

THE BRANCH

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH NEWSLETTER

JUNE 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:

Becky Hornsby and Sue Pichert would like you to enjoy welcoming visitors and newcomers. See article, this page.



Photo by Marjie Smith

Becky Hornsby, left, and Sue Pichert hold up bread mixes and baking pans that were used to introduce new volunteers to the art of breadmaking, during a training/information session for those involved and interested in welcoming newcomers. They would love to hear from you, if you feel led to be part of this ministry.

Get a rise out of welcoming

Those in charge of welcoming newcomers, could really use some bread bakers to help make the small loaves that are given to visitors and newcomers to remind them that St. B's is a place where we come to be nourished in Christ and in community.

Did you know that there is a faithful group of seven bakers who take turns, approximately every seven weeks, preparing 10 mini loaves of bread to give to visitors each Sunday? We always welcome new volunteers!

Bread is baked in the volunteers' kitchens. If you like to bake bread and are looking for a simple way to be a part of the vibrant newcomer's ministry, please contact Becky Hornsby, who will give you info as well as a simple recipe, if you need it, and the supplies to get you started! Please call Becky at 333-1916, or e-mail

beckyhornsby@hotmail.com.

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church

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The Rev. Dr. Jerry Smith, *rector*
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*

Office:

Pam White, *director of operations*
Jane Long, *office manager, executive assistant*
Annie Heyward, *administrative assistant*
Becky Hornsby, *childcare coordinator*

Parish ministry:

Carla Schober, *dir. of children's discipleship*
Aaron Mayo, *children's ministry assistant*
Susan Powell, *preschool coordinator*
Meredith Flynn, *nursery director*
Kristin Kinser, *elementary coordinator*
Ann Denson, *Sunday morning leader*
Steve Lefebvre, *youth discipleship intern*

Preschool and Mother's Day Out:

Suzy Floyd, *preschool director*
Mary Ellen Ratcliffe, *preschool exec. assistant*

Music:

Eric Wyse, *director of music*
Tom Howard, *associate music director*
Teresa Robinson, *administrative assistant*
Henry Martin, *sound engineer*

Vestry Members:

Sarah Bell Earley, *senior warden*
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: Abby Butler signs up to assist during a welcoming ministries information session.



Photo by Marjie Smith

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

Freedom in God's calling

Vocation: something I can't not do

Vocation at its deepest level is "... something I can't not do, for reasons I'm unable to explain to anyone else and don't fully understand myself but that are nonetheless compelling," according to Parker Palmer, in "Let Your Life Speak."

We live in a culture that tends to define people by what they do rather than who they are. One of the first questions we ask folks after being introduced is, "What do you do?" We ask without really being interested in whether they are emotionally satisfied with their jobs or not. In fact, whole industries have grown around the fact that most people really don't seem to like what they do so seek meaning and purpose in their free-time activities.

The Bible says, "Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart," (Ps 37:4) but many of us just don't know the desires of our hearts. Sadly we only find out as we go where our desires 'aren't.'

Historically, the church has believed that every man and woman has a vocation. This is not limited to full-time ordained ministry though. By definition, it means "a strong feeling of suitability for a particular career or occupation" and comes from the Latin vocare 'to call.' The implication is that everyone had a 'calling' and should be assisted in identifying where that might lie. When the calling is being lived out, everyone wins. The person benefits from the emotional rejuvenation that comes from doing what one was created to do, and the community benefits as the job is being done wholeheartedly.

As much as the church has not lost this concept of vocation, we are often guilty of thinking of it only in terms of ministry rather than more holistically. We have even give exclusive rights to vocational discernment committees to be used by those interested in full time ministry, either ordained or lay, but it is almost always in some way related to full-time work in the church.

Imagine if everyone were given the communities' encouragement to be becoming what they were created by God to be, rather than, as is often the case, becoming what is socially expected as ambitious and entrepreneurial folk.

Better still, imagine if all Christian parents actually helped children find their hearts rather than encouraging them down paths that suit their parental ambitions for them rather than the children's gifts.

As parents, we often want to live unrealistic lives vicariously through our children or we place a large burden on them thinking our reputation will be established or undermined by how successful they will be. Sadly, our definition of success is often based on something woven into our secular society rather than God's definition.

There is a prayer in the Daily Office which suggests firmly that 'perfect freedom' comes from serving God. This prayer rightly understands that we are all called to this end and we will all only know freedom when we yield to the call of God who created us to be what we have had inscribed on our hearts by him and not what has been inscribed on our psyches by society.

There is great freedom in being where you know God wants you to be and there is emotion and spiritual 'payback' when using your gifts for the community.

It is time to reclaim the word and reclaim the vision that each of us has unique gifts that can be used to serve God and, consequently, the community. For this to happen, we will have to be willing to be honest with ourselves and then courageous enough to allow God to actually be the lord of our lives.

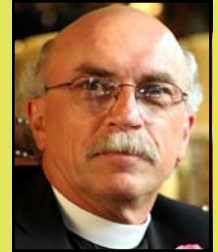
What a terrific impact the church will have for the Kingdom of God when we act under our 'calledness' and respond obediently!



You may contact Jerry Smith at:
jerrysmith@stbs.net

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



Sarah Bell Earley: warden



GETTING TO KNOW

BY MARJIE SMITH

Sarah Bell Earley catches you by surprise – regularly. St. Bartholomew's senior warden, who is mother to Clara and wife to Tony, surprised everyone again, when one of her block prints showed up at the St. Bartholomew's art show: even those who know her may not have known she dabbles in art.

The simple, but elegant print of a tree, says a lot about the artist. Its lines are simple and firm, while it comes alive surrounded by color. Sarah herself is a mixture of linear and creative.

She dresses simply, but when you arrive at the Earley home, you are embraced by color, starting with the blue siding and lime green door. It is one of this writer's favorite houses in East Nashville.

"I love creative projects," she says. "I've realized recently how important creativity is to me to keep me happy emotionally." Her creative outlet can cover the everyday: creating a meal or landscaping the garden. It can also be more direct: printmaking, quilting or woodworking.

Sarah is not agenda-oriented. She does not have a plan for how she is going to conquer the world through her career, her mothering skills or her top position on vestry. She opens the door, learns about the room she enters and lets things unfold from there. When she was asked by the nominating committee at St. B's to let her name stand for vestry, she opened the door and said yes. Hers was the first year of nominees selected through the drawing of lots.

She took the approach, "If God doesn't think I really need to be doing this right now, I can go with that."

God did want her on vestry. He not only wanted her on vestry, but in her third and final year, he wanted her to lend her experience to the team in the senior leadership position. Neither having been raised to think of herself as a leader nor having aspired to be one, it took her by surprise.

"I would never have chosen myself to do that job," she says.



She enjoys getting to know "the whole picture behind the scenes" both as warden and as volunteer proof reader for *The Branch*. And she has discovered that she gets greater joy from doing the



Sarah Bell Earley with daughter Clara and husband Tony, in the fall of 2006.

things "I have a real desire to do, rather than the things I think I really ought to be doing."

One concern Sarah had about taking on the position of warden was the possibility of an opportunity to adopt a second child. The Earleys brought Clara into their hearts and lives in February of 2005, from China. She was 14 months old. They are waiting to be approved for a second child, also from China.

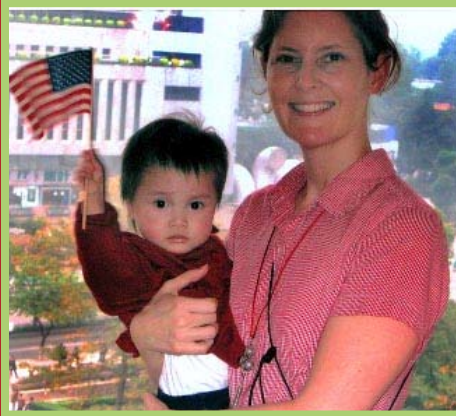
Clara is the love of Tony and Sarah's life. Sarah, who is at home with Clara, says it "has been the best thing ever. It has given me a new appreciation for parents. ... It has given me a whole different perspective on babies crying on airplanes or kids acting up in restaurants."

Although Clara wasn't the exact age they had asked for, she was "perfect for us," says Sarah. As a prospective mom, she was full of questions: "What if we get a child who doesn't like books or like the foods we like?"

Reflecting back, Sarah says, "She was exactly what we needed, the timing was right and the age was perfect. If we'd gotten a child that was six months younger I would have been more overwhelmed than I was."

Clara's warm, spirited personality has filled the house with sunshine. "She is great to be around," says her mom. "She has increased my thankfulness. I feel blessed every day."

Being a realist, she knows that having adopted late, they may not see grandchildren. They intend to squeeze the moment with Clara. "Motherhood is creative and nurturing in both directions," she says. "To have a happy home is a treat. Millions of people are longing for a happy home. ... Right now, there's nothing I'd rather be doing."



Photos by Tony Earley

God's timing proved perfect

Sarah Bell Earley, with Clara, shortly after she was adopted from China in 2005.

The decision to adopt came after some struggles with realizing they wouldn't be having a child of their own. "I probably wasted a good two years, basically having a temper tantrum about hoping God would respond the way I wanted him to," she says, transparently. She was also dealing with her mother's declining health back in North Carolina.

"I think the timing turned out just right in the end but I wasn't the model of faith one might hope for during the waiting process," she adds in her understated way.

They signed the letter of intent for adoption in January, 2004. The referral came a year later.

It has been the most life-altering, but not the only *big* move in the life of this couple who married in October of 1993. Although they are both from the small town of Rutherfordton, North Carolina, they did not know each other growing up. When they began to take notice of each other, they were college grads. She was the girl in the choir who moved back home with a degree from college to help her ill mom. Tony was a journalist at the county paper.

They met at the Episcopal Church where Sarah grew up. Ironically, Tony, who grew up Baptist, had started to attend because of a former girlfriend. Initially, she admits, "We could not stand each other; we did not get along. We both had a lot of growing up to do and we were both under a lot of different stresses."

Sarah went off to Kerala State in India with Habitat for Humanity and Tony went off to grad school. She went armed to build bricks out of mud. In reality, the caste system prevented them from doing the manual labor. During her year and a half there, she served more as a good-will ambassador.

"I went to I don't know how many weddings and funerals and baptisms and hundreds of ground breakings and house dedications. ... I learned so much about patience. You'd go to something that was supposed to start at one hour and two to three hours later it still hadn't started. You would just have to sit there and be patient and talk to people. I learned a lot about a different culture."

Sarah, who came home early because of a family health crisis, led a two-week work camp back to India. She stayed several weeks longer to tour. Her tour included a visit to see a childhood friend in Italy. As she drove from Germany to Italy alone, she thought, "This is just so wonderful, I wish I had someone to share this with, and I don't mean my sister – nothing against my sister, who I love very much."

