
FROM THE RECTOR, by Barbara Williamson

This year I have felt called to write a Christmas card to every single one of you, full of my gratitude for the contributions each of you makes to St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church in fulfillment of your baptismal promises and to the glory of God. I deeply regret the impracticality of composing 250 personal letters. The best I can do is to make an attempt here to offer my grateful thanks to you for who you are, what you do, and how much you give.

You may think I am talking only to the core leadership, people like Susan Berry, Peter Gonze, and the rest of the Vestry members who give so much to help the church community to be the best that it can be and to budget for its many initiatives. You may think I am talking only about people like the volunteers in our Christian formation programs for children and youth who Sunday by Sunday do their best for our younger members. You may think I am talking only about the cadre of volunteers whose labors of love with silver and linens, flowers and music, ushering, acolyting, reading, and ministering the bread and the wine create a beautiful and hospitable space in which to worship God. You may think I am talking only about the volunteers who host coffee hour, oversee the web site, edit the Mantle, direct the Christmas pageant, write the checks, fold bulletins, or see to everything from the

boiler to the light bulbs. You may think I am talking only about the many committee members who organize our fellowship events, run the stewardship campaign, assist our refugee family living in the rectory, visit the homebound, offer classes for adults, cook and

I am grateful to all who try at any level to be a part of the St. E's community and who are open at any level to a deeper relationship with God.

serve at the Salvation Army Soup Kitchen, lead the youth on pilgrimage or ASP, attend to newcomers, organize us for a picture directory, a CROP walk, or the Giving Tree, or offer their expertise to consult with us on acoustical treatment of the parish hall, networking computers, or how best to conduct an all parish feedback project. You may think I am talking only about the "Fair Ladies" without whose superb organization and cheerful dedication, our budget deficit would be larger by \$12,000. You may think I am talking only about those who make a financial commitment to St. E's.



Without question, I am deeply grateful to all of these, more grateful than you can know. And I am grateful to everyone else. I am grateful to the adults who go to the effort to get to church with their children. I am grateful to the adults who come alone. I am grateful to all who try at any level to be a part of the St. E's community and who are open at any level to a deeper relationship with God. Whether you have only your toe in the water or you are swimming in the deep end, I am grateful to you for your participation in and financial support of the church. Your faithfulness and dedication, even if only the size of a mustard seed, are a huge gift to me and to God. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Barbara



January 2007!

Here we are in a new year, in the still new century.

New Year's and Birthdays (if you are still counting) are moments when we celebrate the passage of time and an opportunity for new beginnings. People all over the world make New Year's Resolutions. Usually we make promises to improve on some habit related to health, weight, exercise, occupation or income. Just as usually, these promises are soon broken and forgotten, until another year has passed and we resolve to do better.

Perhaps that's why, as the final seconds of the year tick away, we become introspective. So lately, I have been thinking about St. E's and 2006, the year that just was. Among the things I am recalling was that, 2006 was our first full year in residence since the new construction project was completed. We have enjoyed the thrill and excitement of the new space, a return to familiar routines and the adoption of some new approaches and programs. Barbara completed the second half of her delayed sabbatical and returned to us renewed and refreshed. All of this involved adjustment,

change and patience; it has been an evolution that carried some stress and strains. But somehow, it all seemed to work out.

Looking back at some of the events. We regret the departure of old friends, some of whom have left our community due to new job opportunities, others because a change in life circumstances such as retirement or downsizing. For some a change in life circumstances has allowed for even greater participation.

Also, we are enriched and invigorated with the many new members who have come to St. E's. We have seen growth and vitality in Christian formation by the number of children and young adults involved in COGS, Rite 13, J2A, and Youth Group. All ably supported by the legion of dedicated adult leaders.

One aspect of adjustment has been the challenge of balancing the books with the added expense of debt repayment. Contributing to this are evolving parishioner demographics, adjusting to a new pattern of fixed expenditures associated with our new space and embracing new programs have called us to dig deeper in our commitments.

