

The Mantle

St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church
Sudbury, Massachusetts



Spring Auction to Benefit Youth Group Programs and General Outreach

Saturday April 28th 6:00 pm – 8:30 pm



St. Elizabeth's annual Spring Auction is right around the corner and we need you! This is the major fundraising event for all of the Youth Group and some outreach programs for the year. Proceeds support the Appalachia Service Project, the City Mission Project, the Pilgrimage taken by the Journey to Adulthood participants, the outreach ministries supported by these groups, as well as Refugee Immigration Ministry and MICAH.

Auction items will give you and your family enjoyment and entertainment in the coming year...including weeklong stays at vacation homes in New Hampshire and Nantucket, a Microsoft Xbox 360 with games, original artwork, Red Sox tickets, babysitting and yard work services. Think about what you could contribute to add to our selection. In the past, people have shared their hobbies - perhaps a fly fishing lesson, sailing trip, gourmet dinner or walking garden tour.

Saturday evening April 28 is the live event! We will have child care with fun activities. Please come, bring a friend and leave with valuable trips, experiences and enjoyment for you and your family.

Please contact us with items to contribute and any questions. David and Kiersten Varner at 617-484-1894 or youthgroup@st-elizabeths.org.

Warden's Words

by Lisa Barnes, Co-Warden

In this, my first installment of Warden's Words, I am fretting terribly about how to honor, connect with, and clearly reflect the rainbow of people, personalities, opinions and deeply held beliefs that make up our community. Try, wish and pray as I might, of course I cannot. But it is a goal worth trying, wishing, and praying for, and I have faith that in time I will get better at it. Please know that it is so important to me to listen to your ideas, concerns and suggestions, and while I try to settle my inner whirling dervish, if I appear to not understand or acknowledge conversations I am witness to, I try to take time later to let them sink in.

In 1982, I attended a 4-day, new-age-style retreat I was familiar with called Life Institute. It was kind of a "learn from the past, forgive, take responsibility and chart your course" course. At the close of the class, the director selected one recorded song for each of us first-timers and played it during a big, group hug. (Some of you know al-

ready about the hippie, tree-hugging side of my childhood. It is a part I cherish, but no more so than the high-society, main-line Philadelphia side. Is it any wonder I am dyslexic?) The

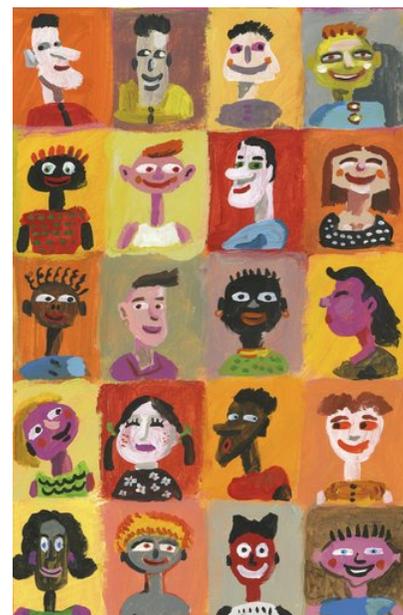


"...I am a person who truly thrives on the joys, opportunities and challenges of knowing many diverse personalities from a broad spectrum of backgrounds."

song chosen for me was Barbara Streisand's *People*. I had and have mixed feelings about that "unique" selection. (What people don't need people?) But I can't deny that I am a person who truly thrives on the joys, opportunities and challenges of knowing many diverse personalities from a broad spectrum of backgrounds.

I admit it - I am out there. And I understand that many don't care to tag along. But I am thrilled whenever someone dares to dip

their toe into the water with me and see what we can find. So it is with that optimistic, curious and child-like vision that I approach my role with Peter Gonze as co-warden. Barbara Williamson recently made the analogy about the opportunities at St. Elizabeth's during this post-capital campaign/construction phase as like a prairie dog sticking his head out from under the earth, safe and sound, to check out what's doin'. I am a person (a prairie dog, if you will) who needs people. St. Elizabeth's is the place for me. Who knows where God's grace will lead us in the years to come. I look forward to what treasures we can discover together.



Vestry Notes

by Peter Gonze, Co-Warden

The Vestry met twice during March. The first meeting was the annual day-long retreat on March 3rd. This meeting is an opportunity for the new Vestry to get together, become better acquainted and spend time delving into topics in greater depth than is possible at the monthly Vestry meetings. Then, later in the month, the monthly Vestry meeting was held.

A major theme that has emerged is to begin a dialog and focus on ways that the Vestry can improve communication and support to the many committees, task forces and special initiatives going on throughout St. E's. We have a very active and varied menu of faith based programs which contribute to the vitality and viability of our church community. It has become clear that we need to check in with the various groups to assure that there is a conduit for communication of key issues and opportunities.

Each year Vestry members are called on to volunteer to be a "Vestry Liaison" and each mem-

ber is designated as the liaison for one of the committees. While this practice has been in place for years, at the Retreat we spent some focused time to emphasize the importance of the function and to explore ways to enhance communication.