Ready for a relationship now, she and Tony dated and married within a year of her return. Six months later, they moved to Ambridge, PA, as she began work on her Masters of Arts in Theology. She has an undergraduate degree in environmental studies from Brown University.

It was a teaching position for Tony at Vanderbilt University that brought them to Nashville in 1997. They bought their house in East Nashville at that time.

"I was finishing my thesis on the computer when the tornado hit 10 years ago," she says. "I was working on it ... and the computer kept blinking." The sky had turned black and the radio went off. She was talking to Tony on the phone. "Get in the closet," he said.

"I kind of moseyed over to the closet with the dog, and a bottle of water and a magazine and the tornado hit," she says, laughing. She heard a "whoosh" right after she sat down. Neighbors on both sides lost trees and the power was out for a week.

"It put the fear of tornadoes in me. We go to the neighbor's root cellar now," she laughs.

About the same time as the tornado, the Earleys started attending St. B's. They had tried it out when they first arrived but on their first visit the rector announced he was leaving in two weeks. A year later, they tried again.

"It felt completely right," she says.

Now, she is happy in her role as warden, knowing God put her there and there are things for her to learn and to do.

She doesn't know what comes next, but she is experienced at walking through new doors.



An unorthodox communion

Only friends go to the deep places of sadness



RUMINATIONS

BY MARJIE SMITH

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I suppose we always think that you haven't shared communion with the Body of Christ unless you've knelt at the communion rail and had everything properly blessed. We think of the representational body of Christ as manufactured wafers – just where do those wafers come from, and are they made in a business and in a fashion that honors Christ? I have no idea. And this column is not about them. And it's not about what constitutes a proper Eucharist or communion service.

This is about sharing a sacred moment in the middle of sorrow.

It was about eight years ago, in the middle of a snow storm on a Sunday morning that our golden retriever began to succumb to old age. She had been acting strangely the night before and hadn't wanted to go out. When His Collarship got up to go to the early service, Sheba, again, didn't want to go out and he left her. When I came down, she was lying down, her legs curled under her, her head weaving back and forth.

She attempted to get up, and taking that as a need to visit the outdoors, I took her to the door and put her on the deck. Her legs splayed out on the slippery skiff of snow. She didn't try to get up. She laid her head down on the deck. And the snow sifted gently down on her.

I knew then that I was losing my dog. I do not do well when my dogs die.

I carried the big, old dog into the house and held her in my lap for about an hour: just the two of us, quietly saying goodbye.

Then I called my friend, Ramona. Ramona was one of Sheba's two surrogate moms. When we were away, Sheba moved in with Ramona and claimed her spot on the end of the bed, which she never got away with in our house.

Ramona, who lived right around the corner, was there immediately. She called her vet and then we tried to figure out how we were going to take a dying dog and the two of us in my single-cab Dodge truck. It was inhumane, we decided, to put her in the open box in a storm. So Ramona, who was scheduled for knee surgery, and this scribbler, who was recovering from a knee injury, created



a hammock out of a blanket and hobbled with her to the truck. We somehow got Sheba planted in Ramona's lap, and repeated the process at the vet's office.

Ramona called our friend Ellen, who was the church secretary, to let her know neither of us would make the 11 a.m. service, and why. The vet told us Sheba had heart failure. We watched, tears streaming, as the vet put her into a permanent sleep.

When we returned to the house with our sad faces, Ellen's vehicle was parked in the driveway.

While our community took communion in a stone church, three miles away, we sat in the living room, praying, sipping wine, crying and sharing Sheba stories. It is etched in my mind as one of those close moments of friendship that no one can ever take away.

I was not at the communion rail that Sunday. I did not have a wafer or share the common cup, though I ate and drank with friends. The sentences spoken were not out of the Book of Common Prayer, but they were prayers and they were words of love.

It's the closest thing to communion you can get without it being communion.

On another note, and much more recently, I'd like to share how a neighbor brightened up a sad corner. Leo lives kitty-corner to us, in another yellow-sided, ancient Victorian cottage. Early last week, he rang the doorbell.

"Just wanted to make sure you were home; I have something for you," he said.

A few minutes later, he returned with his arms filled with beautiful peonies from his backyard garden. They were simply a gift. No reason. Just sharing his wonderful flowers.



He had no way of knowing that my brother had called that morning to say that mom had had a 20-minute seizure and he'd spent the night by her bed. We don't know what it means. Mom, who is 90, has had Alzheimer's for 15 years and has been in a nursing home for 8 of them. Still, we do not think of the now-mom, but the then-mom when we are sorrowful. And Leo's flowers remind me of the mom I knew.

Advocacy as spiritual discipline



LIVE GREEN

BY LAURA & JUD LAUGHTER

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This month's column represents our one-year anniversary of addressing all things green both inside and outside the Saint B's community. Thus, we are returning to a topic broached in our very first column: environmentalism as a Christian call. We open the discussion with how advocacy is a spiritual discipline; we close with information on where we think advocacy is needed right now.

Last month, Jud attended an Emergent Cohort meeting at the invitation of Padre Dixon Kinser (he hates to be called Father) during which Fritz Gutwein (fritzg@nccecojustice.org) from the National Council of Churches presented information about climate change and our Christian response. Fritz works with the NCC's Eco-Justice Program (www.nccecojustice.org). They define Eco-justice as "all ministries designed to heal and defend creation, working to assure justice for all of creation and the human beings who live in it." The Web site includes all manner of resources, from children's curricula to corporate statements of confession in regards to the environment.

A lot of Fritz's presentation demonstrated how climate change is related to every other ministry of the church and thus needs to be taken seriously. For example, food costs rise when there is drought or flooding and then it takes more money to feed the same number of hungry people. The number of refugees from situations linked to climate change is growing. The Eco-Justice Web site has a more complete document on these connections titled *Climate and Church: How Global Climate Change Will Impact Core Church Ministries*. The short of it is, climate change in some way impacts every mission and ministry of the church.

Fritz spoke particularly about advocacy for the environment as a spiritual discipline, just like prayer or the Eucharist. For him, advocating for change through our personal and political systems not only represents us working in the ways of God but also draws us closer to God. Engagement in making the world a better place increases our communion with God, and increasing our communion with God pushes us to engage in making the world a better place. By referring to Luke 4 and the passage Jesus reads in the synagogue at Nazareth, Fritz talked about how God calls us to change broken systems, a big one being our impact on climate change.

Right now, Fritz is working as an advocate for a specific bill that should come up for votes in our federal legislature this June and we think this is an important opportunity to

include advocacy as a spiritual discipline in our current lives. The *Lieberman-Warner Climate Security Act* is a bipartisan response to greenhouse-gas emissions that uses market forces to effect change. It's referred to as a "Cap and Trade" measure that puts limits on emissions (the cap) and then makes those emissions a commodity that can be traded. Basically, if one business stays under the limit, they can sell the difference to another business that goes over. Over time, the cap gets lower and lower, forcing businesses to either emit fewer greenhouse gases or spend more and more money buying credits at a commodities auction. The overall idea is to make such emissions so costly that businesses have to find other ways of providing their products or services (you can read a lot more about the bill in detail at lieberman.senate.gov/issues/globalwarming.cfm).

Fritz's job in all this is to convince our representatives to pass this bill, both with direct meetings and through encouraging and organizing constituent support and advocacy. Advocacy for this legislation is tied directly to the mission of the church is several ways. We are called to be stewards of creation, which includes pursuing these types of solutions. We are called to be instruments of peace, and advocacy for these types of solutions helps to alleviate international conflict. We are called to feed the hungry, and climate change is linked directly to food security.

Finally, and something that impresses us most about this specific bill, is that we are called to help the poor, and that call is included in this solution. The Lieberman-Warner Act is going to involve a lot of money; in fact, this is the biggest monetary bill since Medicare/Medicaid. A significant portion of the money involved is to be spent on providing relief to low- and middle-income families. This bill recognizes that it will force energy prices to increase, but it also covers that increase for those least likely to handle such an increase. This provision was taken out of an earlier version of the bill, but Senator Warner was convinced to put it back in based on the advocacy of the National Religious Partnership for the Environment (www.nrpe.org); this was advocacy as a spiritual practice through our call to help the poor.

As constituents from Tennessee, we can participate in this advocacy by contacting our own representatives. Senators Alexander and Corker are not fully in line with the bill but they recognize the need to do something; Alexander wants to see this type of solution developed sector by sector while Corker has come out in favor of a tax on all carbon emissions. Our advocacy on the issue might be enough to lead them in to voting in favor of the bill. In the following days and weeks, you should be hearing more about this in the news. If you're interested in becoming an advocate on this issue, contact Fritz by e-mail or check out the resources on the Eco-Justice Web site (both listed above).



Powell family called to missions

Their destination: a school for missionary's kids in Germany



FLY ON THE WALL

BY KRISTIN SEARFOSS

At Wheaton College, the alma mater of the five Searfoss children, we were a few of the many PKs, or preacher's kids, but there were also lots of MKs — missionary kids. I don't run into the terms PK and MK too much these days. Reading those acronyms again as I found out more about the Powell family at St. Bartholomew's was like a return visit to college. Mark and Susan Powell have been called as missionaries to an international Christian boarding school in Germany primarily for MKs.

This summer, they and their children, Meredith, Evan and Ethan, are traveling to Kandern, Germany, to serve at the Black Forest Academy (BFA). Susan will be the middle/high school librarian and Mark, a former MK himself, will be the school's IT/Web site/communications specialist as well as a counselor for the middle school and high school boys.

The Powell children will also be at the school: Ethan will be in second grade at BFA's elementary school in a small village near Kandern, and Evan (seventh grade) and Meredith (tenth grade) will attend the school's main campus in Kandern.

Black Forest Academy, was founded in 1956 by Janz Team Ministries. In the 2007-2008 school year, it had 345 students. Staff members, all missionaries who must raise their own support, are assigned to BFA by various mission boards. Students are in grades one to 12, and the residential boarding program is for students in grades seven to 12. There is a small percentage of students whose parents are business people instead of missionaries.

It took prayer, an ever-stronger feeling that they were called to missions, wise counsel from Father Jerry Smith, a faithful discernment team at St. Bartholomew's and open positions at Black Forest Academy that fit their expertise and gifts exactly to send the Powell family into missions. Susan says, "We'd really love to emphasize the fact that our amazing parish has been instrumental in our ability to step out in faith and make this journey."

Finding Black Forest Academy was the result of an Internet search. Once the Powells determined that they were being led to missions and were not meant to be church planters or ministers, Susan began looking into



vocational missions. They were linked to BFA's Web site through Greater Europe Mission's site.