These commitments take many forms: our gifts of time, of talents and treasure. These are all gifts, gifts through us from God, and all gifts are gratefully received, large and small. Each according to our abilities.

Writing this piece in mid-December, I don't know how far the now traditional year-end appeal will go towards balancing the books. But, I have faith that it will work out. I have faith because I know that no matter what challenges we think we may face, or the impact of change on our lives in our church family or our own families, God's grace is free and that is priceless.

As we look ahead to a new year, I hope you share the sense of energy and purpose in all of our works and activities. I wish you and your family health, happiness and peace.

Here's to the start of a New Year, together in our faith based community.

Peter

VESTRY NOTES by Susan Berry

As is often the case at the December Vestry meetings, a major portion of our agenda was allotted to our Treasurer, Steve Kenney, to walk the Vestry members through the 2007 budget draft and then to questions and comments. For the most part we are considering a budget that has funding of programs and operations at the same level as 2006, with some possible cuts in maintenance line items to get us close to a balanced budget. The Vestry will approve the 2007 budget at its January meeting.

The Vestry also continued its discussion of the pros and cons of T Mobile's offer to lease a piece of St. E's property as a site for a cell tower. As part of this process, Peter Gonze had done a literature

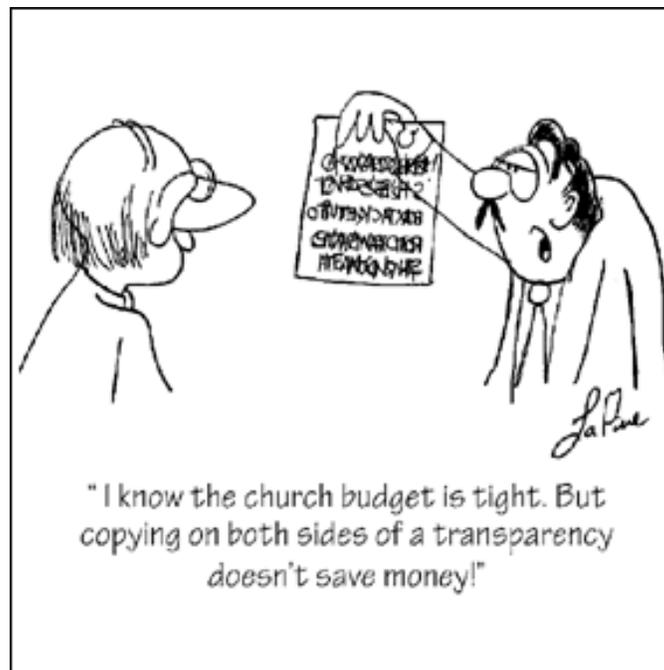
search on health and safety issues and found that the leading researchers in the field have found no evidence for concern to date. However, we are not yet satisfied with the terms of a contract, and, if we can get agreement to terms the Vestry would feel comfortable with, then we would want to talk to neighbors and would have to get agreement from the Standing Committee of the Diocese before we would be ready to vote to accept this proposal.

Finally, the treasurer's report for November 2006 and year-to-date 2006 was reviewed in detail. Year-to-date, income totaled \$268,968, \$1,839 below budget. However, year-to-date expenses were \$303,670 (\$11,064 above budget), resulting in a deficit of

\$34,702. As of the end of November, the year-end deficit was forecast at \$23,330 (higher than the estimate we had at the time of the year-end appeal). We hope to be able to report better news in January once we have the results of the year-end appeal. However, we continue to deal with the strain that debt service, combined with extra maintenance costs of the new building, puts on the funds we receive.

If you have any questions about these or any other issues, please contact either of the co-wardens: Susan Berry (978-443-2430) or Peter Gonze (978-440-9695).

Susan



Why Church?

[The following piece was written by a friend and colleague, the Rev. Steve Bonsey, the Canon for Evangelism at St. Paul's Cathedral in Boston. It is reprinted here by permission. - Barbara]

Why church?

Why do we need church? Why give up our Sundays, our evenings, our free time for this quaint cultural artifact? Why bother raising and spending the money to keep up this lumbering, bumbling, crumbling institution?