As a beginning step, at the March Vestry meeting the Fellowship Committee, ably represented by Ray Considine and Arlene Stevens, came to discuss some of the challenges and opportunities the group faces. Evident is the commitment and enthusiasm the group embodies, as well as the outstanding contribution the small group of organizers make to providing activities that build bonds of fellowship. Equally clear is the great opportunity that exists for expanded participation ... mostly in the form of volunteers. Volunteers are needed to help with currently planned events, organize new activities, as well as to be sure that the various demographic groups within our community have a voice in programs for the future. This is likely to be a consistent theme, and help is always ap-

preciated and never refused! The Vestry appreciates not only the report from Fellowship but also the significant role it plays in supporting the healthy spiritual life we enjoy as a congregation. We look forward to hearing from other committees in the coming months and working together to assist each with its mission.

On the financial front, through the end of February, income versus expenses is running positive by roughly \$18,000. While this is good news, we are running a bit behind where we had forecast. So even though we are off to a good start, we know that we face a number of expense hurdles later this year which will push us into a deficit. The 2007 budget assumes that we will find a way to raise additional funds (a special fundraiser to be determined!) to help balance the budget. This fund raiser is separate from the spring auction (April 28th mark your calendar), which will fund the youth programs including the pilgrimage, City Mission and to support RIM.

April Birthdays



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

Jeffery Abbott, Harry Ainsworth, Harris Bendel, Louise Bendel, Ali Bryant, Graham Daley, Jeff Davis, Bob Ewing, Cathy Fairbairn, Anne Fischer, Kelly Frissora, Kimberly Gee, Laura Hacker, Stan Hanson, Christine Howard, Maureen Hynes, Dan Knaul, Carl Lepordo, Abby Meeks, Ildi Morris, Jim Parker, Mike Perisho, Leslie Ray, Tom Rourke, Larry St. George, Katie Trecker, Katie Walker, Rick Watson, Evan White, Kris Wile, Greg Wilkins, Christopher Woodman

WE'VE MOVED!

Bev & Phil Messersmith have headed to the Cape!
Here's how you can contact them at their new home:

58 Wood Avenue
Sandwich, MA 02563
508-308-0653



ADULT DAY HEALTH PROGRAM

Serving Concord and Surrounding Communities

Cooperative Elder Services, Inc. Adult Day, Social Day, and Alzheimer's Day Care Center located at 7 Chamberlin Drive in Concord provides individualized programs for elders in a safe, structured day time environment which includes socialization, therapeutic activities, nursing care, light breakfast, and hot lunch. Funding is available to eligible participants, and door to door transportation can be arranged. Hours are 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. For more information call Patricia Alexander Oliphant at 978-318-0046.

Consider Volunteering with Sudbury Medical Reserve Corps

By John Stevens

There are many ways to give of ourselves for the benefit of others that are in keeping with our Christian faith. Volunteering with the Sudbury Medical Reserve Corp (SMRC) is one of them. The SMRC is our local team of volunteer medical and non-medical residents who train and stand ready to assist Emergency Response Professionals during times of public health threat and community need.

Although historically a safe place, Sudbury is not immune to natural or accidental events that can threaten the safety and well-being of our community. Tornados, Avian Flu, chemical spills, and other devastating incidents are just as likely to occur here as anywhere. The lessons from 9/11 and Katrina suggest that planning and preparation are keys to responding quickly, efficiently and effectively when a public safety or public health threat occurs.

We would like to recruit, train and maintain an MRC response team of about 150 volunteers, with approximately 35-40 of them being medical/health practitioners. The remaining majority of volunteers need to be non-medical persons with diverse skills and abilities and a willingness to assume any one of a myriad of critical support roles.

Critical support roles include greeting and directing people to registration and triage stations, registering, compiling data records, managing people flow, ensuring people's comfort and safety, distributing food or supplies, assisting those infirm or disabled, providing child care, monitoring people's behavioral and emotional reactions, maintaining a 'first alert' vigilance for people in immediate distress, transporting people and/or supplies, managing traffic flow and parking volume, providing security and safety oversight, etc.

We are especially interested in recruiting volunteers with specialized skill or knowledge, e.g. volunteers who know sign language or are fluent in one or more foreign languages, etc.

As a member of the SMRC, your availability to respond to a "call out" would be up to you. It is expected that not every volunteer will be able to respond if and when a call out is made. Hence, we need a large contingent of volunteers to ensure the likelihood that enough people will be available if and when called upon.

Among the important reasons to consider becoming a volunteer is the chance to work shoulder-to-shoulder with other caring and committed Sudbury residents helping and protecting our neighbors, our co-workers, and our families during times of public health threat or community need. Knowing who they are and being one of them can be a tremendous source of comfort as we go about our daily lives, feeling secure and confident that those we care about will be properly looked after in the event of a community threat or crisis.

To know more , please look for me at Coffee Hour, call me at (978) 443-7960, or send me an email: mrcec@town.sudbury.ma.us.

