

THE EPISTLE

RIDGEWAY, SOUTH CAROLINA
FEBRUARY, 2009

OF ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



Dear people of God,

I have been looking at the calendar for this month and it is indeed a busy month. We start on February 2nd with Ground Hog Day; a day of anticipation during this season of Epiphany, the season of Light and the Great Aha. Will the ground hog see his shadow or not? In a largely agricultural community, we all know what that means. Personally, I've had enough cold, and I'm ready for some warmth. But, I digress.

The following week is when changes begin and things get busy. I will be away at the annual Pre-Lenten Retreat for the first part of the week. Valentine's Day is that Saturday, 2/14 (yes, that is a hint to men). Sunday, 2/15, there is a Midlands Convocation meeting at St. Mary's, Columbia and then Monday is President's Day.

Because the season of Lent begins the next week, the Mission Committee is meeting a week early, 2/18, and our last "regular" Adult Study will be the day before.

You see, the following Tuesday, February 24th is Shrove Tuesday, or if you are at Mardi Gras, it's Fat Tuesday. Our annual Pancake Supper will be that evening. The next day is Ash Wednesday and we celebrate the Ash Wednesday service with the Holy Eucharist at 6:30pm. Those two days and their events signal for us the start of Lent and the deep reflections and meditations we are supposed to engage in for forty days as we await Holy Week and Easter.

Already we are into March and the start of the Soup Suppers and Lenten Program. The first of those will be Tuesday, March 3rd. The regular Wednesday Healing Service is the next evening. Don't look now but Day Light Savings Time begins on the following Sunday, so we need to remember to set the clocks forward on Saturday. I'm out of breath.

Do you remember back during Advent and Christmas how things were busy. They were a good kind of busy, yet we still looked forward to the arrival of the New Year and a chance just to rest a little. Well I guess that was January. January seems to have gone by in a blur.

All of this is to say that Lent is coming. Lent is meant to be one of the most holy and deliberate times of the Liturgical year. But, we easily get caught up in what we are "going to give up" for Lent and we miss its holiness. We miss its time of rest in the Lord as we contemplate who we are and whose we are. Take the time to prepare for a holy Lent this year. Spend the time with the Lord so you can "come out the other end", rested and refreshed by communion with your Father in Heaven.

God bless you and keep you,
and hold you always
in the palm of his hand,
Fr. Tommy+



**HERE'S TO ALL
THE SAINTS
CELEBRATING IN
FEBRUARY**

Gen Palmer VII	02/02	Amaris Cobb	02/20
Buck Rowe	02/02	Tyshaun Cobb	02/20
Geo. L. Langdale	02/06	Geo. S. Langdale	02/20
Terry Murtaugh	02/16	Tom Willingham	02/27
Bobby Arndt	02/18	Patti Palmer	02/28
Steve Lever	02/19		

EPISCOPAL RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT

The conflict in Gaza has already cost more than 1,000 lives since December and the fighting continues. Episcopal Relief & Development remains in touch with the Rt. Rev. Suheil S. Dawani of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and our partners at the Al Ahli Hospital central Gaza City.

Al Ahli Hospital is now treating more than 50 injured civilians every day. The hospital staff is working around the clock to provide emergency medical care. Recently, the hospital finally received a delivery of desperately needed medicine, supplies, blankets, and food. However, the ongoing fighting makes such deliveries increasingly difficult. Episcopal Relief and Development is continuing to send funds to help the hospital meet the rising costs of treating patients. "We are so grateful for the immediate and exceptionally generous response in prayers and monetary gifts" said Bishop Dawani. Episcopal Relief & Development asks donors to keep Al Ahli Hospital in their prayers.

YOUR MISSION COMMITTEE

Sr. Warden:	JoAnn Palmer	2011
Jr. Warden:	Tom Willingham	2009
Member:	Mike Autry	2010
Member:	Bob Moore	2010
Member:	Ben DeBerry	2011
Member:	MJ Lever (one year term)	2009
Treasurer:	Carolyn Babb	2009
Secretary:	Margaret Murtaugh	2009
Next Scheduled Meeting: Wednesday, 01/28/2009, 7:00PM		

"EQUIPPED FOR ACTION:

CHANGING LIVES," VOLUME II

A day for continuing leadership development for congregational ministry will be convened at Heathwood Hall, Columbia, February 28, 2009 from 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. This is a direct continuation of our work at Diocesan Convention last Fall.

Online registration will begin in mid-January. (Cost \$15) Visit the diocesan Web site for more information; where you can download details of the day and Basic agenda. Workshops and plenary sessions focused on healthy church leadership and healthy congregations, with opportunities for dialogue among same-size congregations and a wealth of workshops focused on topics ranging from finance, leadership of vestry and wardens, assertive evangelism and formation for all ages, effective communications and outreach, and much more. (Workshop descriptions are coming soon!) Delegates to Convention and Wardens of the church need to plan to attend. The keynote speaker is the Rev. Dr. James Lemler. He is currently serving as priest-in-charge of Christ Church, Greenwich, Connecticut. A former director of mission for the Episcopal Church and dean of Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, Lemler has served the Church as pastor, preacher, and consultant in the areas of philanthropy, stewardship, and congregational development.