Researching BFA, Mark and Susan discovered that the school had a critical need for a librarian, an IT/communications specialist and a boys' counselor. Susan had completed her master's in library science only a couple of years earlier, and Mark had spent 17 years in IT after having completed a master's in clinical psychology. "The way in which BFA's needs and our gifts matched is truly amazing," Mark says.

Currently a part-time librarian at Pinewood Elementary School in Williamson County, Susan is looking forward to the relationships she will be able to build with students at BFA's library. Mark has a great deal of experience developing and maintaining Web sites and recognizes how important it is to keep the Web site current with photos of students and their activities, since the Web site is often the main way parents feel included in all that their children are doing. He is excited to be able to use his counseling degree, something he has always wanted to do.

I wanted to know if people who hear about the Powells' plans figure serving at the Black Forest Academy might be just one big vacation in Europe. Overcoming this perspective may be a challenge, but at the same time, "we can't control or shape peoples' ideas and beliefs about our mission and our calling. What we are called to do is seek his kingdom," they say.

Mark says, "We have encountered extremely positive and favorable conversations and perspectives concerning our ministry. I think that our community of believers at St. B's sees beyond the picturesque setting and sees what is at the heart of this movement: a fight for our children's hearts and minds."





Photos: Left, Mark and Susan Powell are preparing to serve Christ as missionaries in Germany, taking care of missionaries' children.

Right, Susan, with their three children on Mother's Day.

"We know, without a shadow of a doubt, that we are being called to serve precious missionary children," he says. "For now, it is MKs at the Black Forest Academy. From my personal experience as a missionary kid (or using today's terminology: third culture kid), and from the stories shared by other MKs at St. B's and by friends over the years, I have come to appreciate the need for this service and ministry."

I asked Mark and Susan about some of the tough life issues that missionary kids experience. Mark, whose parents served in Puerto Rico and St. Croix, answered that MKs experience many of the same concerns that adolescents who are not MKs face, but on top of all of these issues, they have a real sense of being "different."

MKs deal with things like **loneliness**, particularly when leaving places where they've made friends and now find themselves in a new country or city and have to make new friends; the **alienation** they feel because of new cultures, new languages, new sights and new sounds; **short-lived friendships** due to moving from one place to another; **prejudice**; **educational challenges** when MKs must change schools often and therefore don't have continuity in their schooling; and **separation from parents**.

Mark remembers, "My parents did the best they could for me. They sacrificed greatly for their work, and I felt like sometimes I did, too. I was sent back to the U.S. during the summer, which I loved, but we were separated from our parents, and that was tough."

"I also remember when my father had to go on furlough (raising support) and was gone for long periods of time. This was particularly hard on my mother, who had to care for us three children by herself."

Another issue MKs face is having "lots and lots of services to attend, even when



we didn't 'feel' like it," Marks says. "This seems trivial, but it is wearing. This is complicated by the fact that people always want to put you on a stage."

When it comes to their own children, Susan and Mark will be very sensitive to these types of concerns. The family will have their own rented house, and Susan says she and Mark are both "keenly aware" of how important it is for us to maintain our family 'identity' while serving at BFA. Susan says the five Powells will carve out "family only" nights or days into their weeks. They will continue to uphold their regular family traditions and prayerfully incorporate some new ones as well.

Once they are in Germany, the Powells will communicate through their blog (fivepowells.blogspot.com), through Facebook and e-mail newsletters as well as through regular mail. They anticipate preparing DVDs to send back to St. Bartholomew's to show at events such as the annual meeting as well as doing some video conferencing.

The Powells still need a couple more people to serve on their "advocacy team." Susan says she doesn't really know what to call this position but that the team is "basically the people who will be our liaisons at St. B's and keep our needs and ministry before the parish." The family already has two people for this team but needs about two more.

You may contact Kristin Searfoss at: Kristinsearfoss@tds.net

Have breakfast with St. Bart

Yummy!!!

The first Sunday of July offers all an opportunity to enjoy baked goods offered by the St Bs ECW (Episcopal Church Women).

The proceeds from the monthly bake sales help support ECW inreach and outreach throughout the year.

The bake sale will be set up outside with the coffee between services. Don't forget to bring plenty of cash to church with you, and don't expect much to be left over after the second service.

All women of St. B's are members of the ECW.

We ask you to donate baked goods (from your kitchen or someone else's) only one time, and suggest the following:

If your last name begins with J-R, please donate to the July 6 sale. If your name begins with S-Z, please plan to contribute to the August 3 sale.

Of course, you can contribute baked goods to all the sales, and the contributions from males are welcomed as well.

Bring your donation to church with you on the first Sunday of the month, or leave it in the kitchen during the week before the sale. There will be an area designated for ECW bake sale goods.

We are sending out the anointed



MISSIONS

BY CARMEN HALL

The year was 1992. We were raising our initial support for full-time ministry.

Sergeant K. was a woman in the U.S. Army and an ethnic minority. These are true facts about her but they are not what defined her. To me, she will always be a reminder of Jesus washing the disciples' feet.

We were astounded when we went to Sergeant K's home for a "support appointment" to tell her about our ministry. She had prepared the most elaborate and intricately decorated banquet for us. It was as beautiful as any wedding feast. She kept saying what an honor it was to have the Lord's anointed in her home. Here she was calling us the Lord's anointed, but we were unworthy to untie her sandals. When had we ever gone to such lengths to bless anyone? We were humbled. In Mark 9:41, Jesus says, "I tell you the truth, anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to Christ will certainly not lose his reward." Sergeant K gave lavishly, like the woman who anointed the Lord's feet with perfume. What will be her reward?

A friend referred to us Captain G, also U.S. Army. As always, we used the presentation manual our ministry organization provided. We could sense a growing tension in Captain G and before long he exploded. He was angry at the small numbers of his ethnicity (same as Sergeant K's) that were represented in the pictures. As he chewed us out as only an eloquent army officer can, we were humbled once again. There was little we could do but listen, to extend understanding, trying not to be defensive.

Later, we met with a couple from our church to share about our ministry. The husband took it upon himself to critique us. I can still remember Rob's first comment about our presentation — it was "canned." Ouch. Another kind of humbling, perhaps the most painful because we already

knew it! He bluntly detailed our obvious weaknesses. His criticism certainly revealed how much grace God was giving us. Only rarely did anyone criticize our efforts; most accepted us flaws and all. They looked past the human frailties to see the God behind our call.

God worked wonders to build our faith during those days, but what amazes me is the faith our supporters demonstrated. After all, we had the supernatural experiences in which God revealed his call to ministry. Our ministry partners weren't given those "burning bush" manifestations. We were just a couple of 25 year-old whipper-snappers — we had no track record of a long and fruitful ministry. I had studied chemistry in college and graduate school, Thomas computer engineering. We had met as army officers — we were not yet "missionaries." Our supporters didn't know then that many would come to Christ, mostly in closed East Asia, that they would be trained as ministry leaders, that some would lead gospel ministry teams into other closed nations where Western missionaries are not allowed.

Most of our ministry partners were faithful to give during our 12-plus years of ministry — a testimony to their generous love of God. But I sometimes wonder if their greatest reward will be for that first time they joined, when they believed that God was at work with little "proof," and believed God would supply for both them and others.

St. B's has many who are serving the Lord in faith-ministry, some veteran, some just beginning, both long-term and short-term. Are we stepping out in faith and joining them before asked? I suspect that there are many Sergeant K's in our midst — oh, that I also would grow up into that lavish love of Christ.

The St. B's community believes that God has called Mark and Susan Powell to serve in the mission field. All that they lack is the financial means to do what is not "their" mission, but *ours* as his children — to expand the Kingdom of God throughout the world. Yes, the Lord could drop the funds from the sky, but his delight is in opening the hearts and wallets of his followers. Let us glorify God together in providing their support and sending them out by August 1.

Taking meals to the homeless

Mobile Loaves and Fishes, which has been using the church rectory for preparing meals to take to the homeless, served coffee at both services, on May 18, as a thank you to the parish and to increase visibility.



A number of St. B's parishioners are involved with the street ministry, enough that St. B's will field a team on the first Tuesday of every month, as well as fill in on other occasions. To join in, or for more information, contact Trey Myatt at: treymyatt@earthlink.net.



Photo by Marjie Smith



Flowers arranged with love

BY BET SCOTT

PROJECT COORDINATOR

On Thursday, April 24, soon after 9:15 a.m., Teresa Coleman, Jane Harrison, Nancy Valentine and Katrina Wilson dove into a mass of blooming, cut flowers, twigs, shrubs, bedding plants, herbs and vines. They were creating arrangements to be used on the tables at the ECW spring convention. The end result was 20 exquisite baskets that would have rivaled the most prestigious commercial florist.

Joan Hutchinson potted up flats of sweet-smelling herbs and Susan Lyons supplied masses of money plant, the bright purple flower that was the mainstay of the arrangements. Anne Dennison, Joan and Susan came around 11:30 a.m. (after fulfilling other commitments) and finished the last two baskets.

A light lunch was served and we were graced with the company of the Rev. Dixon Kinser. Joan, Susan and Anne each did a yeoman's job cleaning up the mess.

Maggie Ward and Suzie Woolwine headed up the mountain loaded with baskets, which, by the grace of God, stayed fresh throughout the convention and were sold at its conclusion. The proceeds were give by St. B's ECW to the Diocese of Tennessee's ECW.

Blessings and thanks for a job well done.

In these photos:

Some of the women who helped with the flower arranging, were counter-clockwise from top: Jane Harrison, Susan Tylor, Teresa Coleman, Nancy Valentine and Katrina Wilson.

Photos by Bet Scott



3rd Annual Nursery Parent Breakfast

Over 30 parents attended the Nursery Parent Breakfast on Sunday, May 18. The purpose of the morning was to allow busy parents a moment to reconnect with one another, meet parents new to St. B's and enjoy a hot breakfast. Many thanks to Dixon Kinser and the youth who shared the icon room with us that morning, and to Patsy Flynn who made the delicious food!



Photos by Pam White

THE BRANCH JUNE 2008-11

Music Ministry



Photos by Marjie Smith



FROM THE LOFT

BY SUSAN HOUSTON
CHOIR MEMBER

A (long) morning in the life of a St. B's worship musician:

6 a.m. The alarm goes off, and I whine piteously. This does nothing to improve matters, but I get up and shower and prepare for church. I make sure to wear comfortable shoes, since I'll be standing a lot. I get some breakfast, and head to church.

7:30 a.m. The musicians arrive and head to the loft: three or four instrumentalists (guitar, bass guitar and percussion), three miked singers (usually two women and one man, since we seem to have a shortage of male singers), assistant music director Tom Howard on the piano, and finally music director Eric Wyse, racing up the stairs with sheets of extra music and a laptop. Henry Martin is finishing up the mikes, adding and subtracting as needed, and checking levels.