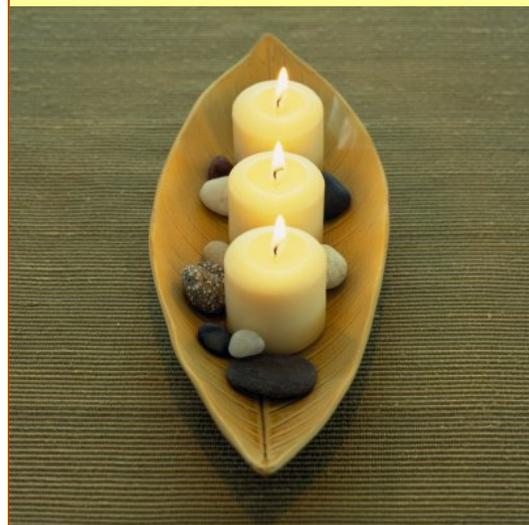
Liturgy of the Light

As Easter approaches, we are getting ready for the Liturgy of the Light service to be held on April 7th at 7pm at the chapel.

All Level II children are invited to participate in the service. On April 7th at 6:30pm we will meet in front of St E's by the cross for the unearthing of the Alleluias at 6:45pm, then continue to the chapel for a 7pm service.

A practice will be held on April 1st.

There is a meaningful script to follow along with many speaking parts. We would love your children to take part in this special service. A sign-up sheet is posted outside Atrium II. Questions? Please contact Chris Howard at ChristineHoward@comcast.net or Jennifer Ehlers at jgehl@comcast.net.



J2A (Grades 8-10)

This past month our J2A class covered lessons on "You are the Body of Christ". We filled out 3x5 cards with positive statements about each of us and talked about how we are each different together we are or various gifts and talents make up the Christ's Body. Other lessons included, "Walking the Labyrinth" and "Friendly Silence". Barbara visited the class to continue leading us through the Prayer Book, helping us to understand the commitments we make during Confirmation.

On March 2-3, six J2Aer's attended a retreat held by the Diocese of Massachusetts at the Barbara C. Harris Camp in New Hampshire. Our group and some 75 other young people who also attended were all preparing for Confirmation. While we were there, our J2Aer's were able to listen and learn more about their decision to be confirmed. The highlight of the weekend was to be able to hear from Bishop Barbara Harris herself who was with us on Saturday morning. She talked about her experience of being confirmed as a young child then listened and answered questions from the young people who were obviously impressed hearing from this wonderful person.

All of the class is involved in the upcoming auction. Each J2Aer has been asked to contact 6-7 members of the church to encourage them to donate and participate in the April 28th Auction Event. This is the major fund raiser for our youth activities which include: ASP, City Mission and Pilgrimage. We are expecting a very exciting evening.

Those J2Aer's going on pilgrimage this summer also want to acknowledge and thank everyone who offer mileage to purchase tickets airline to So. Dakota. We were all very impressed by the generous outpouring of support received that allowed us to purchase 4 round trip tickets.

My Atrium Experience by Tim Howard

I enjoy the Atrium. There are a lot of fun things to learn and the people are nice. We heard one of my favorite stories just the other week — the story of the eight legends and the three servants. The King had to go away on vacation. He had eight talents that were very valuable, and he had to give them to someone to keep them safe.

He had a very good servant so he gave him five of the talents to keep safe. That servant went out to fetch more, and doubled it to ten. The second servant was given two talents. He went out and doubled it and came back with four. The last servant was given one talent. Instead of doubling it, he decided to bury it and tuck it away. When the king came back the first servant gave him the ten talents. The king said "thanks". The second servant gave him four and the king said "thanks". The last servant dug up the one talent and gave it to the king and the king said angrily, "Why didn't you get me more?" The servant gave excuses like "I didn't hear you" and "I forgot." The king is really mad and sent him to the middle of a huge desert and leaves him there.

We discussed the story as a group and talked about who each of us would want to be. I would want to be the one with the four legends. I wouldn't want to be the one with the ten legends because if I wasn't able to get ten, I wouldn't want to disappoint the king. I wouldn't want to be stuck in the desert either.

Youth Group

On March 4, we had a discussion about Lent, talked more about City Mission and came up with ideas for decorating the Youth Group room. On March 11, we cooked for the Miracle Kitchen. We had a great turnout and enjoyed concocting "Texas Hash"... On March 25, we created our own Psalm adapted from Psalm 46 and made certificates of service for the auction:

*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
He provides light and strength in times of darkness and despair,
a helping hand in times of need.
With him no soul shall be abandoned,
and all things will find a way to calm.
All who put their trust in him shall be at peace.
The Lord will surround you with his love and comfort.
He will show you the pathway to peace.
He will lead you through the hardest times and protect you from danger.
You are my Alpha Omega, beginning and end.*

Auction - April 28th, 6-8:30 p.m.

See the article on the front cover! If you have questions or items to donate, or would like to volunteer, contact David and Kiersten Varner at 617-484-1894 or youthgroup@st-elizabeths.org.

April Events

We would love to see you at Holy Week services. We do not have any thing specifically planned for April 15 & 23 due to spring vacation, but keep on the lookout. We will probably throw in a bowling trip or dinner out for those still in town.

April 29 - U2charist - St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Framingham - 5 p.m.