If we want people to believe in God, there may be other ways to do it. We could take them to other places where they might experience a sense of awe and wonder. We could take them up to cloud-studded mountaintops or for walks on the beach at sunrise. We could create an industry to market spiritual tourism. Some might well experience shivers of transcendence on exotic golf course or high-end shopping malls.

If we want people – particularly our children – to be good or to learn right from wrong, there are other ways to do it. We could hold classes. We could use empty school rooms on weekends. We could incorporate the latest techniques of morally-correct education and behavior modification. We could even introduce therapeutic techniques to make them happier and better adjusted. We could create elite programs with selective admissions processes and decals that parents could put in their car windows.

If we want to build community and create relationships of mutual caring and support, there are other ways to do it. We could develop internet networks that link people with others just like themselves with whom they would get on swimmingly. They could all go through their life cycles together and read the same self-help books. We could get a prominent daytime television celebrity to brand the whole deal. The system could pay for itself with the profits on logo mugs alone.

So why church?

I have my own bottom-line reason why church is absolutely necessary, but let me first say clearly that I do not necessarily mean church-as-we-know it. In fact, I am all too acutely aware that church-as-we-know-it can sometimes just get in the way of church-as-we-need-it-to-be.

We need church because we – you and I, the whole human race, the entire created order – need a community of transformation and resistance. Not just a community that cares for us, but a fellowship that changes and empowers us. Not a program to help us fit in to the world as it is, but a mission that inspires and strengthens us to resist the consumerism, militarism and exploitation that is all around us. Not just an experience of knowing and loving God, but a way of life in witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ with power to make us and our world whole and holy.

We need church because the world needs to be saved – from us! We need church because we need to be saved – from ourselves! We need church because the gospel of Jesus Christ offers the way of salvation for us and our world – we know no other! And we need church because there is no one here to do the job but us.

The JOURNEY TO ADULTHOOD : J2A (grades 8-10)



This past month our J2A class covered lessons on “Passion in the Bible”. Copies of the Song of Songs, a passionate love story between a bride and groom, were handed out and those in class each had a reading part. In our lesson on “Gender Proving” we paged through some of the current tabloid magazines looking at how the images, products and words portrayed us as men and women of the world. And, we explored another prayer form, this time we experienced “Centering Prayer” perhaps the most challenging to prayer form we have looked at. It is a style of prayer in which nothing is consciously asked for and no outcome is sought, it may feel to the beginner a though absolutely nothing is going on. Don’t be fooled; something very important indeed is going on.

And in addition to the lessons our J2A young people have made a decision! Their pilgrimage sights are set on journeying to Borderland Ranch in South Dakota www.borderlandsranch.org sometime this summer. It was really great to see that this was a unanimous decision made by the class after having spent a number of weeks talking with each other, parents and weighing a number of options. As leaders we think it is a great choice as well.

The class has already started to raise the necessary funds to support the trip. The first event was on Saturday nights December 9th and 16th. Babysitting services were offered at St. Elizabeth’s for those parents that were looking for a night out to shop or go to a party. The second opportunity will be to sell raffle tickets in front of Sudbury Farms. Sudbury Farms has donated \$500 in gift cards for us to raffle off. The proceeds from both of these events will go to funding ASP and pilgrimage. Congratulations to our J2A young adults on their decision!

If you have any questions about J2A, please contact:

Lisa Barnes (Sugg) 978-443-6816) lisarbarnes@hotmail.com

Larry St. George 978-443-2998 Lawrence.StGeorge@gyrusacmi.com

Jay Holdman, 978-443-2081 james.holdman@comcast.net

NEWS FROM THE ATRIUMS : Level III

On Sunday, December 17th, I had the distinct pleasure of being present in the Level III Atrium during the first half of the 10 a.m. service. This is a luxury afforded by the generous spirit of Barbara Smith-Moran, who by preaching and celebrating from time to time, allows me the freedom to attend to the other half of the congregation, the half busy with activities of Christian formation from 9:45 to 10:45 most Sunday mornings.