7:35 a.m. We start working through the music, initially skipping the hymns since most of us are familiar with the melodies. The singers will go over any unfamiliar ones if necessary after we've gone through the pieces with instrumental accompaniment. Eric or Tom will stop and give directions for tempo, instrumental introductions, or decide whether the singers will sing in unison or parts. There are occasional minor problems, such as discovering we have the wrong version of the sheet music, the lyrics in the program don't match our



copy, or all the pencils are broken, and there is no bottled water. The singers drink a lot of liquids throughout the two services.

8:20 a.m. We always try to be finished by 8:15, so that the congregation may have silence for contemplation or prayer; we are rarely able to do so. Everyone rushes downstairs for coffee and bathroom breaks. Choir members attending the first service come and take seats. The more voices we have in the loft, the fuller the sound is. Often choristers will sing up to the sermon, go downstairs and join their spouses and families for the sermon through the passing of the peace, then come back up to the loft and sing for the rest of the service.

8:30 a.m. The service begins with Eric on the organ, and miked singers singing the opening hymn. We always try to stand back a bit from the mike for the opening and closing hymns, so that it will sound more like congregational singing, and less like mikes. The instrumentalists start making their way upstairs - they have a few extra minutes before they are needed.

8:45 a.m. Time for the Psalm. This is where one of the vocalists, usually the soprano, will become the cantor and sing the recitative passages. We all join in on the choruses. The music for this can be intimidating, since it consists of long passages sung to about eight notes, and knowing when to change can be a bit tricky since the passages are not shown under the notes like conventional sheet music in hymnals. Sometimes they are written by a St. B's musician, and if the full choir is present, they may sing a choral anthem.

9 a.m. Most of the musicians step out for a breather when the sermon begins and get more coffee, practice a quick tweak of an arrangement or run through a song we had to skip in rehearsal. We've pretty much been on the run for 90 minutes. We'll stay for the full second service.

9:30 a.m. Someone dashes out to tell us that they're passing the peace. We run back in for the offertory. This is usually a special number: either a solo vocalist with accompaniment, or a specialty instrument like the harp,

(Continued on page 17)

THE TWIG

Children's Ministry
at St. Bartholomew's
June



In short

Summer volunteers needed

Please consider our need for volunteers to help with the children's discipleship programs this summer.

In the summer, we try to give our regular Sunday school teachers a break and would welcome your assistance. It is an opportunity to bond with these fine younger members of the congregation.

If you are interested, please contact carlaschob@gmail.com.

Help with Meals for Moms

If you enjoy making people feel welcome and/or remember what it was like to be at home the first couple of weeks with a new baby, please sign up to help with Meals for Moms. We deliver meals for five weeks to new families in the parish. It is a wonderful way to support others. Meal preparation can range from home-cooked meals to take-out, depending on your inclination.

Please contact Meredith Flynn, nursery coordinator, for more information.



Photo by Ann Denson

Mother's Day flowers

Carla Schober, director of children's discipleship, and Kristin Kinser, elementary coordinator, help the children of the church give out flowers on Mother's Day.

What summer looks like

Summer children's discipleship is just that, all about discipleship. On Sunday mornings, we will focus on what it is to look beyond ourselves to the needs of others.

At the 8:30 service, in June and August, children (4 years through 6th Grade) will meet as a large group. The theme will be on what Jesus taught about discipleship. In June, we will discuss Jesus' choosing of his 12 disciples and what it means to be called. We'll talk of obedience and trust by the multiplication of the loaves and fishes. We'll talk together about servanthood as we walk through the parable of the Good Samaritan and touch on what it means to sacrifice with the example of the widow's mite. (There will not be children's discipleship during the 8:30 service from June 29 through July 27. The early service will be child-friendly and nursery care through 3 years will be available.)

In the 10:30 service (June, July and August), rising elementary children will be given a glimpse of discipleship through the experiences of missionaries that call St. B's home. Each week, a different missionary will share about his or her particular call of service, both outside of our country and within our city. Kristin Kinser, elementary coordinator, writes, "The idea/theme of the Summer (10:30) will be that following Jesus is not just about attending church on Sunday. It is about living your life in a way that brings hope, peace, forgiveness, reconciliation and healing." Everyone speaking will be the ones you and your children have seen either on a Sunday morning or at one of our all-church gatherings. Kristin adds, "I pray that through (their) stories, experiences and photos these kids' imaginations and hearts will be sparked and inspired to see what they could do to serve Jesus."

Both the 8:30 and 10:30 children's discipleship settings are open to all parishioners. Many of the lessons taught and experiences shared are what we all can learn or be reminded of in our daily lives.

Exploring the wonder of empty nest



The wonder of it all

by Carla Schober

Director of children's discipleship

"It seems like only yesterday" may sound cliché but the words keep playing over in my mind and I can actually feel the meaning of the phrase.

Here I sit, the start of the last full day of high school for our youngest child, Ellie. This morning I fought off tears as I made her last brown-bag lunch and remembered sending her off to kindergarten. She was so cute and acted so brave as she boarded the bus with her best friend Meghan. Little did she realize it was me who was nervous and not very brave. All I wanted to do at that moment was squish next to her on the bus seat and make sure she was safe. Now, for however many times I yawned at the monotony of making her and her brothers' lunches, I'm going to miss the simple but dedicated time of thinking of each child as I put peanut butter on a sandwich, cut up an apple or sometimes, much to their embarrassment, leave silly notes. I'm going to miss these days. It hurts but feels good at the same time.

My husband David and I are about to enter the empty-nest season. We don't know what that will look like, however we didn't know what being parents would look like either. Going back, I remember holding our first baby, Justin, and wondering how I was going to pull parenting off. I had never even held a baby before Justin. I'd read many of the "how to"

books but each one had a different take and usually strong opinion that put down the others. Reading wasn't a bad idea but for me it simply caused me more confusion and feeling more or less inept. It finally came down to faith — the faith that told me the Lord was there and that he loved and cared for our children far more than we could imagine. That faith helped me realize that no matter how many mistakes I made through my lack of experience and humanness, he was still there helping me, my husband and my children through mistakes and times of questions.

By the time this article is published, Ellie will have graduated from high school and ready to begin college in August. Our oldest son Justin will be in Spain with a summer study abroad program and our middle son Michael will be living in Knoxville raising extra money for next fall's school year.

The faith that I grew into as a young parent will now be stretched to know and trust that our children, now grown, are ready to make their own mistakes and good decisions with their own faith in the Lord. It's not going to be easy. I have a pit in my stomach even as I write this and I find my eyes tear up quite a lot. It's now time to truly love, pray and be available to our children in a new and unfamiliar way. We've made it through one season of parenthood and, in the "wonder of it all" are heading into another.

On Saturday, May 17, four members of St. B's attended the CPR training course and are now certified to administer CPR. The class was taught by Beth Ramsay, RN, faithful children's ministry volunteer. Beth graciously and enthusiastically shared her expertise.

Photos by Ann Denson



CHILDREN'S DISCIPLESHIP LEADERSHIP TEAM

Carla Schober

Children's discipleship
director

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Aaron Mayo

Children's discipleship
assistant

mayoarm@hotmail.com

Ann Denson

Sunday morning leader

annmd123@yahoo.com

Susan Powell

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Meredith Flynn

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Kristin Kinser

elementary coordinator

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Gary Mumme

5th/6th Grade Boys' Club
leader

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Karen Daniel

5th/6th Grade Girls' Club leader

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Shari Smyth

8:30 service coordinator

Level 1 Catechist

wsmyth3420@comcast.net

Getting to know

Who's new?



Nathan, Jill
and Kyran Clair

A family relatively new to St. B's is the Clair family. Nathan and Jill Clair are mid westerners. Jill comes from Omaha, Nebraska, and Nathan from Chicago. They first met in Omaha where Nathan was planting a church that Jill eventually attended.

The Clairs are now in Nashville as Nathan works on his Master of Theological Studies at Vanderbilt Divinity School. As Nathan investigated Nashville's Episcopal churches online, he recognized Dixon Kinser's name from emergent church Web sites he'd been reading.

They decided to give St. B's a try and fell in love with the church right away.

They are re-learning an appreciation for Anglican worship and feel refreshed!



Sunday school children give out flowers on Mother's Day.



Photos by Ann Denson

*There are opportunities for you
to be trained for ...*

Catechesis & Godly Play

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd and Godly Play are classes/learning styles that take training and experience as well as a great deal of consistent time and preparation. They both meet during the 8:30 a.m. Sunday service.

We are sorry to say, due to the lack of additional trained catechists, the number of children allowed in our Catechesis class is limited. Godly Play too is growing far larger and quicker than we planned. We are already considering the fall and possible leaders who might be interested in training.

If you're willing to train, we would like to provide two different types of training, depending on your desire and availability.

For Catechesis: Children's Discipleship will find funds to pay for potential trainees to take the 90-hour course given at the Cathedral and/or St. George's this fall. The class meets either once a week from September - March, 2009, from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. (childcare is provided) or at St. George's once a month for most of a Saturday. For trainees, St. B's will purchase all supplies and other miscellaneous needs.

For Godly Play: We have a certified GP trainer willing to donate her time to train a group for (2) 2-day morning training sessions at St. B's. This is obviously a wonderful and giving offer and could help us provide additional much needed classes and child-teacher ratio. Again, St. B's would be responsible for supplies and other miscellaneous needs.

If you are interested in being trained in either category, or know of someone who may, please let Carla Schober know as soon as possible (carlaschob@gmail.com).

Hallway Pray-ers



Kindling

by Ann Denson

The children's ministry at St. Bartholomew's is where it is today because of one word: prayer; a lot of prayer by a lot of people ... many of whom are reading this right now. Nothing in this ministry has happened without intention.

Carla Schober, director, is one of the praying-est people I know! Never a Sunday morning with all of its activities, classes and responsibilities happens without her praying in advance of that day. Or, without her gathering one or all of her leaders nearby to pray — specifically — for that day. Even in the midst of the Sunday school hour, one might see Carla (or others on her team) walking the hallways, and then stopping to pray with or for someone. It is as normal as breathing. This ministry is simply bathed in prayer.

There are others praying in these hallways however, every single Sunday. Others who have nothing to do with the children's ministry directly, others who are quietly and very unassumingly praying powerfully each week; here follows a little of their story.

Last year, beginning sometime in June or July, two or three people gathered each Sunday to pray for the St. Bartholomew's community: for Fr. Jerry Smith, our rector; the staff; the vestry; the 10:30 a.m. service and the children's and youth ministries (while they met during that time period).

