headley 3/25
Joan Hutchinson 3/25
Suzanne Zadick 3/25
Jaymey Hardin 3/26
Sarah Krogman 3/26
Sean Smith 3/26
Rachel Sefton 3/27

Susan Tyler 3/27
Bethany Bakker 3/28
Aidan Kinser 3/29
Paul Miller 3/29
Aaron Smith 3/30
Grace Stranch 3/30
Hunter Wilhoite 3/30
Leah Daniel 3/30
Elizabeth Weber 3/30
Michael Forth 3/31

Births

- Paige Elizabeth Goldthorpe, 2/17/08, parents Georgeanna and Ted, sister Anne

Transfers

- Robert & Stana Chapman, transferred to Grace Episcopal Church, Spring Hill, TN

Like many children coming and going with the MDO program, Clara Earley drops into the rector's office for an informal visit with Fr. Jerry. Many of them also visit Miss Allison in the St. B's bookstore.

Photo by Heather Childs



Jesus lives in every new beginning

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Compassion Sunday at St. B's — April 13

Plant a seed of hope
in the heart
of an impoverished boy or girl
in a developing country.

**Sponsor a child
through
Compassion International.**

Your sponsorship of \$32 per month provides
educational, social and health benefits
through a local church in the community
where the child lives.

Your child will be involved in Christian
training and learn that Jesus deeply loves
him or her.

*Come visit the Compassion table on
Sunday, April 13 and change the life of a
child and your own!*



Compassion photo

*"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and
judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy."*

— Proverbs 31:8-9

FOR UPCOMING ST. B'S EVENTS/ACTIVITIES: LOG ON TO WWW.STBS.NET