LENTEN SOUP SUPPERS AND STUDY PROGRAM

We will begin the Lenten season with our traditional Shrove Tuesday, Pancake Supper sponsored by the Men Of St. Stephen's on Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 6:30PM in the Parish Hall. Soup Suppers will then proceed each Tuesday thereafter at 6:15PM and will be followed by a Lenten Study at 7:00PM. The Lenten Program will continue through Holy Week, ending on Holy Saturday, April 11, 2009. We will be using "Windows into the Light" by Fr. Michael Sullivan. The study offers meditation and reflection for each week in Lent. Additionally we use the Passion or Palm Sunday unit for Sunday School on Palm Sunday and the units for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday will be the subject of the services at Noon and 3:00pm on Good Friday. A session will offered on Holy Saturday at Noon and the last, Easter, unit will be covered the Tuesday of Easter Week. Sign-up sheets for soup, bread, dessert and attendance are on the bulletin board.

FROM THE SENIOR WARDEN

The Mission Committee - Why Do We Have One And What Does It Do?

National and Diocesan Canons (ecclesiastical laws that establish rules and procedures) specify the establishment of an elected body to serve as the agents and legal representatives of a Parish or Mission in all matters concerning its corporate property and the relations of the Parish to its Clergy. Although the National Canons do not specifically address Missions, our Diocesan Canons do: When a Mission is initially established “*The Ecclesiastical Authority, or a Priest under the direction of the Ecclesiastical Authority, shall appoint from among the members of the Mission a Warden,...The Ecclesiastical Authority or Priest shall also appoint a Secretary, a Treasurer, and such other officers as may be necessary, and such officers shall be elected annually thereafter... Such officers shall hold office until their successors are elected. It shall be the duty of the Warden to procure a suitable place of public worship, and to provide things necessary for decent and orderly Church services.*” The Bylaws of St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church define the purpose, structure and responsibilities of this elected body: the **Mission Committee**. It is the “*official representative of St. Stephen’s and shall maintain and manage the temporalities of St. Stephen’s in compliance with the Canons of the Diocese, and the laws of South Carolina and the United States of America.*” The Mission Committee consists of the Vicar and six Qualified Voting Members elected to serve 3-year terms. Each year, Senior and Junior Wardens are elected from the six members of the Mission Committee by the Qualified Voting Members of the congregation.

According to the Bylaws, the **Vicar** controls and directs the worship and spiritual life of the congregation in compliance with the Canons of the Diocese, and presides at Mission Committee meetings. The **Senior Warden** assists the Vicar and represents him/her to the Members of St. Stephen’s and, with the Vicar’s consent, may appoint *ad hoc* committees to enhance the spiritual life and growth of the congregation. The **Junior Warden** represents the Members of St. Stephen’s to the Vicar and is particularly concerned with the maintenance and improvement of buildings, grounds and other real property belonging to St. Stephen’s and, with the Vicar’s consent, may also appoint *ad hoc* committees. Additionally, the Mission Committee annually elects a **Secretary** to record and keep the minutes of all Congregation and Mission Committee meetings, and a **Treasurer** who carries out the day-to-day financial activities at the direction of the Mission Committee. The Secretary and Treasurer may but are not required to be members of the Mission Committee.

You have given us the responsibilities of serving as the official representatives of St. Stephen’s and managing its temporal affairs. Your thoughts, concerns and questions help us fulfill those responsibilities. We want to hear from you.

With Thanksgiving to God
JoAnn Palmer

COMMISSIONING OF OFFICERS

The official commissioning of the Mission Committee members, the Wardens, and the Treasurer occurred during the worship service January 11, 2009, the First Sunday after Epiphany.

Commissioned as members of the Mission Committee were Mike Autry, Bob Moore and MJ Lever (who is filling the last year of Doug Bryant’s term). JoAnn Palmer was commissioned as Senior Warden and Tom Willingham as Junior Warden. Carolyn Babb was commissioned as Treasurer.

Ben DeBerry (committee member) was at home caring for Frances and the Secretary position was not yet filled. Since then, we have asked Margaret Murtaugh to be the Secretary and she has accepted. Margaret and Ben will be commissioned for their respective posts on Sunday, January 25, 2009.

You are asked to consider these officers and their work in your prayers. When you see these fine folks, be sure to congratulate them, and to thank them for their willingness to serve God in his church.

YOUNG-ER PEOPLE'S PAGE

GRAVATT CHAPEL CONSECRATION

Gravatt's new, free-standing Chapel of the Transfiguration, built to replace the chapel that burned with Cullum Hall in 2003, is ready for action. The Chapel was designed by John Powell of LTC & Associates and constructed by Pizzuti Builders. Chairs can be dedicated for \$250 each and funds are needed to complete landscaping and construction of a labyrinth. To make a donation, visit www.bishopgravatt.org or contact Lauri Yeargin, executive director, 803.648.1817.