In the Level III Atrium, I gave a presentation called, “The Structure of the Holy Eucharist,” a

deceptively boring-sounding title for a presentation that leads to all sorts of insights just by taking the time to wonder about what is going on in worship.

The service is divided into two parts, one called the Word of God, or the Service of the Word, and the other called The Holy Communion, or the Service of the Table. There are 18 different pieces to the Service of the Word, only five of which stay the same from one church season to the next.

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

Of the thirteen that change, eight change every week. The Service of the Word is dynamic and fluid, keeping us on our toes with music, prayers, Scripture readings, and sermons that change from week to week. This part of the service gives us a window into the dynamism of God.

The Service of the Table has very few parts that change from season to season or week to week. While the words of the Eucharistic Prayers differ, the structures of the prayers are essentially the same. This part of the service gives us a window into the steadfast constancy of God.

One of the children asked me why the service is divided into parts. I gave him a perfectly respectable answer alluding to what I have said above. But there is more. The first Christians were Jews who attended synagogue worship, the Service of the Word, on the Sabbath (Saturday). The next day, Sunday, the Lord's Day, they participated in Holy Communion, the Service of the Table. Eventually Jewish Christians were banned from synagogue worship. They brought their tradition of prayers, Scripture readings, and preaching, the Service of the Word, to their Sunday worship and voila, the Christian tradition of two part worship was born.

The Atriums are a place of exploration, learning, and formation for children and adults. Don't miss an opportunity to serve in the Atriums. You will get more than you give.

Barbara Williamson

ADULT EDUCATION in the New Year

Beginning in January, there will be a number of opportunities for Adult Christian Formation. Here is a brief overview of the upcoming offerings:

- Beginning January 9th on five consecutive Tuesday mornings from 10 to 11 AM Graden Kirksey will lead a seminar on the origins of the Bible.
- Beginning January 17th on four consecutive Wednesday evenings at 7:30 Jonas Barciauskas will lead book study group of the novel *Gilead* (see article below.)

Looking ahead

- A team of laity and clergy will lead classes for adults preparing to be confirmed at the deanery wide confirmation on June 2nd. Classes will be held on ten various Sunday mornings from 9:10 to 9:55 AM beginning February 4th.
- Larry Ruark will again head up the production of the Lenten Devotional Guide, about which you can read more elsewhere in this edition of the *Mantle*. Reflections will be due February 9th.
- Beginning February 28th, for five consecutive Wednesday evenings, we will offer Holy Eucharist at 6 PM followed by a soup supper and a Lenten program for adults.

Mark your calendars and stay tuned!

Adult Education: Book Discussion - *Gilead*

Beginning Wednesday, January 17, at 7:30, we will discuss *Gilead*, the winner of the 2005 Pulitzer Prize in fiction by Marilynne Robinson. A novel written in the form of a letter by John Ames, a small-town Iowa minister, to his young son, *Gilead* received great critical acclaim. *The Washington Post Book World* review called *Gilead* "so serenely beautiful, and written in a prose so gravely measured and thoughtful, that one feels touched with grace just to read it." Ames is 76 years old and the boy 6, the only child born to Ames by his second, much younger wife. The letter's stories about Ames and his father and grandfather, also both ministers, span the decades between the Civil War and 1956, the year in which Ames may very well die from a terminal heart condition. Intended for his son as a grown man, the letter becomes a diary of Ames' last days, a narrative containing spiritual insights and events he could never have anticipated when he began writing it.

People who plan to participate in the group should read the first 60 pages or so by Jan. 17. For more information about the discussion group, contact Jonas Barciauskas (978-440-8164; barciaus@bc.edu).

