

FROM THE DEAR PEOPLE OF GOD,



I don't know about you but it sure seems to me that this year has just gone by in a blur. It's amazing considering that it has been a difficult year for so many.

Things like the price of gas has had us all in a dither. The effects on the economy have been devastating. And, with recent upheavals on Wall Street everything has gotten tougher. I saw a news report that said that just six states account for 60% of the housing market problems what with foreclosures and "bad" loans. Food costs more too, and with so many people out of work, the food banks are struggling to keep up. Then there is all the contentious and often mudslinging politics that have plagued us in this election year. Still, it all seems to have gone by in a rush.

Scripture tells us that when "the end" comes, that it will come quickly. Sort of makes one think, does it not? No one knows what the timing is, but it is reason for pause if you will.

And it makes it hard to find things to be thankful for when so much is in flux. But let me try. I am thankful for family friends that love me and show it. I am thankful that in the very near future Lynn and I will celebrate our fortieth wedding anniversary. Yes, yes, I know - SHE is a saint. I'm also very thankful that come January I'll get to celebrate my sixtieth birthday. Yes, yes, I know - I don't look it! Ha, ha.

I'm thankful that earlier this year St. Stephen's grew by four confirmations and that when Bishop Henderson visits us on November 9th, we'll grow by six more. We are meant to be about growing God's church and God is to be praised for the success. I'm thankful that Christian Education continues to be another success of St. Stephen's. I'm thankful for faithful children who worked in the last Advent Season to send three geese and a beehive to those in need (and for those adults who bought the goods that the children made in order to raise the funds). And I am also thankful for those tasks that the Lord has given us to do that challenge us - in them, we grow in faith. Diocesan leadership that continues to work to provide a smooth and faithful transition of the Episcopate is another thing for which I'm thankful.

We also live in a country where, despite hard times and disagreements, we can always worship God as we wish. We can speak out for and/or against those issues of government that confront us. We can vote as we wish without fear. We can go where we want, when we want. So much of the world has never had these "rights" that we consider *unalienable*.

I am thankful for the responsibility that comes with these many blessings. Of those who have received much, much is expected. Most importantly I think, I am thankful for the Lord God who provides all that we need and for the hope that is yet ours to see and experience.

This next year is likely to be a tough one in many respects, but as long as we walk humbly and faithfully with Our Lord we have absolutely nothing to fear and much to be thankful for, even as we wait to see it happen.

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
NOVEMBER**

YOUR MISSION COMMITTEE

Jim McGrew	11/03	Justin Autry	11/15
Kathleen Harwood	11/05	Lexus Cobb	11/15
Dell Harris	11/05	Tom Harwood	11/16
Adam Trimmier	11/05	Jo Milling	11/17
Cleve Langdale	11/11	Erin Trimmier	11/21
Sharon Swofford	11/13	Jay Branham	11/30

Sr. Warden:	Doug Bryant	2009
Jr. Warden:	Tom Willingham	2009
Member:	Mike Floyd	2008
Member:	Patti Palmer	2008
Member:	Mike Autry	2010
Member:	Bob Moore	2010
Secretary:	Carter Siegling	2008
Treasurer:	Tom Harwood	2008

HEALING SERVICE

“Grant to all who seek your guidance, and to all who are lonely, anxious, or despondent, a knowledge of your will and an awareness of your presence.” (Litany of Healing)

There has been a nudging need for me to write concerning the Healing Service here at St. Stephen’s. God likes to do this with me. “Go ahead and share why it is so important to you and your husband.”

Often people think of healing by what they see evangelicals do on television. Many among the traditional denominations are apprehensive with such displays of dramatic healing, or presumed healing. They are uncomfortable with it, and because of this may close themselves off from any form of Healing Service.

In the quietness of our sanctuary during the Healing Service here at St. Stephen’s there is a welcoming “awareness” of the Trinity’s “presence.” I have come to realize in my life that God often needs us to come to him at a certain location. The Holy Spirit nudges me, encouraging me to simply come to where God needs me to be in fellowship with him and others. I have come some Wednesday nights with no set idea of why, other than knowing God wants, and needs me to come. I lean on him to impart the reason why. “Not my will, but [his] will be done.” And I smile with gratitude for this.

Yours in Christ,
Margaret Murtaugh

The Letter of James tells us in the fifth chapter beginning at the thirteenth verse: “Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed.” The Healing Services are at 6:30PM on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month. Maybe the Lord is calling you to healing as proclaimed to us by James.

CONFIRMATION / RECEPTION

November 9th, the Bishop will visit St. Stephen’s. He will Receive into the Episcopal Church Brenda McGrew and Terry Murtaugh, and he will Confirm Carolyn Cosby, Karen Kuehner, Jim McGrew and Jacob Upchurch. Please plan to be in attendance for this grand event. Unfortunately, John Cosby will be out of town on that Sunday so he will hopefully be Confirmed at St. John’s, Congaree on Sunday, December 21st.

FAIRFIELD COUNTY FOODBANK

As you know, we have regularly supported the foodbank in Winnsboro with “Biscuits, Rice and Milk.” As happens with such things, donations tend to fall off following the “initial push.” Please remember that with the economy in such a mess, that many more families are now relying on us and others to keep the foodbank well stocked. The Thanksgiving holiday is also coming in this month. Please continue to help that others will be *able* to give thanks.