Today, this group, still small, meets every Sunday at 10:30 a.m. and prays for the duration of the service — about 1 ½ hours. Anyone who walks through the Sunday school wing located under the gym might have noticed a room with yellow-and-white-striped awning over its two doors; this is the library, one of our best kept secrets. This is also the location of the prayer team, quiet and unassuming but sending powerful pleas before the throne of grace. They are faithful, focused and serious about this time with our Heavenly Father. Nothing is secretive about this prayer time, lest I mislead — they stay very connected to Fr. Jerry, sharing what they believe God reveals to them. Nothing is exclusive about this group; in fact, they really want others who believe in the power of prayer to join them, the invitation is open, every week.

Phyllis Xanthopoulos and Jack and Vicki Milam were the first to gather on a weekly basis. Later, CaroleAnn Gingles and Carney Hawkins became involved in the prayer time. If asked, each might tell you something very similar, they

weren't so sure this was what they wanted to do and that for various reasons, but they knew that obedience to God was more important than their own needs. They knew they were and are called for such a time.

Phyllis shares about this gathering "We pray for each other and our families. We pray for St. B's, the priests and for the body. We pray where God leads us," she explains. "On occasion someone comes in [the library] and we pray with them for whatever their need is. God has changed our hearts and minds in some areas over the months — especially about what is going on in the national church and ... our reaction to it."

Phyllis and this small team want others to join them in this effort. She says, "A few weeks ago I spoke to Jerry about the group and he offered to make a series of announcements in church about the group to see if we can add more people." She continues, "I believe the Lord is doing a work in us in preparation of getting us ready for expansion ... Last week Vicki said something to the effect 'before you can do the first, you need to do the first thing.'"

The 'first thing' is clear — to gather, to be obedient to God's calling to do so, to pray. Their hearts have been changed as a result, and — here's the "kicker" as that saying goes — unbeknownst to most of us, so have ours.

A vivid illustration is revealed in CaroleAnn Gingles' words about her part in this powerful team — "Early one morning ... I was out walking. I was struggling, struggling about some issue I have continued to pray about for years and the thought came to me that I might as well just quit. 'What is the use?' (it was the devil talking). As I came up the last big hill, I saw a tall building reaching from the earth to heaven. As I looked at it I began to see the individual stones the building was made of.

"As I was wondering about this, I felt the Holy Spirit say, 'Your prayers are like the stones of this building. It takes every one of your prayers to make a strong building and it cannot be completed without all of the prayers you pray.' It was a great illustration for me.

"So when I came to St Bartholomew's, I knew that part of what I wanted to be a part of was PRAYers. Vicki invited me to join them. I am grateful."

She concluded with these words of appreciation "I am reminded of Joan (Hutchinson) ... that without her and others of those who have been faithful PRAYers before us (as well as those for whom we are now laying the groundwork) we would not be where we are today - nor be able to lay hold of that for which we anticipate - RE: being more and more willing to 'step out of the boat and walk on the water'."

The library door is open at 10:30 a.m. every Sunday.

Sunday schedule grueling



(Continued from page 12)

cello or flute. Sometimes Tom will improvise on the piano, or Eric will play a piece he's prepared on the organ. Occasionally, we use the offertory to introduce a worship song, hymn or service music setting to the congregation, with the musicians teaching it often having only just learned it two hours previously, and if we're lucky, with the help of a music score or mp3 sent by e-mail that week.

We go through what we call service music; the Sanctus (Holy, holy, holy, Lord), the Memorial Acclamation (Christ has died, Christ is risen...), The Lord's Prayer (Our Father in Heaven) and the Agnus Dei (Lamb of God, You take away...). Many of the musicians have these pieces memorized. The choristers go down for Eucharist and return, while the miked singers and instrumentalists perform a mixture of traditional songs and more modern praise and worship music. Eric and Tom keep a watch on the progress of the ushers down the aisle, since communion may end before we have completed all of our prepared music, or we may need to stretch out the music if there is higher attendance.

9:55 a.m. One of the singers (usually the cantor) will ask the congregation to stand and sing one last song. This is usually a favorite song or one written by a member of St. B's, and ties in with the sermon or church calendar. Then it is time for the recessional and the final hymn; just the organ and singers, with maybe a snare drum or piano, a descant from the higher sopranos, or Eric will freely harmonize on the organ for the final verse, depending on the mood.

10:05 a.m. We have a break before the next service begins: more coffee, maybe a snack if we've planned

ahead, or we can mooch something from an obliging tray of cookies. Sometimes there has been a minor disaster, such as an unprepared hymn that needs more work, and we'll hurry to practice it before the service.

10:30 a.m. We begin again. My feet hurt, and I wish I had another Diet Coke. More choristers join us in the loft for the second service. We stay throughout the full service. This time, when the Eucharist begins, the singers and instrumentalists stream down to the altar rail, trying to not appear hurried, but needing to get back up to the loft so that we can begin the Communion music, while either Tom or Eric remain behind to play piano or organ.

Once we get back up to the loft, the director who remained behind will go down to receive communion, while the other will resume the music. I have seen Tom slide from the piano bench while Eric slid onto the other side to continue the flow of music, with scarcely a pause. If it is Eric who has remained behind, he will start directing the next song, and then halfway through the first verse, step downstairs for communion with his family.

12 noon. We sing the final hymn, and by now I (and occasionally other performers) am highly caffeinated, and we attack it with gusto, because it is the last one. We exchange grins and share our enthusiasm for songs that went very well or were particularly moving. We collect the empty coffee cups and water bottles, put the sheet music in the recycle bin, and head back downstairs, both tired and energized, if such a thing is possible.



Hollywood Jesus

Fr. Dixon's super summer questions for 2008



A MISSIONAL LIFE

BY FR. DIXON KINSER

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH MINISTRIES

If you don't know it by now I am a comic book geek. I have loved comic books, still love comic books and will forever (probably) love comic books. The comic book is unlike any other print medium in the way it invites the reader to "fill in the gaps" between the frames and tells stories with a mixture of text and images. In this, the comic book is peerless and I love it.

Furthermore, I contend that it is the comic book that is providing our late-modern Western culture with its most salient mythologies. The root of the word "mythology" is *mythos*, which means, loosely, "word of mouth." Myths are the stories we tell to comprehend those "unspeakable" realities of the universe. They offer content, shape and story to cosmic mysteries like, "Where did we come from?" "What is the purpose of life?" or "Why is there evil in the world?" Today, it is the comic book superhero (more often than not) we using as a gateway our mythologies.

Now, because we tell our stories primarily through film these days, it should be no surprise then that when a comic book hero makes the jump to the silver screen (in most cases) the film is a huge hit. The comic book event movie is one of the most proficient delivery systems of popular mythology and on the docket this summer are no less than three, huge and bonafide superhero mythology stories.

Therefore, I'd like to offer my own personal, Christian, Kingdom of God reflections on three of the summers' biggest upcoming films. Each movie follows in the tradition of the best science fiction by using the fantastic to speak prophetically about the everyday and I've seen signs in these stories of a *mythos* deeply connected to God's story. I expect the Holy Spirit to use all three as a means of forming me spiritually. If you would like to interact with them the same way, here are some questions to consider.

Iron Man (Release Date May 9)

Already a blockbuster at the time I write this "Iron Man" tells the story of billionaire weapons developer Tony Stark. Stark is a celebrity for both his hedonism and ability to produce new weap-



ons of mass destruction. However, when a trip to Afghanistan (Vietnam in its original 1963 iteration) goes horribly wrong and a terrorist group seeking his technology kidnaps him, Stark has a change of heart (quite literally – his heart is damaged during the kidnapping and he must build an iron suit in order to escape and protect his damaged ticker – hence Iron Man). He vows to use his amazing technological skill to protect life instead of destroying it and becomes Iron Man.

Tony Stark's transformation into Iron Man reminds me a lot of one of Paul's admonitions to the Ephesians. In Ephesians 4:28, Paul counsels that anyone, "who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need." Here Paul suggests that instead of just stopping a bad behavior (stealing) you use your hands (the things you've been stealing with) to actually do good. In this act in the opposite spirit of your former life, taking on good-ness as a way of redeeming bad-ness.

Reminds me a lot of Tony Stark. *Iron Man* should challenge us to reflect on how we practice redemption in our lives and communities by turning our worst habits into best practices. Sounds like something I'd love to talk about around St. B's.

The Incredible Hulk (Release date June 13)

If you don't know this story let me fill you in. Dr. Bruce Banner is a brilliant scientist, but after being subject to DNA-altering radiation (gamma rays in the 1962 original) he becomes the Incredible Hulk. As you probably know from the '70's TV show, the Hulk's transformation only happens when he gets angry or is under emotional duress. The essence of the Hulk character is that he is confronting darkness within.

Bruce Banner removes himself from society, including the only woman he's ever loved, in order to seek a cure. However, when the powers that be (the US military in this case) want the Hulk's DNA for a weapon, Dr. Banner has to face what he is really made of. Will he give in and be consumed by his dark alter ego or will he find salvation? I'll be there opening weekend to ask myself those same questions.

When does our careful, protected darkness erupt out of us? What brings it about? Why do we try to hide it? Does that make it any better? Also, and more importantly, are we as committed as Bruce Banner to find redemption? In watching "The Hulk," it will be hard to deny that wholeness is something that requires both courage and sacrifice. Such is the way of Jesus. However, taking up our cross and suffer-

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

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A Missional Life Cont'd from p. 18

(Continued from page 18)

ing in Christ does not lead to death, but instead new life. Do we have the courage to seek it?

Batman: The Dark Knight (July 18)

Batman is a character I can relate to. Unlike the seemingly perfect Superman, Batman is a dark dude. He has big hang ups, no superpowers (just smarts and lots of cash) and in his obsession to do justice, he straddles the line between saint and sinner. Again, I can relate to that.

In this summer's sequel to 2005's "Batman Begins," "The Dark Knight" picks up where its predecessor left off. Batman has forged an alliance with Lieutenant James Gordon and DA Harvey Dent and all three are waging a successful war on crime in Gotham until a new criminal mastermind, the Joker, threatens to undo it all. Batman has never faced a foe of the Joker's profound evil and inhumanity and his crusade to bring him down may cost Batman his soul.

The tension between Batman and Joker has always struck me. The Joker (in his comic origins at least) is actually (albeit inadvertently) created by Batman. Their lives have always been intertwined because of this with the former trying to convince the latter of just how alike they really are.

The conflict between these two comic icons always reminded me of one insidious facet of evil: the way it remakes you in its image. One can see this pattern in the way people who were bullied become bullies or the way we inexplicably revisit our worst treatment on others. It is only in being remade in the image of Jesus that we break that cycle. The good news is, God is about that business and does it all the time. (Colossians 3:10) We cannot redeem evil with evil, but can instead overcome it with good (Ro 12:21).

"The Dark Knight" becomes an opportunity to look at what it takes to bring God's justice into our world. Do we do this in a way that mirrors God's self-sacrificial love for the creation or in a way that mirrors the might-makes-right ethic of evil. Are our endeavors to right the wrongs of our day making us look more like God, or more like the very evil we are combating?