JANUARY 2007

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31	8:00 AM Holy Eucharist - Church 9:45 AM No Church School 10:00 AM Family Friendly Holy Eucharist - Church	1 New Year's Day-Office Closed	2	3 Annual Reports due	4 10:30 AM TaiChi (PH) 3:00 PM - 9:30 PM Parish Directory Photos	5 3:00 PM - 9:30 PM Parish Directory Photos	6 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM Parish Directory Photos
7	8:00 AM Holy Eucharist - Church 9:45 AM Church School 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist - Church 4:00 PM Youth Group Meeting	8 5:00 PM Wardens Meeting 7:00 PM Girl Scout Meeting (R13rm) 7:30 PM Adult Ed Committee (cnf)	9 10:00 AM Origins of the Bible Seminar 3:00 PM Brownie Meeting (MPR) 2472 3:00 PM Brownie Troop #2450 (YGR) 7:00 PM Diversity Committee Meeting (cnf)	10 3:00 PM Brownie Meeting(MPR) 7:30 PM RIM (MPR)	11 10:30 AM TaiChi (PH) 4:30 PM - 8:30 PM Weight Watchers Meetings (MPR) 7:00 PM COGS Steering Committee meeting (YGR)	12	13
14	8:00 AM Holy Eucharist - Church 9:45 AM No Church School 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist - (Family Friendly Service) Church 4:00 PM MICAH Story Circle	15 Office Closed- Martin Luther King Day	16 10:00 AM Origins of the Bible Seminar 3:00 PM Brownie Meeting (MPR) 2472 5:00 PM Wardens Meeting	17 3:30 PM Girl Scouts (MPR) 7:30 PM Adult Ed. (MPR)	18 10:30 AM TaiChi (PH) 4:30 PM - 8:30 PM Weight Watchers Meetings (MPR) 6:45 PM STOP	19	20 Winter Weekend
21	Winter Weekend 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist - Church 9:45 AM Church School 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist - Church 4:00 PM Youth Group Meeting	22 Mantle Deadline 3:00 PM - 5:30 PM Brownie(7149) and Girl Scouts(2484) meeting (PH & MPR) 7:00 PM Vestry Meeting (MPR)	23 10:00 AM Origins of the Bible Seminar 12:30 PM Deanery Luncheon (PH) 7:00 PM Miricle Kitchen Mixer	24 3:00 PM Brownie Meeting(MPR) 7:30 PM Adult Ed. (MPR)	25 10:30 AM TaiChi (PH) 4:30 PM - 8:30 PM Weight Watchers Meetings (MPR)	26	27 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM ESL Teacher Training
28	8:00 AM Holy Eucharist - Church 9:45 AM Church School 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist - Church 11:30 AM Annual Meeting 7:00 PM Homeless Forum (Trinity Church Concord)	29 5:00 PM Wardens Meeting	30 10:00 AM Origins of the Bible Seminar 3:00 PM Brownie Meeting (MPR) 2472	31 7:30 PM Adult Ed. (MPR)	1 10:30 AM TaiChi (PH) 4:30 PM - 8:30 PM Weight Watchers Meetings (MPR)	2 9:00 AM Life Line Screening	3

	December 31 1 Christmas	January 7 1 Epiphany	January 14 2 Epiphany	January 21 3 Epiphany	January 28 4 Epiphany
Euch. Min.	8 AM 10 AM Matt Reilly Betsy Wallingford	8 AM Larry Ruark 10 AM Ruth Griesel Harry Ainsworth	8 AM Audrey Newton 10 AM Steve Davies Susan Newlin	8 AM Harry Ainsworth 10 AM B. Wallingford S. Davies	8 AM Ruth Griesel 10 AM Audrey Newton, Matt Reilly
Breadbearer(s) Third Station	Ruth Griesel	Karyn Grant Stuart Hamilton Bev Messersmith	Rich Grant	John Howard	Larry Stewart Linda Trail Rich Grant
Lector	Walter Morgan	Jonas Barciauskas	Jane Graham	Walter Morgan	Karl Loos
Acolyte	Richard Rourke	Chris St. George	Jose Darias	Jack Walker	Emily Perry
V.P.O.D.	Anne Reilly	Steve Kenney	Walter Morgan	Susan Newlin	John Pearson
Ushers	Kevin & Judy Loughry	Jum & Jane Newton		John & Arlene Stevens	Jonas Barciauskas & Pat Coffin
Greeters	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA
Altar Guild	8 & 10 AM Ruth Griesel	8 & 10 Anne Reilly	8 & 10 AM Stevie Spina	8 & 10 AM Stevie Spina	8 & 10 AM Stevie Spina
Coffee Server	Terry Rourke	Kiersten & Dave Varner	Jeremy Perisho	Cathy Fairbairn	Kristine Mitchell