U2

Check out this link. This is a really neat worship experience set to the music of U2. The service begins at 5 p.m., so we'll leave St. E's by 4:15 p.m. Let us know ASAP if you will attend and we'll make a reservation. A light supper is provided by St. Andrew's.

http://www.boston.com/news/local/articles/2007/03/21_episcopal_church_taps_u2_for_liturgy/

Youth Group Retreat - May 18-19 at Barbara Harris Conference Center - details to come. We'll leave the church around 3:30 p.m. on May 18 and return the afternoon of May 19.

City Mission - July 7-14. We need to know if you will participate by May 6th. A \$75.00 deposit is due by May 6th. Make checks payable to "St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church" with "City Mission 2007" in the memo.

If you have any questions or are interested in participating in City Mission or any other youth group activity, please let us know. You can contact David and Kiersten Varner at 617-484-1894 or youthgroup@st-elizabeths.org.

	April 1 Palm Sunday	April 5 Maundy Thurs.	April 6 Good Fri. Chapel	April 8 Easter Sunday	April 15 2 Easter	April 22 3 Easter	April 29 4 Easter
Soup Kitchen: Kitchen Angel: Tricia Griggs	9 AM	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	9 AM	8 & 10 AM	8 & 10 AM	8 & 10 AM
Euch. Min.	11 AM	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	11 AM	8 AM Larry Ruark 10 AM Matt Reilly Harry Ainsworth	8 AM Betsy Wallingford 10 AM Audrey Newton Larry Ruark	8 AM Harry Ainsworth 10 AM Susan Newlin Stuart Hamilton
Breadbearer	Audrey Newton Steve Davies	Larry Ruark		Ruth Griesel Stuart Hamilton	Linda Trail	John Howard	Larry Stewart
3rd Station	Karyn Grant			Audrey Newton			
Lector	Larry Ruark John Howard	Larry Ruark John Howard	Larry Ruark Craig Stafford	Ann Loos Barbara Smith-Moran	Ann Loos Barbara Smith-Moran	Ruth Griesel Stuart Hamilton	Larry Ruark Karyn Grant
Acolytes	Jane Graham	Karl Loos	Larry Ruark Craig Stafford	Rich Grant	Jane Graham	Karl Loos	Walter Morgan
V.P.O.D.	Emily Knaul Richard Rourke Tim Howard			Jose Darias Ben Sugg Sam Sugg	Ben Sugg	John Newton	Chris St. George
Ushers	Steve Kenney			Walter Morgan	Jane Newton	John Pearson	Gifford Perry
Greeters	Larry Jobson & Pat Coffin			Susan Newlin	Pat Coffin, Jonas Barciauskas	Rajeev & Joanne Deshmuk	Kevin & Tricia Griggs
Coffee Host	Pat McCabe			Ray Considine & John Romain	Betsy Wallingford	Karl & Ann Loos	Audrey Newton
Altar Guild	Cathy Fairbairn			Christine Mitchell	Pat Blackey	Betsy Wallingford	Leslie Ray
	Pat Blackey	Vicki Reder	Vicki Reder	Pat Blackey	8 AM Pat Blackey 10 AM P. Blackey	8 AM V. Reder 10 AM Vicki Reder	8 AM V. Reder 10 AM P. Blackey