The Right Reverend Dorsey F. Henderson, Jr., Bishop of Upper South Carolina will consecrate The Chapel of the Transfiguration, on Monday, February 16, 2009 at 5:00 p.m. Your prayers and presence are requested. Clergy - White Stoles. Dinner is to follow the liturgy in Stewart Hall. Donations for dinner will be accepted

RSVP 803-648-1817

gravattguest@wildblue.net

LILLY FOUNDATION GRANTS

The Discernment Programs Office at the University of the South, Sewanee, Tenn., invites undergraduate students at colleges and universities across the nation to apply for the eighth Summer Discernment Institute, which will be held June 1 - July 25, 2009. Applications for 18 placement openings in this summer's program are due by February 16, 2009. More information and a copy of the application form can be found at www.sewanee.edu/lillyproj/lldi.html or by calling 931.598.1869.

Students interested in exploring vocations in ordained ministry or service with non-profit organizations will be accepted into the eight-week program and receive a stipend for their work in their chosen internship. Students spend the first week at Sewanee engaged in activities that help prepare them for their six-week internships. Students return to Sewanee the final week for an opportunity for debriefing and

reflection on their vocational experience and its values.

The Summer Discernment Institute also offers opportunities for internships with secular organizations or other religious organizations such as the Children's Defense Fund, the Grameen Bank, the International Partnership for Service Learning, the Center for Action and Contemplation, the Society of St. John the Evangelist, L'Arche, and Youth World International. Other internships have included work in medical research, support of at-risk youth, and environmental concerns. Over 160 students from more than 35 institutions have participated from 2002 through 2008.

The Summer Discernment Institute is becoming widely recognized throughout the Episcopal Church for those of college age who are considering a call to ordained ministry. The Pastoral Leadership Search Effort (PLSE) of the Episcopal Church recognizes that this internship program provides a unique opportunity for students to work in parish and other organizational environments and obtain a first-hand understanding of what a life of active ministry entails. Ordained ministry discernment is open to students of all denominations and has included a student interested in and currently studying for the rabbinate, as well as students with callings in the Presbyterian Church USA, the United Methodist Church, and the Unitarian Universalist Society.

Applications for the 2009 Summer Discernment Institute are due February 16, 2009.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Students may nominate their own placements. Students in all four years of college, including seniors, are encouraged to apply. Discernment Programs Coordinator Robin Hille Michaels comments, "Many amazing connections for students have come about from their own initiative in finding placements with churches and organizations whose missions are closely aligned with their own life's passion."

FEBRUARY 2009

ALTAR GUILD FOR FEBRUARY: **FRANCES DeBERRY, AND KAREN KUEHNER**

DAY/DATE	CHALICER	LECTOR	CRUCIFER / ACOLYTE	GREETERS/ OBLATIONERS	CHILDREN'S CHAPEL	HOSPITALITY	ALTAR FLOWERS
February 1 4 Epiphany	Don Babb	Tom Harwood	Jenna Upchurch	Betty Branham and Karen Kuehner	Donna Guess	Cathy Beale and George Langdale	Frances DeBerry and Karen Keuhner
February 8 5 Epiphany	Bitsy Milling	Bitsy Milling	Kayla Branham	Kathleen and Tom Harwood	Jo Milling	MJ and Ashley Lever	Sara Faucett
February 15 6 Epiphany	JoAnn Palmer	Bob King	Matthew Langdale	Dee Dee and Jay Branham	Carolyn Babb	Frances and Ben DeBerry	Carolyn and John Cosby
February 22 Last Epiphany	Tom Willingham	Lindsay Matthews	Ashley Lever	Brenda and Jim McGrew	Donna Guess	Lynn and Fr. Tommy Dwyer	Patti Palmer
February 25 Ash Wednesday	Don Babb	JoAnn Palmer	Jacob Upchurch	Lynn Dwyer and Kathy Rogers	Ash Wednesday	Ash Wednesday	
March 1 1 Lent	Marjorie Pratt	Marjorie Pratt	Jenna Upchurch	Tom Willingham and Tom Harwood	Nancy and Dick Johnson	Kathleen and Tom Harwood	

ALTAR GUILD FOR FEBRUARY: **SARA FAUCETT, AND ELEANOR MILLING**

Important Note: If you cannot serve when assigned, please: 1) Swap with someone or a find a substitute. 2) Inform the church office of any changes for inclusion in the service leaflet. Thank you.

DAY/DATE	FIRST READING	THE PSALM	SECOND READING	THE GOSPEL
February 1 4 Epiphany	Deuteronomy 18:15-20	111	1 Corinthians 8:1-13	Mark 1:21-28
February 8 5 Epiphany	Isaiah 40:21-31	147:1-12, 21c	1 Corinthians 9:16-23	Mark 1:29-39
February 15 6 Epiphany	2 Kings 5:1-14	30	1 Corinthians 9:24-27	Mark 1:40-45
February 22 Last Epiphany	2 Kings 2:1-12	50:1-6	2 Corinthians 4:3-6	Mark 9:2-9
February 25 Ash Wednesday	Joel 2:1-2, 12-17	103	2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10	Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21
March 1 1 Lent	Genesis 9:8-17	25:1-9	1 Peter 3:18-22	Mark 1:9-15

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