Ruth Griesel, Bev Messersmith, Vicki Reder,
Stevie Spina, and Betsy Wallingford invite you
to join us for the fifth annual

Miracle Kitchen Mixer

Tuesday, January 23rd

7 pm

149 Morse Road, Sudbury

RSVP: Ruth Griesel at (978) 443-7055

email ruth.griesel@Verizon.net

Have you been wanting to reach out and do something to make a difference but don't have much time – and don't know what to do? There is a way! Let us tell you about the Salvation Army Miracle Kitchen. The Salvation Army began offering meals in Framingham 28 years ago, and St. E's has been volunteering at the Miracle Kitchen for over 20 years. We provide dinner on the second Tuesday of each month, and we usually serve about 80 people.

You can participate in many ways:

- by preparing a casserole and dropping it off at St. E's (a recipe and roasting tin will be provided);
- by coming to the Miracle Kitchen after work and helping to serve;
- by becoming a coordinator (i.e., signing up the cooks and servers, rounding up 24 pounds of frozen vegetables, picking up the casseroles at church, and getting over to Framingham at around 5 p.m. to pop the casseroles in the oven and start the vegetables – it's easier than it sounds!)

Occasionally, we have more servers than are necessary (a rare event), and at times like this we encourage volunteers to go into the dining room and visit with folks as they eat their dinners. All of this takes less time than you would think. On a normal Tuesday evening, we've served, cleaned up the kitchen, and are on our way home by around 6:45 p.m. The folks we serve are very grateful for this ministry.

The annual mixer is an opportunity to share coffee and dessert, celebrate the Miracle Kitchen, and learn about one of St. E's most flexible volunteer opportunities. Please join us for some wine, cheese, dessert, and coffee.

Do you want to be in the pictures?



PICTORIAL DIRECTORY UPDATE

We are delighted that so many members of our parish have signed up to have their photographs taken by Olan Mills on one of the three days that the photographer will be at St. Elizabeth's (January 4th, 5th, and 6th). Everyone whose photograph appears in the directory will receive a free directory, as well as a complimentary 8 x 10 photograph.

DON'T FORGET YOUR APPOINTMENT TIME! Your portrait is important to the success of our congregation's directory. Please be on time for your session. (Olan Mills suggests arriving 10 minutes ahead of time so that paper work can be taken care of prior to your sitting.) Families, allow at least 45 minutes for your sitting and selection of your favorite pose.

Thanks to all for your wonderful support of this project!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!



Jackson Hudgins, Grace Keilen, Don Neal, Madeline Neal, Meg Striepe, Ed Lewis, Bethany Stevens, Chris Trecker, Barbara Williamson, Noah Wilson, Charlotte Bobrecker, Art Huston, Kristin Kimble, Cynthia Abbott, Bev Messersmith, Marcy Wilkins, Allie Binder, Donna Lee, Joan Gallagher, Mary Pihl, Emma Norton, Richard Rourke, Fred Bautze, Ben Lepordo, Tom Davies, Sally Norton, John Brackett, Ben Davis, Stephanie DeJesus, John Romain, and Nicholas Wilkins

HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

by Dave & Kiersten Varner

Last Month

On December 3, the youth met to kick-off the fundraising events for next summer's trip. We discussed the various strategies to raise the funds we need and the idea that we will be combining efforts with the Journey-to-Adulthood class as they raise money for their pilgrimage. We also had fun with arts and crafts as we reverted to our childhoods and made Christmas or Advent chains out of red and green construction paper. The youth wrote special verses or

Advent and Christmas words on the individual links. We concluded the afternoon's activities by once again playing a riveting game of Sardines!