APRIL 2007

Palm Sunday <u>9:00 AM Holy Eucharist - Church</u> <u>9:15 AM Church School/Liturgy of the Light practice</u> <u>11:00 AM Holy Eucharist - Choir sings Psalm 77</u> <u>11:00 AM Laving on of Hands</u>	<u>2</u> <u>3:00 PM Wardens Meeting (CNF)</u>	<u>3</u> <u>10:00 AM Bible Study (CNF)</u> <u>11:15 AM Yoga Class (MPR)</u> <u>3:00 PM Brownie Meeting (MPR) 2472</u> <u>3:00 PM Brownie Troop #2450 (YGR)</u> <u>7:00 PM Diversity Committee Meeting (cnf)</u> <u>7:30 PM ESL Class (MPR & Cnf)</u>	<u>4</u> <u>3:00 PM Brownie Meeting (MPR)</u>	<u>5</u> <u>Maundy Thursday</u> <u>10:30 AM TaiChi (PH)</u> <u>7:30 PM Maundy Thursday- HEIL Church</u>	<u>6</u> <u>Good Friday</u> <u>7:30 PM Good Friday Service - Chapel</u>	<u>7</u> <u>6:45 PM Unearth Alleluias (The Cross)</u> <u>7:00 PM Liturgy of the Light (Chapel)</u>
<u>8</u> <u>Barbara away after services</u> <u>Easter</u> <u>9:00 AM Holy Eucharist - Church</u> <u>11:00 AM Holy Eucharist - Church</u>	<u>9</u> <u>Barbara away</u> <u>Office Closed</u> <u>3:00 PM - 5:30 PM Brownie(7149) and Girl Scouts(2484) meeting (PH & MPR)</u> <u>7:00 PM Girl Scout Meeting (R13 rm)</u>	<u>10</u> <u>Barbara away</u> <u>10:00 AM Bible Study (CNF)</u> <u>11:15 AM Yoga Class (MPR)</u> <u>3:00 PM Brownie Meeting (MPR) 2472</u> <u>6:00 PM Miracle Kitchen</u> <u>7:30 PM ESL Class (MPR & Cnf)</u>	<u>11</u> <u>Barbara away</u>	<u>12</u> <u>Barbara away</u> <u>10:30 AM TaiChi (PH)</u> <u>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal (Choir loft)</u> <u>7:00 PM COGS Steering Committee meeting (YGR)</u> <u>7:30 PM RIM Meeting (MPR)</u>	<u>13</u> <u>Barbara away</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>15</u> <u>8:00 AM Holy Eucharist - Chapel</u> <u>9:45 AM No Church School</u> <u>10:00 AM Family Friendly Holy Eucharist - Church</u>	<u>16</u> <u>Barbara out of office after 12</u> <u>School vacation week</u>	<u>17</u> <u>Barbara out of office</u> <u>School vacation week</u> <u>10:00 AM Bible Study (CNF)</u> <u>7:30 PM ESL Class (MPR & Cnf)</u>	<u>18</u> <u>School vacation week</u>	<u>19</u> <u>School vacation week</u> <u>10:30 AM TaiChi (PH)</u> <u>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal (Choir loft)</u>	<u>20</u> <u>School vacation week</u>	<u>21</u> <u>School vacation week</u>
<u>22</u> <u>8:00 AM Holy Eucharist - Chapel</u> <u>9:00 AM - 9:45 AM Adult Confirmation Classes</u> <u>9:45 AM Church School</u> <u>10:00 AM Holy Eucharist - Church</u>	<u>23</u> <u>7:00 PM Vestry Meeting (MPR)</u>	<u>24</u> <u>Clergy Conference- Barbara Away</u> <u>10:00 AM Bible Study (CNF)</u> <u>3:00 PM Brownie Meeting (MPR) 2472</u> <u>7:30 PM ESL Class (MPR & Cnf)</u>	<u>25</u> <u>Clergy Conference- Barbara Away</u> <u>3:30 PM Girl Scouts (MPR)</u>	<u>26</u> <u>Clergy Conference- Barbara Away</u> <u>10:30 AM TaiChi (PH)</u> <u>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal (Choir loft)</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u> <u>6:00 PM Youth Group / Outreach Auction</u>
<u>29</u> <u>8:00 AM Holy Eucharist - Chapel</u> <u>9:00 AM - 9:45 AM Adult Confirmation Classes</u> <u>9:45 AM Church School</u> <u>10:00 AM Holy Eucharist - Church</u> <u>4:15 PM Youth leaves for U2charist</u>	<u>30</u> <u>3:00 PM - 5:30 PM Brownie(7149) and Girl Scouts(2484) meeting (PH & MPR)</u>	<u>1</u> <u>3:00 PM Brownie Meeting (MPR) 2472</u> <u>3:00 PM Brownie Troop #2450 (YGR)</u> <u>6:30 PM Deanery Assembly-Holy Spirit...Wayland</u> <u>7:00 PM Diversity Committee Meeting (cnf)</u> <u>7:30 PM ESL Class (MPR & Cnf)</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u> <u>3:00 PM Wardens Meeting (CNF)</u> <u>7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal (Choir loft)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>

Special Supplement: Strained Relations in the Anglican Communion

At some level most of us are aware that relations are strained between the Episcopal Church of the United States (ECUSA) and a number of the other provinces of the Anglican Communion. Some of you have asked me to elaborate on how tensions arose and where we stand at the moment, particularly since the meeting of the Anglican Primates (a Primate is a Presiding Bishop of a Province, so our Presiding Bishop Katherine Jefferts Schori is a Primate and attended the meeting) in Tanzania in February and the meeting of the American House of Bishops (at which Bp. Jefferts Schori presided) in Texas in mid-March.

Members of the Anglican Communion are those churches which can trace their roots to the Church of England's Archbishop of Canterbury. How the various provinces of the Communion live out their Anglicanism is in part a product of who founded them and the context in which they find themselves.

Therefore, for instance, the Anglican churches in parts of Africa, many of which were established in the colonial period by conservative, evangelical British missionaries, are rooted in English polity and tradition. In those churches this makes for a hierarchical system of authority where Bishops are appointed, not elected by a representatives of the laity and clergy; clergy are appointed to positions, not chosen by their congregations; and the 1662 Prayer Book is still the authorized source of doctrine and worship.

This is quite different from American polity and tradition (modeled after a democratic republic structure of government), where a Bishop is elected by a diocesan convention of lay and clergy delegates; where Episcopal parishes select their own Rector and where the church is overseen by a vestry of lay people and the Rector who may vote on an issue only to break a tie; and where the 1979 Book of Common Prayer is the authorized source of doctrine and worship.

Further, the social, political, and cultural context of many of the African churches is quite different from that in the United States. In the African churches, the status of women, the novelty of democracy, and the cultural taboos concerning human sexuality all affect the way authority is shared and exercised. Finally, the theological education of the clergy there and here is different, resulting in differences in scriptural interpretation.