These are just some of the questions I'll be asking while I enjoy the heck out of myself at the multiplex this summer. It is certainly not an exhaustive list, but it provides a place to start at least until July 25. Then I'll be meditating on truth with the "X-Files!"

I love the summer!



Music team lunch, May 18



Photos by Marjie Smith

Using water wisely at home



AT HOME BY BONNIE BASHOR

Romans 8:19-23: The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

(This information is adapted from <http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/non-hw/green/owners.htm>).

Too much of a good thing.

You can have healthier plants, save money on water bills and conserve precious water resources by learning to give your lawn and garden just what they need, and no more.

Water deeply, but infrequently.

Most plants do best if the soil is allowed to partially dry out between waterings. A loss of shine or footprints remaining after you walk across the lawn indicates that it's time to water. Vegetables and other annuals should be watered at the first sign of wilting, but tougher perennials need water only if they stay droopy after it cools off in the evening. Trees and shrubs usually don't need any watering once their roots are fully established (two to five years), except in very dry years.

Make every drop count.

Some easy ways to lower water bills and get more water to plants include:

- Build your soil with compost and mulch to hold water and reduce evaporation.
- Choose low-water-use plants. Once established, they can often thrive just on rainfall.
- Use soaker hoses or drip irrigation on beds - they can save 50 percent or more compared with sprinklers.
- Use an outdoor water timer (available at garden stores) to water just the right amount, frequency and time of day.
- Water lawns separately from other plantings. Make sure sprinklers

aren't watering the pavement.

- When soil is dry or compacted, it won't absorb water quickly. If water puddles, stop watering a while and then restart so the water has time to soak in.
- Water in the early morning — if you water at mid-day, much of the water just evaporates. Evening watering should be avoided because it can encourage the growth of mold or plant diseases.
- In a dry spell, you can allow an established lawn to go dormant. Water just once a month and brown areas of the lawn will bounce back in the fall.

Rain gardens are landscaped areas designed to soak up rainwater from your roof, driveway and/or lawn. These gardens are designed to collect rainwater runoff and filter and slowly release it into the ground. A rain garden typically can retain 30 percent more rainwater than a conventional patch of lawn. By reducing the volume and velocity of storm water runoff, rain gardens help reduce soil erosion, filter fine particulates and capture fertilizer and excess nutrients that can pollute rivers and lakes.

The organizations listed below provide more information on rain gardens and guides for building your own rain garden.

- University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension's Water Resources Program
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- Rain Garden Network
- Rain Gardens of West Michigan

Let the rain soak in.

Rain rushes off roofs, pavement and compacted soil. This causes flooding downstream, erodes stream banks and muddies the water, which harms fish and other wildlife. Runoff also puts pollutants in the water and increases the amount of stormwater that must be treated at the sewage treatment plant. You can help slow this run-off and help the soil hold the moisture plants need in summer.

- Direct downspouts out into lawns, rain gardens or rain barrels.
- Use compost and mulch to reduce erosion and help rain soak in.
- Use open pavers, gravel or other pavement options that let rain seep into the soil.
- Plant dense strips of native trees, shrubs and ground-covers next to streams, lakes and ditches to stabilize the soil and to slow and filter run-off.



Praying by the Book

Discipline of the Daily Office strengthens spiritually



REFLECTION

BY JOEL MILLER

"Pray without ceasing." "The fervent prayers of a righteous man avails much."

In the church where I grew up, I heard these verses a lot. For those who bandied them about they were convenient summaries of their prayer life, or what they wanted it to be. For me they were like slogans for products not for sale in my city.

At best prayer was an uneven and elusive discipline. It was often triggered by a crisis: bad traffic, an upcoming test. "Heavenly Father," I started, followed with a statement of something God already knew, to which I tacked a request for something else to fix the first something.

It wasn't always desperation that drove my devotion. I thirsted for God, but seeking him in prayer proved a constant challenge. My mind wandered. The backs of my eyelids were movie screens. I could jump between praise and petition and planning a hiking trip all in the same moment, eyes still pinched like piety was my constant state of being. Such a prayer could hardly be called fervent. More like furtive, especially when I caught myself wandering. Was I availing jack? I had my doubts.

And here's the bad news: All of this was when I actually tried. Increasingly, I didn't. I knew people who prayed for hours on end. With my scattershot supplications I could barely keep my mind on track for more than two minutes. It was frustrating. And it didn't seem to accomplish anything. I got no victory in the areas of my life where I struggled with sin. I rarely felt close to God. It didn't seem to matter. Prayer became an accident in my life, something occasional, more miss than hit.

I don't know which came first: withdrawal from attempting meaningful prayer or the slow emaciation of my spirit. But they both happened. God became more an accusing thought than a person. I couldn't stop thinking about him (though I wished desperately at times that I could), but I was at a loss about what to do about it. What to tell him? How to tell him? I could talk to the wall as easily as God.

Then things changed. I wandered into the Anglican tradition. After years in the desert it was like stumbling into an oasis.

One of the restoratives I found was the daily office and the Book of Common Prayer. Wow. "Here's what I needed," I thought. And how.

For the first-time in my Christian walk, I felt as if I had a guide to prayer, an aid, a support. More than the endless encouragements to pray that I grew up with, here was a way to do it, a discipline to accomplish it. And as I began using the prayer book each day, I was awakened. Parts of me came alive.

I found I craved the discipline of the daily office, the act of bringing my time and schedule into conformity with something bigger and more meaningful. I'm easy for allowing the demands of the day to drive me every direction but before the throne. But the discipline of following the prayer book helps me turn those demands toward the throne instead. Because I am approaching God several times a day, confessing my sins, praising him, thanking him for his grace and provision, my faith has been strengthened and I am better able to keep perspective on the things that matter and those that do not.

It also helps me in my daily struggles. When lust starts itching behind my eyes, the words are already there: "Drive far from us all wrong desires, incline our hearts to keep your law... ." When life is unsure and unpredictable: "Be present, O merciful God, and protect us ... so that we who are wearied by the changes and chances of this life may rest in your eternal changelessness..." Because of the prayer book I have the right words — the right thoughts — when it counts.

My personal sense of incorporation into the church is greater as well. There is something powerful in the idea that millions of fellow believers are beseeching, praising, thanking God at all hours of the day using these same words. Pray without ceasing? Yeah, that's how. And I find the unity created in our common prayers both humbling and invigorating.

I don't know if these are fervent prayers or if they are accomplishing much, but I know a few things they're accomplishing: I'm closer to God, my spirit's alive, and my faith swells in places it used to shrink. I'll take that.



Learning hands-on about God



YOU DOING OK?

BY FR. RANDY HOOVER-DEMPSEY

ASSISTANT RECTOR

I taught science to fourth and fifth graders for 20 years. I loved it. We learned science by doing experiments. On the first day of class I would say, "We're going to be doing the same thing that scientists in research centers do every day. We're not going to be reading books about science. We're going to learn science by designing and carrying out experiments."

And on the first day of class we did just that. We did an experiment called, "Let the Good Times Roll." The question that we were seeking to answer was "How does the height of a ramp affect the distance a ball will roll?" After planning the experiment, the kids were grouped in pairs with their ramps and tennis balls and measuring sticks and they got to work. It was tons of fun, and we all learned a lot.

By teaching science I had the opportunity to think about science and faith. I've never seen science as being in conflict with theology. For example, I know that our universe is expanding and, as Carl Sagan used to say, "there are billions and billions of galaxies," but I've never seen the scientific discoveries about astronomy as somehow threatening Christian faith or theology. The amazing complexity of the universe points to the amazing complexity of the Creator of the universe.

Why is it important for disciples of Jesus Christ to embrace the complexity and mystery of God that we see revealed in science? It is important because Jesus Christ is important for the modern world. We serve a Lord who is resurrected and whose Holy Spirit is living among us. Scripture testifies to the holy presence of God. This presence is holy because it is other than us. When we connect with God's holiness, we are like Moses standing before the incomprehensibility of the burning bush. Isn't that the way you feel when you lie down on the grass and look at the night sky?

Yet the holy presence is also a presence that we know. Our Lord, Jesus Christ, is the creator of the world. Who will connect mystery of the creation with the presence of the creator if it is not those who call Jesus Lord?

Carla Schober, our director of children's discipleship, and her colleagues are offering the St. B's community an opportunity to consider the wonder of God. Beginning June 10

and 17, the summer series, "Exploring the Wonder," will offer members of all ages a chance to gather to reconsider elements of faith that we might have taken for granted. Carla says, "Scripture points to the awesomeness of God. The mys-

tery of God is also awesome. "Exploring the Wonder" will give us a chance to take a fresh look at our faith and our belief.

"Exploring the Wonder" will be "active learning" suitable for all ages. On June 10 and 17, we'll be exploring the wonder "Around the Table." We'll have a chance to take a fresh look at some familiar themes centering on our experience of the Holy Eucharist. In July, we'll be exploring the wonder of the "Work of God's Hands." I'm excited about this part of the summer series because we'll be looking for God's presence in the fields of geology, plants, astronomy and more.

Each "Exploring the Wonder" session will begin and end with worship. Families will be able to complete the activities together. However, this series of events will allow us to live out the reality that we are all part of one family. Everyone is welcome — young and old, singles and multiples, happy and grumpy.

"Exploring the Wonder" takes place at St. B's June 10 and 17, July 8 and 15 and August 5 and 12.)

Emotionally Free seminar a beginning

Note: The first part of this article is a fictionalized account based on the author's experience.

Les and Joyce had been married for seven years when they came in to ask for prayer. They were committed to their relationship, but they were having problems. Marital counseling had helped, but something seemed to be robbing them of the intimacy that they both desired. They wanted someone to pray healing over their relationship.

Les and Joyce contacted some friends from church who had experience with healing prayer. Together they asked the Holy Spirit to help them understand what was going on in Les and Joyce's relationship, so that they would know how to pray.

As they prayed together, almost immediately Les began to see a picture from the past. As an infant, he had been separated from his mom for several years. In his remembrance of himself as a child, he could see himself crying and he knew that he felt abandoned by his mom. It became clear that one of the problems facing Les and Joyce in their

(Continued on page 23)



You Doing OK?

Cont'd from p. 22



marriage was Les's fear that he would be abandoned.

The work of healing prayer in the marriage of Les and Joyce was not counseling. Instead, Les and Joyce were joined by two other Christian friends who asked God to show them how to pray together for healing in their marriage.

During the first weekend in May, 45 people came together at St. B's to learn more about the power of healing prayer. The Emotionally Free seminar brought together people who wanted to experience healing prayer in their own lives with others who felt called to the ministry of healing prayer.

The brochure for the seminar explained it's basic premise.