On December 9 & 16, the youth provided baby-sitting services to parishioners who just needed to get away from the kids for awhile. All the youth had a great time cutting and gluing and playing with glitter, watching movies, eating Oreos, playing duck-duck-goose and having a generally fabulous time with your kids.

Thanks to all parents who helped us raise funds by allowing us to take care of your kids!

Sudbury Farms Raffle

We continue selling raffle tickets for Sudbury Farms to friends, family and parishioners. Remember we are selling tickets for \$5.00 each with the grand prize being a \$200 gift certificate to Sudbury Farms and three 2nd place prizes of \$100 gift certificates. If you have any questions about the raffle, please direct them to Dave or Kiersten.

Upcoming Events



January 7 - Youth Group Meeting - youth group meeting at 4 p.m. - Come help us welcome in the New Year!

January 21 - Youth Group Meeting @ 4 p.m. - If you aren't going on the St. E's ski weekend, come enjoy winter with us!

To Be Determined Weekend in January - Watch for announcements for a Saturday or Sunday in January in which we will gather in front of Sudbury Farms to sell raffle tickets to shoppers. More details to come!!!!

Questions, comments, ideas?...please contact Kiersten & Dave Varner at 617-484-1894 or youthgroup@st-elizabeths.org.

2007 Stewardship Report

2007 Stewardship Giving Nears Financial Goal

As the calendar year winds down and the liturgical year starts anew, Stewardship at St. Elizabeth's has achieved a new record in terms of financial giving to support our annual budget. As of December 13, we have received Stewardship cards from 95 parish families for a total of \$253,259. Based on prior years' giving patterns we will likely receive 10 - 15 additional gifts over the next several weeks or months that will bring total giving up to about \$270,000. While we are thanks filled for this very generous support, we are still short of our goals of \$300,000 and 130 families. Of particular concern is the Stewardship participation rate at St. Elizabeth's, which we believe should be in the 120 to 130 range given the number of active families in the parish.

For those of you who haven't returned your Stewardship card, please take a minute and do so now or send an email to stewardship@st-elizabeths.org. And remember that all gifts, regardless of size, are not only important to St. E's, but also necessary to meet our budget for 2007. For those of you who have returned your giving card, thank-you, and please, make an effort to keep your pledge up-to-date during the year. It is only through your gifts that we are able to do the work God has given us to do.

Faithfully,
Karl Loos
For the Stewardship Committee



Family Homelessness Prevention Adult Basic Education Forum Summary

Family Homelessness is at crisis levels In Massachusetts.

Over 20,000 children do not have permanent homes.

1400 families with about 3000 children are in shelters every night in Massachusetts.

Housing a family in a shelter for a year costs about \$36,000. The average time a family stays in a shelter is about 7 ½ months.

The cost of adult basic education is \$2000 per person per year

Focus of the **Third Annual Family Homelessness Forum:**

Sunday January 28, 2007, Trinity Episcopal Church, Concord, 7:00pm - 8:45pm

Overlooked Strategies to End Family Homelessness:

What Works & Why – First-Hand Accounts

- Access to education and skills for living wage jobs
- Homeless prevention programs
- Easy steps everyone can take to make a difference

This Third Annual Forum on Family Homelessness, *Overlooked Strategies to End Family Homelessness: What Works & Why – First Hand Accounts*, focuses on the key role adult education plays in preventing and ameliorating family homelessness. In an eye-opening discussion, panelists will highlight successful and common sense strategies that are too often overlooked in the search for ways to prevent and end family homelessness.