It goes without saying that there have always been these differences between and among the various provinces of the Anglican Communion. It is only in the last ten years or so that there has been a drive by some parts of the communion to demand conformity by all parts of the communion, and this demand for conformity was most clearly expressed at the Lambeth Conference (a meeting of all Anglican bishops once every ten years, held in England and named for Lambeth Palace where it used to be convened) in 1998.

From the Rector, Continued

The issue of human sexuality, particularly homosexuality, had become a source of tension. At that Lambeth Conference, the African bishops drafted and passed nonbinding Resolution 1.10 which held in part

1. that sexual expression is the exclusive province of heterosexual marriage, all others being called to abstinence
2. that all the baptized are children of God regardless of their sexual orientation and that it is incumbent upon the church to listen to the experience of the homosexuals
3. that while homosexual practice is incompatible with Scripture, and while all people are called to minister to each other, irrespective of sexual orientation, and to condemn irrational fear of homosexuals, it cannot advise the legitimizing or the blessing of same sex unions or ordaining those involved in same gender unions.

The full text of the resolution can be read at www.lambethconference.org/resolutions/1998/1998-1-10.cfm. While this resolution passed, the vast majority of American and Canadian bishops at the time voted against it or abstained. Over 50% of the bishops in the Anglican Communion, indeed over 50% of Anglicans, are African, easily overpowering the dissent of the North American bishops.

Fast forward to the General Convention of ECUSA in 2003. At this convention (a bicameral body with elected lay and ordained delegates from each diocese in the House of Deputies and all currently seated bishops in the House of Bishops), a resolution was passed recognizing that local faith communities are operating within the bounds of our common life as they explore and experience liturgies celebrating and blessing same-sex unions. Further, the General Convention (GC) ratified the election of the Rev. V. Gene Robinson, an openly gay priest living in a same gender union, by the diocesan convention of New Hampshire to be the bishop of that diocese.

These two actions stood in contradiction to 1998 Lambeth Resolution 1.10. While the Lambeth resolution was nonbinding and not representative of the position held by ECUSA, the bishops, African, American, and other, who voted for that resolution in 1998 felt betrayed and dismissed. Many of the African bishops, who learned of the GC's actions by reading their newspapers, felt that ECUSA had acted unilaterally and imperially, akin in their view to the US foreign policy. A number of these bishops declared themselves out of communion with ECUSA.

To be fair, it is also true that most of the North American bishops at Lambeth 1998 saw Resolution 1.10 as a power play attempting to impose conformity across the communion with respect to interpretation of Scripture and the treatment of gay, lesbian, transgendered, and bisexual children of God, a conformity that has never been a particularly high priority for Anglicans who have always lived with ambiguity. As the Rev. Dr. Katherine Grieb noted in her presentation to the House of Bishops March 19th, "Anglicanism has a long tradition, not of closing our eyes to conflict, but of creating spaces where different points of view can be argued intelligently, coherently, and with attention to biblical interpretation in ways that we can move forward without everyone agreeing but with an understanding that though we don't see it the same way, we care deeply about our union." The text of her remarks can be read in full at www.dfms.org/3577_83906_ENG_HTM.htm.

From the Rector, Continued

Following the 2003 GC of ECUSA, the Anglican Consultative Council, the executive body of the Anglican Communion, called for a review of the situation and proposed a way forward in the Windsor Report, drafted by a body representing the divergent views held within the communion. This report called for a response by ECUSA at its subsequent GC in 2006. The response the Windsor Report called for essentially was repentance and amendment of life. The full text of the Windsor Report can be read at www.anglicancommunion.org/windsor2004/index.cfm.

Last summer, the GC passed resolutions which committed ECUSA to interdependence within the Anglican Communion and expressed sincere regret for the upset caused by the actions of the 2003 convention, but it stopped short of repenting. Furthermore it asked dioceses to exercise restraint with respect to electing anyone to the episcopate whose manner of life would present a challenge to the wider church, but it stopped short of declaring a moratorium on considering gay and lesbian clergy as candidates for bishop. What's more, the GC 2006 elected a woman, Bp. Katherine Jefferts Schori, as Presiding Bishop and Primate of ECUSA. For those provinces in the Anglican communion which do not approve of the ordination of women to the priesthood or the episcopate, the election of Jefferts Schori added insult to injury.

Concurrent with the dismay expressed by other provinces in the Anglican Communion over the actions of GC 2006, a number of churches and dioceses *within* ECUSA felt betrayed by the actions of GCs 2003 and 2006. A number of these churches have sought the pastoral oversight of a bishop sympathetic to their concerns. So, for instance, Holy Trinity in Marlborough, has the pastoral oversight of Bishop Harvey of Newfoundland. That church continues to pay its assessment to the Diocese of Massachusetts and to attend conventions, but our bishops do not make visitations there or offer pastoral care to the rector. In the case of Holy Trinity, this arrangement was worked out by the rector, the congregation, and Bishop Shaw and Bishop Harvey. Most arrangements are not so amicable.