"Even dedicated Christians can be locked into debilitating habits and self-defeating addictions whether emotional, mental, physical, sexual, or even financial. Often soul healing prayer releases the mind-set that has been locking such controlling patterns in place, and brings about the inner strength to break those bondages."

St. B's member, Bonnie Bashor, has had extensive experience in healing prayer and the Emotionally Free curriculum as a part of her missionary work with Sharing Of Ministries Abroad in Africa. (SOMA is a mission/ministry working in the Anglican Communion.) Bonnie has also worked with Gail Patton of SOMA, and she and others involved in prayer ministry at St. B's thought it would be a great idea to invite Gail to bring a team of laypeople familiar with Emotionally Free to present a seminar at our parish. Father Jerry Smith quickly got on board with the project and helped to make it happen.

Where is the Holy Spirit leading us in the ministry of healing prayer? That is what those of us who attended the seminar are praying about now.



TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

BY PAM WHITE

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

New air conditioning in place

Thanks to all who have contributed and are contributing to the Nehemiah Fund. We have raised enough money to begin work on our two most critical facilities issues during the month of June. They are replacing the broken air conditioning units in the choir loft (already completed) and the heating and air conditioning units housed on top of the gymnasium (beginning first week of June). These units cool the gym and downstairs parish hall area.

Work has been completed on the new choir loft air conditioning units much to the joy of Eric Wyse and the entire music ministry team. For the first summer in four years, they will not have to bring spray bottles to cool themselves off during practice and services on Sunday. Likewise, the congregation will not have to bring sweaters to church during the summer months to keep from catching a cold (All this as a result of trying to cool off the choir loft during the hot summer months).

Work is to begin on the units above the gymnasium the first week of June and will include replacing the roof area first where the new units will reside. We will keep you posted on the progress! In the mean time, if you have any questions, please contact Dick Jewell, vestry liaison to facilities, Pam White, director of operations, or else any member of our newly formed facilities committee: Mimi Heldman, Tim Villager or David Morss.

New admin assistant hired for St. B's office

After several interviews we are excited to announce that we have hired Annie Heyward as St. Bartholomew's receptionist / administrative assistant, re-

placing Heather Childs, who will be staying home to be a full time mom to her son Joses.

Annie's first day in the office was Tuesday, May 27. Annie is a graduate of the University of Georgia and is originally from St. Louis, Missouri. Her experience includes non profit work for Reformed University Fellowship at Vanderbilt University as well as Davidson College in North Carolina where she developed great communication, fundraising and administrative skills.

In her most recent job she served as an executive assistant to a wedding planner in Nashville where she gained further experience in event planning and stress management. Although Annie is not a member of the Episcopal Church, she does have first-hand knowledge of what it is like to work in ministry at a church as her father was a Presbyterian minister until his recent retirement.

Annie will be reporting to Pam White, director of operations, and supporting Carla Schober, director of children's discipleship and Dixon Kinser, director of youth discipleship and young adults ministry.

Her main role will be to support the ministries of the church administratively in order to help further the vision and mission as well as serve as the initial face and voice that people see when calling / visiting St. Bartholomew's.

Please join me in welcoming Annie.



Annie Heyward



Team Nehemiah runs for St. B's

Marathoners practiced in all weather to prepare



Editor's note: A group of runners at St. B's, decided to run for the Nehemiah Fund, asking people to sponsor them for their training and race miles and donate the money to the Nehemiah Fund. They have finished the race and urge you to make your donations in their honor. They have also shared their experiences, below.

This year's race was my fifth half marathon. In years past I've done the distance in approximately two hours, and each year I've come to the start line with hopes of breaking the two-hour barrier but was never able to do so. This year was my year though. I crossed the finish line in 1:54 thanks to training for four months with my roommate and Team Nehemiah.

The best part of the training/racing experience? I now have a great group of 14 or so individuals from St. B's whom I consider close friends. You get to know people fairly well when you're logging 8 to 10 miles on a Saturday morning! The relationships formed during the process will last far longer than the excitement of breaking the two-hour barrier, and for that I am grateful.

—Brittany Lassiter, Team Nehemiah co-captain

To be honest, I have gone through several drafts of this short blurb to talk about my experience running and training for the half marathon. During the four-month training period, I dealt with mental challenges, physical challenges and life challenges that I never imagined would occur when I set out to do this. As I crossed the finish line on April 26, I nearly broke into tears because of what that accomplishment meant to me. It was so wonderful to have the support of St. B's and the Nehemiah group as I trained, and I thoroughly enjoyed seeing other runners with bright yellow shirts that said Nehemiah on the front as I ran.

The importance of community for all of life's challenges never ceases to amaze me, and it definitely became apparent to me towards the end of my training time when the last thing I wanted to do was run. Many days the only motivation I had was the Wednesday night runs with the folks at St. B's, and I even look forward to continuing with the Wednesday night runs.

—Abigail Butler



I have wanted to run in the Country Music Half Marathon for a few years now but something always came up to cause me either to stop training or chicken out. Needless to say, this has been a long time coming. It was a personal challenge not to give up, keep training, and run this race. I went into this with the goal of crossing the finish line but ended up beating my training time by eight minutes. This was an awesome experience, one I know I will never forget. I enjoyed every minute of it — even mile 11 when my legs were screaming NO MORE! Thanks be to God for keeping me strong and able. I can't wait until next year!!

—Denise Kemp

Throughout the whole training I felt like I needed to continue on with my hard work and consistency regardless of the fact that I didn't see a lot of improvement or change. So when I passed the finish line in 27 minutes less than last year's time, I was shocked that the hard work actually paid off. I had stopped believing

that the hard work could even make a difference for someone like me. I felt like I was just stuck in a slow time slot. Now, I'm so determined to push harder and run farther to see how much difference I can make in my time.

That's probably the best thing that happened during my training. Believing that I can actually get faster if I work hard enough.

—Allie Surina

Remember that great line from "Chariots of Fire" that Christians have been drawing inspiration from for years? Eric Liddell says, "I believe God made me for a purpose, but he also made me fast. And when I run I feel his pleasure."

Well, not me.

When I run, I mostly feel pain. I've never liked to run for the sake of running. I'd rather believe that St. Paul was thinking of the high moral plain where I live when he said, "for bodily exercise profits little — but godliness is profitable unto all things" (1 Tim. 4.7).

But I ran the Country Music Half-Marathon back in April anyway. Much to the shock of my family (brothers, parents, children) who know how much I've hated running over the years, I actually finished. My time was a somewhat respectable 2:30:25 for a virgin half-marathoner, especially one who is over 50, overweight

(Continued on page 25)

Reflection (Continued from page 24)

and under-motivated.



Against the stride of my fellow running mates' glowing testimonials, I've been a curmudgeon by comparison. I did not have fun. And I think they are all lying. Who are we trying to kid? It hurts too much to run 13 miles. Period. You get done and you can't even step up a six-inch curb without nearly collapsing from pain and loss of motor skill. My team didn't even win or lose! What's that about? And what salesman thought up a sporting event where the participants pay to flagellate themselves? He should be collecting a royalty on every such race in the world.

No. I did not have fun. But I was rewarded. In fact, not only did I think it was great that

I did not die mid-contest, I proved I could do something that had alluded and frustrated me for years. What matters is not that I had fun, but that I am better for having run. The training, the run, and the completion of the run brought value to my life that I had not successfully accomplished before. And for that I am both amazed and grateful.

A part of this run (and the training that lead up to it) was, for me, about achieving a kind of personal and even spiritual discipline that I could never make happen in my life. Who knows? Maybe next year I might actually feel more godly.

—David Leach

Half marathon training season has become part of my annual rhythm, like Lent or Advent or Ultimate Frisbee Summer League. Some might think you can get it out of your system after you've done it once, but that's not the case for me. Instead, I've found that training gets *in* your system and makes you crazy enough to want to do it again and again. So this year when Meredith Pharaoh asked me to join Team Nehemiah to "carry on a great project" (Nehemiah 6:3), the decision was easy and obvious.

13.1 miles is a serious goal. You must train for it. It dauntingly looms off in the distance when training begins. As you move closer to the race date, you start to say to yourself, "If I can do nine miles, what's a few more?"

This time around, I especially enjoyed sharing a hobby with other St. B's parishioners and getting to know these friends better at the group runs. We did shorter runs during the week on our own and met once or twice a week for longer group runs. Some of us often gathered afterwards for brunch or brews.

Many thanks to Meredith Pharaoh and Brittany Lassitter for organizing the runs. Thank you to Jerry and Marjie for treating us to the carb-loading party before the race. And a big thank you to Dick Jewell for supporting the team by providing us with awesome race shirts.

—Aaron Sefton

I Corinthians 9:24-25

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one

gets the prize? Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. hey do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.

Hebrews 12:1

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.

I'm no anthropologist, but I would imagine that it's safe to say that running was probably the first athletic contest. There's really nothing to it. Run from here to there and see who can get there first. However it's safe to say that in running the marathon I wasn't even close to winning. I only hoped to finish the 26.2 miles.

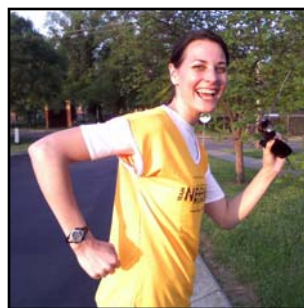


I will say when I began the training I wasn't sure I could do it. The longest I'd ever run was three miles, and I was no speed demon to say the least. Still, it was something that I wanted to do and felt it was worth my while. In the end, the training paid off. I was able to run the entire race without hitting "the wall." I didn't have to stop and felt good the entire time. It was also great knowing that although I never saw any of our St. B's runners, they were there too, doing their best.

As I noted above, there are a number of Bible verses comparing running with the spiritual life. One thing is clear, unlike tests in school, one can't cram for a marathon! You have to be diligent and stick to the program. The spiritual analogies between running and Christian faith are clear. And I'm sure that all of us who took on this challenge learned a great deal about ourselves and our Christian walk.

Thanks to Dick Jewell and Aaron Sefton, we had our Nehemiah Project shirts on for the race. An extra special thanks should go to Meredith Pharaoh, who kept us runners inspired with e-mails and scheduled training runs, but was not able to be there as she had her sister's wedding in California to attend on race day.

—David Schober



Among our group runs and the race, Team Nehemiah logged (or jogged, if you prefer a pun) a grand total of **499 miles**. Heartfelt thanks to all who made pledges to match our mileage, to those who made other contributions toward the fundraiser, and to the runners who made the

humble and powerful offering of their time and effort to put in the miles for the church.