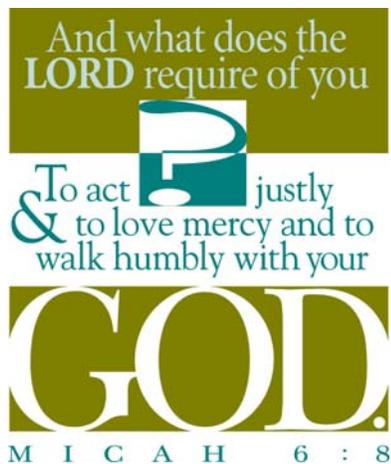
The conversation will also suggest actions audience members can take to reduce long waiting lists and assure that sufficient learning programs and community support services are available for those who urgently need them. At the end of the evening, the attendees will have a deeper understanding of the causes and remedies of family homelessness, and of advocacy activities that can have a powerful impact.

Panelists include two mothers who have benefited from adult basic education programs, directors of two community college programs, and a leading state house advocate for adequate funding of adult education programs. The forum moderator will be Miriam Stein, MSW, advocacy trainer and family homelessness consultant to Cooperative Metropolitan Ministries.

This community forum will be held on **Sunday**, January 28th, from 7:00PM until 8:45 PM at Trinity Episcopal Church, 81 Elm St., Concord. This forum is presented by the Concord Acton Family Homelessness Advocacy Network in conjunction with Cooperative Metropolitan Ministries.

Cooperative Metropolitan Ministries is an interfaith coalition of more than 70 congregations, in the city of Boston and surrounding communities, that brings people together across religious, racial and socioeconomic lines to work jointly for social justice. www.coopmet.org

MICAH UPDATE by Cheryl Davis



Although it may appear things have been quiet recently with MICAH there has been a lot of activity going on. Over the past year and a half the organization has grown in breadth and activity to the point that the Board of Directors recognized that its member churches were ready to take the next step in leadership. To that end the Board was reconstituted to reflect a more active laity component.

Currently there are laity and clergy from Congregation Beth El Sudbury, St. Tarcisius, Framingham, St. Stephens, Framingham, St. Cecilia's Ashland, First Parish Framingham, Eliot Church UCC UU, Natick, and St. Elizabeth's, Sudbury. Representatives from St. Elizabeth's include Barbara, Lucy St. George, Mara Huston, and Cheryl Davis.

Bill Black who has led the Organizing effort for MICAH has decided to go home to the west coast after two years of hard work building the effort to the point we are at now and we are actively interviewing a new organizer. MICAH has also benefited from the services of Julie Bernstein an Intern provided to MICAH by a grant from the Jewish Organizing Initiative. Those of you who have had the opportunity to speak with her will welcome her energy and outlook.

MICAH members recently met with Governor-elect Deval Patrick as part of its community organizing effort, took part in the Framingham health center effort, and sponsored educational seminars at First Parish in Framingham regarding the new health insurance legislation.

On January 14th, MICAH will be sponsoring a Story Circle event. It will start at 4pm with a potluck dinner followed by planned Story Circle where individuals will share heritage stories as well as MetroWest stories. Each congregation is invited to bring 5-8 members. If you are interested in attending please contact one of the board members mentioned above. Each person is also asked to bring one food item from our heritage to share with others.



A lasting empire

One day as Napoleon came toward the end of his career, he looked back across the years — the great Napoleon that at a very early age had all but conquered the world. He was not stopped until he moved out to the battle of Leipzig and then to Waterloo. But that same Napoleon one day stood back and looked across the years, and said: Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne and I have built great empires. But upon what did they depend? They depended upon force. But long ago Jesus started an empire that depended on love, and even to this day millions will die for him.

—Martin Luther King Jr.



Reminder!

The deadline for the February 2007 issue of *The Mantle* is Monday, January 22. Please send your articles to StEsNewsletter@aol.com.

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Ours is a community through which we respond to our connection with God as revealed in Jesus Christ. Together we seek to know and worship God, nurturing one another in love as we live God's will. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we seek to reach out and respond to the needs of others and to make God known to the larger community.

"St. Elizabeth's Church in the Town of Sudbury welcomes and honors everyone. In accordance with our baptismal covenant, we affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person. We strive to include all persons without regard to sexual orientation, race, nationality, gender, family configuration, ethnic background, economic circumstances, difference in ability, culture or age. Our love and acceptance of each other embody our commitment to unity with God and each other in Christ."