In some cases the alternative pastoral oversight by bishops outside of ECUSA has taken place without the permission of the diocesan bishop. So, for instance, two years ago, without the prior knowledge or permission of the Bishop of Ohio, the Rt. Rev. Mark Hollingsworth (one time rector of St. Anne's Lincoln and former Archdeacon of the Diocese of Massachusetts), an African bishop came to Akron to confirm members of a dissenting congregations. There are many more cases of uninvited interference on the part of bishops outside of ECUSA, a development that deeply troubles many American Episcopalians, lay and ordained. Moreover, some churches now wish to sever ties altogether with ECUSA and have entered into battles over church property and funds.

Relatedly, since the GC of 2006, a small number of diocesan bishops within ECUSA have sought the pastoral oversight of an African Primate bypassing Bp. Jefferts Schori as their Presiding Bishop. It remains to be seen how those dioceses work within the very different hierarchy, polity, and Scriptural interpretation that attends the authority of the Nigerian Primate under whose oversight they have placed themselves.

Now that we have reviewed briefly some of the history leading up to this point, we turn to the Primates meeting in Tanzania in February of this year. The 38 primates (Bp. Jefferts Schori is the only woman) meet periodically for prayer, mutual consultation, and to discuss initiatives of the whole

From the Rector, Continued

communion. This meeting focused on the Millennium Development Goals, theological education, interpretation of Scripture, and the response of ECUSA to the Windsor Report. The text of the communiqué issued upon the conclusion of the meeting can be read at

www.dfms.org/3577_82571_ENG_HTM.htm. It is clear that the majority of primates feel that ECUSA's response to the Windsor Report is inadequate. The Communiqué asks the American House of Bishops to:

- 1) make an unequivocal common covenant that the Bishops will not authorize any rite of blessing for same-sex unions in their dioceses or through GC; and
- 2) confirm that the passing of Resolution B033 of the 75th GC means that a candidate for episcopal orders living in a same-sex union shall not receive the necessary consent unless some new consensus on these matters emerges across the Communion.

It says that failure to give these assurances by the 30th of September 2007, the month of the next meeting of the House of Bishops, means that the relationship between us "remains damaged at best" and this "has consequences for the full participation of the Church in the Anglican Communion."

First and foremost, this directive completely overlooks the fact that the polity of ECUSA is bicameral. The House of Bishops cannot unilaterally undo the work of the GC any more than the Senate can unilaterally repeal legislation already signed into law. Only a duly called GC can do the work the Primates have put before the House of Bishops. Secondly, the Covenant Design Group commissioned by the Anglican Consultative Council is already working on a document that will outline the provisions of constituent members' responsibilities to the Anglican Communion as a whole, including issues of human sexuality, Biblical interpretation, and uninvited intervention in the affairs of one province (say, ECUSA) by another (say, Nigeria). The Primates' Communiqué pre-empts the work of the Covenant Design Group.

Still, our Presiding Bishop was most measured in her perspective of the Primates' meeting. Quoting from her remarks, the full text of which can be viewed at

www.dfms.org/3577_82669_ENG_HTM.htm

We traveled home from this meeting at Carnival, the farewell to meat (carne vale) that comes just before Lent begins. That is an image that may be useful as we consider what the Primates' gathering is commending to the Episcopal Church. The Episcopal Church has been asked to consider the wider body of the Anglican Communion and its needs. Our own Church has in recent years tended to focus on the suffering of one portion of the body, particularly those who feel that justice demands the full recognition and celebration of the gifts of gay and lesbian Christians. That focus has been seen in some other parts of the global Church, as inappropriate, especially as it has been felt to be a dismissal of traditional understandings of sexual morality. Both parties hold positions that can be defended by appeal to our Anglican sources of authority - scripture, tradition, and reason - but each finds it very difficult to understand and embrace the other. What is being asked of both parties is a season of fasting - from authorizing rites for blessing same-sex unions and consecrating bishops in such unions on the one hand, and from transgressing traditional diocesan boundaries on the other.

Justice, (steadfast) love, and mercy always go together in our biblical tradition. None is complete without the others. While those who seek full inclusion for gay and lesbian Christians, and the equal valuing of their gifts for ministry, do so out of an undeniable passion for jus

From the Rector, Continued

tice, others seek a fidelity to the tradition that cannot understand or countenance the violation of what that tradition says about sexual ethics. Each is being asked to forbear for a season. The word of hope is that in God all things are possible, and that fasting is not a permanent condition of a Christian people, nor a normative one. God's dream is of all people gathered at a feast, and we enter Lent looking toward to that Easter feast and the new life that will, in God's good time, be proclaimed.

The Presiding Bishop's remarks were hard to hear for our gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered brothers and sisters in Christ and for those who stand with them.