— Meredith Pharaoh



Upgrades start, staffing changes



VESTRY SUMMARY

BY WHIT SMYTH

VESTRY CLERK

Each month the Branch will briefly summarize key points from the previous month's vestry meeting. Here are highlights from the May 12 meeting:

The Financial Report year-to-date (Jan – April) showed that contributions were under budget by \$2,977 but this was a significant improvement over last year's \$10,000 shortfall. More than balancing this out was the fact that expenses were under budget by \$11,173. Average weekly attendance is down by 5% over last year but giving per attendee is 11% higher.

The Nehemiah Fund has over \$169,000 cash-in-hand and more than \$173,000 in pledges. The cash-in-hand funds are enough to begin the HVAC replacement work on the gym roof as well as installing new AC units in the choir loft. Watch for photos and notices of your Nehemiah Funds at work in the weeks ahead.

Sarah Bell Earley passed around a document defining the responsibilities and staffing of a proposed finance committee. **MOTION:** It was moved and unanimously approved that the committee be approved based on this document and begin its work.

Pam White introduced Tom Herring, an Oak Hills resident, who presented a proposal for a St. Bart's Developmental Soccer Academy. Set to begin in September, this program is designed to teach children, ages approximately 4 – 10, the skills of soccer. Developed and led by soccer coaches at Lipscomb University, the Academy would use St. B's fields on Tuesday evenings (5:30 – 6:45 p.m.) and Saturday mornings (8:30 – 10:30 a.m.). About 100 youngsters would be involved, and St. B's children are welcome to sign up.

The zoning problems that the YMCA recently faced in their use of our fields are absent in this proposal because this would be a St. B's program and not subject to City of Oak Hills zoning ordinances.

The St. B's facilities committee will further investigate this program and its ramifications for St. B's and report back to the vestry, which will vote on the proposal during its June 9 meeting.

Pam also presented the revised St. B's Alcoholic Beverage Policy, which is now a formalized document.

Pam also announced that Annie Heyward has been hired as administrative assistant-receptionist in



the St. B's office starting May 27. She will support Pam, Fr. Dixon Kinser and Carla Schober.

St. B's innovative "Exploring the Wonder" program for all family units will begin in June. Designed for all ages, "Exploring the Wonder" will focus on the mystery of God. It will be held on two Tuesday evenings a month during the summer. This exciting program replaces Vacation Bible School and is aimed at enhancing the spiritual development of our community.

The Bishop will confirm a sizeable number of adult members of St. B's on June 15 at the 10:30 a.m. service.

The St. B's Corn Roast will be held July 4.

Fr. Jerry reported that the May 2-4 "Emotionally Free" seminar drew 35 – 40 people. The weekend was a positive step for St. B's because, as he said, "God has now cut the chains that have kept St. B's in spiritual bondage to the systems of the church, and we can move on. God will make this church the way he wants it in spite of ourselves."

Charlie Reasor passed around a sheet requesting volunteers for the St. B's summer Sunday school program. A major push is underway for volunteers to staff summer Sunday school positions since our regular teachers and helpers are off during June, July and August.

The meeting closed with the prayer.

JULY 12 ECW GET-TOGETHER

WOMEN OF ST. B'S - NEED A MID-SUMMER BREAK FROM THE OFFICE, HOME, CHILDREN, RELENTLESS HEAT? TAKE A SATURDAY MORNING BREAK AND COME ENJOY FELLOWSHIP, GOOD FOOD AND FUN AT THE **ECW MID-SUMMER GET TOGETHER**. HERE IS THE GAME PLAN:

- COME AT 9:00. (YES, THAT IS A.M.) FOR A GUIDED MEDITATION BY THE EXPERT, GAIL PITT.
- DIVIDE INTO GROUPS FOR AN ACTIVITY OF YOUR CHOICE:
 - JOIN** THORUNN MCCOY, OUR CULINARY EXPERT, FOR A COOKING CLASS (MAKING WHAT WE WILL ALL ENJOY FOR LUNCH) OR
 - JOIN** GAIL PITT FOR A SILENT MEDITATION TIME OR
 - JOIN** A GROUP TO COMPLETE A SMALL BUT MUCH NEEDED TASK TO KEEP ST. B'S BEAUTIFUL AND FUNCTIONING.
- EVERYONE COMES BACK TOGETHER FOR A LUNCH OF THE GREAT FOOD THORUNN'S CLASS MADE.

PRAY, WORK, EAT - A FAIR PROGRESSION.

THROW IN FELLOWSHIP WITH YOUR SISTERS AT ST. B'S AND IT SHOULD BE A GREAT MORNING.

HELP WITH PLANNING: EMAIL STBSECW@YAHOO.COM TO GIVE US YOUR NAME IF YOU CAN COME. TELL US IF YOU NEED BABYSITTING AND FOR WHAT AGES. YOU CAN EVEN EMAIL AN OFFER TO HELP WITH ORGANIZING THE DAY. JOIN US!

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



June

Anniversaries

Beth & Robert Riviello 6/2
Kendra & Christopher
Thorpe 6/5
Fr. Dave & Katrina Wilson
6/7
Heather & Andrew High 6/8
Becky & Ben Hornsby 6/10
Dawn & Eric Wyse 6/10
Jessica & Dan Bauchiero
6/12
Katherine & Thomas Petillo
6/13
Shirley & Bob Garth 6/13
Lynn & Randall Ferguson
6/14
Emily & Brett Kinzig 6/14
Cherie & Ryan Roberts
6/18
Rachel & Aaron Sefton 6/19
Suzie & Justin Clymer 6/20
Sue & Jim Pichert 6/21
Lisa & Steve Craig 6/22

Melissa Ann & Scott Cosby
6/22
Kristi & Richard Hunter 6/22
Phyllis & Harry Xanthopoulos
6/22
Karen & Brian Hampton
6/23
Nita & Al Andrews 6/23
Tamara & Bob Rowland
6/24
Bethany & Tony Bakker
6/25
Kristi & Dan Cleary 6/25
Nancy & Steve Hindalong
6/26
Ashley & Greg MacLachlan
6/27
Gay & Norman Abernathy
6/28
Shari & Whit Smyth 6/29
Elizabeth & Trey Charrier
6/29

Birthdays

Jack Sullivan 6/1
Millicent West 6/1
Dennis Holt 6/3
Jeffrey Martin 6/3
Margie Cronin 6/3
Ellie Schober 6/4
Jerry Minshall 6/4
Madelin Ryan 6/4
David Thornton 6/5
Ella Hunter 6/5
Grace MacLachlan 6/6
Joe Flynn 6/7
Priscilla Rowland 6/8
Catherine Pearson 6/9
Daniel Martin 6/9
Karen Hampton 6/9
Anna Hayden 6/10
Jared Russell 6/10
Boyd Griffith 6/11
Don Cason 6/11
Bert Hardwick 6/12
Christopher Hornsby 6/14
Abigail Tylor 6/15
Ava Hunter 6/15
Beth Riviello 6/15
Tony Earley 6/15
Bill Bowlby 6/16
Nancy Hyer 6/16
Elizabeth Jewell 6/17
Gates Gustafson 6/17
Hillary Seavers 6/17
Robert Pullen 6/17
Aidan Sullivan 6/18
Deedee Ewubare 6/18
Kirsten Cropp 6/19
David West, Jr. 6/20
Lori Quinn 6/21
Judson Abernathy 6/22
Brannon Huddleston 6/23
Jaisie Castellon 6/23
Jeremy Roe 6/23
Jonathan Stone 6/24

Monique Ingalls 6/25
Betty Ashton Mayo 6/27
Brea Cox 6/27
Scott Cosby 6/27
Shirley Hementolor 6/27
Thomas Scales 6/27
Thorunn McCoy 6/27
Celia Jones 6/29
Nathan Clair 6/29
Bob Floyd 6/30
Caroline Allen 6/30
Jerry Castellon 6/30
John Andrade 6/30

Baptisms

- George Hughes Clements, parents: Natalie & George Clements, 5/11

Births

- Madelyn Grace Schroeder, parents: David and Brooke, 3/24
- Corinna Bauchiero, parents: Dan and Jessie, brother, Drew, 3/28
- James Gowen Johnson, parents: Jim and Libby, 4/21

Weddings

- Christopher McHugh and Elizabeth (Betsy) Cook, 5/25



EXPLORING THE WONDER

A ST. B'S COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE

**TUESDAY EVENINGS, JUNE 10, 17,
JULY 8, 15 AND AUG. 4, 12**

THEMES:

JUNE: EXPLORING THE WONDER AROUND THE TABLE

JULY: EXPLORING THE WONDER AT THE WORK OF HIS HAND

AUG.: EXPLORING THE WONDER WITH THE VOICE OF GOD

ALL SESSIONS TO BE HELD @ ST. B'S

CHILDCARE FOR NON-POTTY-TRAINED CHILDREN ONLY

St. Bartholomew's Church
4800 Belmont Park Terrace
Nashville, TN 37215

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July 4 ... July 4 ... July 4

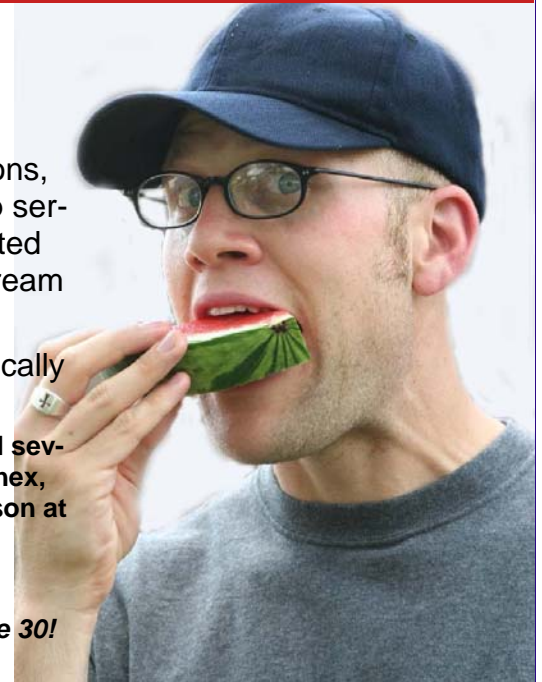
The St. B's corn roast & hot dog roast is coming!

Friday, July 4 from 10 a.m. until approx. 2 p.m.,
join the fun and festivities
to celebrate our country's independence.

We will begin with a parking lot parade at 10 - decorated wagons, three wheelers, tricycles, etc. welcomed - followed by a worship service in the church; then out to the sunshine for hot dogs, roasted corn on the cob, watermelon, chips and cold drinks; even ice cream for dessert!

BRING your friends, folding chairs, blankets, pop-up tents. Typically a hot day, we will try to stay cool!

To help with the event (we need cooks; set-up help; clean-up help; and several advance errand-runners, etc.) look for sign-up sheets in the narthex, contact the church office (churchoffice@stbs.net) or contact Ann Denson at annmd123@yahoo.com.



In order for us to have accurate food & supplies, Please RSVP by June 30!

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