As the Rev. Dr. Grieb (*op.cit.*) pointed out in her remarks to the March 2007 meeting of the House of Bishops,

Theologically, biblically, ... we are at Antioch with Paul walking the way of the Cross with that mysterious Son of Man. With Paul in Antioch, we have - perhaps without adequate consultation with Jerusalem - been having table fellowship (*koinonia*) with Gentiles, until the men from James came to tell us that we have to stop doing it. They want a moratorium on eating with Gentiles. This presents the community with a difficult decision. Peter and Barnabas pull away from the table physically and ritually separate themselves from the Gentiles. Paul says, "I can't do it." If [Paul had pulled away too], most of us would not be here today, being Gentiles ourselves.

Grieb made clear to the House of Bishops that our Anglican GLBT brothers and sisters have spent their lives exiled from full participation in the Anglican Communion. It would be our privilege to join them.

At the conclusion of their meeting March 21st, the House of Bishops issued the following so-called "Mind of the House":

- Resolved, the House of Bishops affirms its desire that The Episcopal Church remain a part of the councils of the Anglican Communion; and
- Resolved, the meaning of the Preamble to the Constitution of The Episcopal Church is determined solely by the GC of The Episcopal Church; and
- Resolved, the House of Bishops believes the proposed Pastoral Scheme of the Dar es Salaam Communiqué of February 19, 2007 would be injurious to The Episcopal Church and urges that the Executive Council decline to participate in it; and
- Resolved, the House of Bishops pledges itself to continue to work to find ways of meeting the pastoral concerns of the Primates that are compatible with our own polity and canons.

And further, it issued to the Archbishop of Canterbury and the members of the Primates' Standing Committee:

We, the Bishops of The Episcopal Church.. have considered the requests directed to us by the Primates... Communiqué dated February 19, 2007.

Although we are unable to accept the proposed Pastoral Scheme, we declare our passionate desire to remain in full constituent membership in both the Anglican Communion and the Episcopal Church.

From the Rector, Continued

We believe that there is an urgent need for us to meet face to face with the Archbishop of Canterbury and members of the Primates' Standing Committee, and we hereby request and urge that such a meeting be negotiated by the Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church and the Archbishop of Canterbury at the earliest possible opportunity.

We invite the Archbishop and members of the Primates' Standing Committee to join us at our expense for three days of prayer and conversation regarding these important matters.

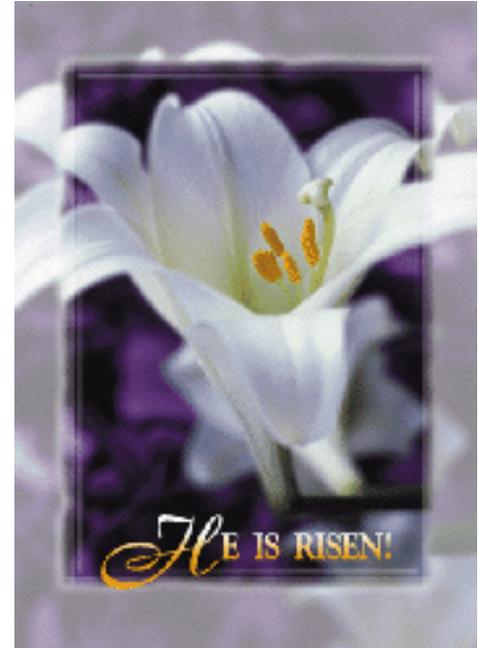
The full text can be viewed at www.dfms.org/3577_84148_ENG_HTML.htm however, it is important to note that as of this writing, the Archbishop of Canterbury has not consented to meet.

So, where does that leave us? We do not know what the future holds. We know only that our church and its leaders will do their best to be faithful and to discern the will of God, and that God's grace abounds. In the meantime, at the parish, deanery, and diocesan level, we will continue to be faithful in prayer, worship, fellowship, and study, continue to abide by our commitment to welcome and befriend all those the world pushes to the margins, to proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ, to seek and serve Christ in all persons, and to strive for justice and peace among all people, respecting the dignity of every human being.

I am happy to discuss with anyone any or all of what I have written here.

For those of you who wish to research the reporting of these issues further, I direct you to the Episcopal News Service website at www.dfms.org/3577_ENG_HTML.htm in addition to the other URLs referenced in the text of this article.

Barbara



Holy Week Schedule

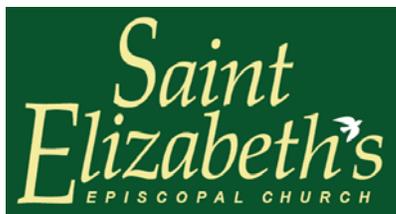
Palm Sunday, April 1, 9am and 11am in the church

Maundy Thursday, April 5, 7:30pm in the church

Good Friday, April 6, 7:30pm in the chapel

Liturgy of the Light, a children's service, April 7,
7pm in the chapel

Easter Sunday, 9am and 11am in the church



One Morse Rd., Sudbury, MA 01776
978-443-6035

The Rev. Barbara S. Williamson, Rector
barbara_williamson@st-elizabeths.org

Susan Berry & Peter Gonze, Co-Wardens
sberry@wellesley.edu, PGonze@unither.com

Stan Hanson, Director of Music
shanson47@comcast.net

Peg Scarlata, Parish Secretary
office@st-elizabeths.org

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 12
SUDBURY, MA

www.st-elizabeths.org

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.