

St David's Episcopal Church

Bean Blossom

Advent 2006

Excerpts from a Gardener's Journal as the Season of Advent Approaches:

11/4/2006 It's raining, misting, really, as I write this. The ground is soft and yielding, not yet locked into winter's stony grip. A good thing, because on the chair near the front door, sits a bag full of bulbs – miniature daffodils, narcissus (narcissi?), anemones, Japanese iris -- the result of an impulse purchase while on an errand of practicality at the hardware store a few weeks ago. It was a cold dark day and I was suckered by the packaging – vibrant drifts of yellow, indigo, purple, magenta and white blossoms, which I immediately imagined as my garden. Of course, the actual garden is a morass of weeds and fallen leaves and the slimy frostbitten dregs of this year's plants, nowhere near ready to receive these little time-capsules of new life. If it is going to bear any resemblance come Spring to the lush floral showcase promised by those packages, I'm going to have to put on my overalls and get out there and get to work.

11/6/2006 This mild weather isn't going to last. Now's the time to get these bulbs in or I'm going to end up as in years past, crouching in a howling mid-December gale half-blinded by swirling snowflakes, hacking divots in the frozen ground with a hatchet and dropping hapless bulbs into what will surely prove to be shallow graves. No, I'd like to do it properly this year, with an eye toward giving these bulbs a fighting chance. It's just that there's so much I have to do before I can even begin the actual planting. And it is still raining....

11/9/2006 My overalls are caked with mud and my fingernails may never be clean again, but the garden is free of debris and ready to receive the bulbs. I've just counted them. Eighty-eight. What was I thinking? I guess I was thinking abundance. Right now, I'm thinking sore back and carpal tunnel syndrome.

11/10/2006

There's a cold front due in tonight. Temperatures falling to below freezing. It's either plant now or figure out recipes for boiled bulbs.

11/11/2006

Mission accomplished. All eighty-eight of 'em in the ground. Hard work, but that's not what I remember as I curl up on the couch before the first wood stove fire of the waning year. What I remember is digging deep. What I remember is the last glimpse of each bulb and the sensation of consigning it to something way beyond my ken and my control as I pushed damp soil in upon it. What I remember is standing up stiff and muddy and strangely content in the dusk, the final bulb in the ground and the trees around me creaking in the first breath of that cold front coming in. The garden slumbered around me, dark and dormant and seemingly undisturbed. But far below its surface lay the promise of daffodils and narcissus (narcissi?), anemones, and iris. My active labor accomplished, now my work is to wait patiently and receptively for the coming of something new into the world. It will arrive in its own time, witnessing to a power that brings out of what seems dead, life abundant.

~Deborah Hutchison

What is Advent?

Advent was the last season to be officially added to the church calendar, in about 600 AD. It was made the first season of the church year because it begins the story of the events of Christ's life, death, and resurrection. Advent always includes four Sundays before Christmas, this year (2006) beginning on **December 3**. Originally, in the Eastern Church, Advent focused on the Annunciation (when the angels told Mary that she would bear a son); but in the West it came to concern the first Coming at the Nativity, the future Coming at the end of time, and the present coming, through grace, to the hearts of men. Thus the themes of consciousness of the coming judgment and of joyful expectation have shaped our observance of Advent for centuries. Our Advent wreath candles, symbolizing the coming of the Light of the world, are to remind us of these themes. It has often been customary to have one rose-colored candle to symbolize joyful expectation. For more advent facts take a look at: <http://anglicansonline.org/special/advent.html>

The Meaning of Greening

Why in the world do we haul a tree into our homes and hang things on it? And speaking of the stuff that we hang "just so" all over this tree...what does that mean to us? Does the wreath that gets hung on the door mean anything...or is it just "pretty?" If you would like to know the answers to these questions, instead of just going through the motions every Christmas Season, please plan to attend the "greening of the church" on **December 24**. This time is so much more than "just decorating the church" and we should treat it as such. It is truly a time for our church family to be together...all generations...all backgrounds...one family! Just as your individual families cherish the traditions that you have created, so must St David's create and cherish theirs. So, with that in mind, we are encouraging the greening to be a time of young and old (and those in the middle) to stay for a while after Sunday Service and be with family.

A CHRISTMAS POLKA By Barbara (Moberly) Faul

(Sung to the tune of – "The Beer Barrel Polka")

There's such a happy season comin' round
Making joy and happiness abound.
And most every place where folks are found
They are dancing a Christmas Polka.

All the children in each neighborhood
Try so hard to do the things they should,
Never have they been so very good,
And they're dancing a Christmas Polka.

They know that Santa's on his way,
He bringing lots of toys and goodies on his sleigh,
And when the reindeer start to prance
They're trying to do this Christmas dance!

So when you hear a tinkling jingle bell
Remember all these glad things that I tell,
If you jump for joy you'll know it well
For you'll be dancing a Christmas Polka!

Lyrics copyright, 1990 ~ Music by Jule Styne

Upcoming Liturgical Developments in our worship at St. David's

In June, 2006, The 75th General Convention directed that all Episcopal Churches adopt the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) as the source of scripture readings for Sunday worship, replacing the lectionary found in *The Book of Common Prayer*. The use of the RCL will promote greater ecumenical unity, as we read and reflect upon the same scriptures as Christians of other denominations around the world.

Officially, this transition will take place on the First Sunday of Advent 2007. However, the RCL has been in trial use in some Episcopal parishes since 2000. With the support of our bishop, the Worship & Music Commission has elected to make the switch to the RCL, effective the First Sunday of Advent, 2006.

The effect of this change will be subtle. Certain familiar stories (now heard every three years) will be heard at other times and in difference sequence. Other, less familiar stories will be given new prominence. It is intended that our spiritual journey will be enriched by their inclusion.

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Also in the season of Advent, we will introduce something that will be familiar to some and new to others. *The Book of Common Prayer* provides a contemporary language version of the Lord's Prayer, based on a new, more accurate translation. In the 27 years since the new Prayer Book was authorized, this version has found a place in the Church and is in wide use today. The essence of the prayer is unchanged, but the simplicity and directness of the language has proven to be spiritually helpful to many. We hope that all will enter into this four week adventure with open hearts and minds, allowing the new words to work in us and lead us to new understandings and, possibly, renewed devotion. At the end of the Advent season, we will resume our use of the more familiar version of the Lord's Prayer for purposes of comparison, followed by some form of reflection as a worshipping community.

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In another development, the Worship & Music Commission proposes a minor variation of our usual approach to preaching. After examining ancient worship patterns and settings, liturgists and church architects believe that the spiritual meaning and power of our worship can be greatly enhanced by the careful organization of the worship space around three key focal points.

These three focal points are the baptismal font (the place of initiation), the altar (the place of communion), and the lectern (the place of encounter with the living Word of God). The worship space (and our movement within it) is consciously defined by the prominent placement of these three liturgical structures or furnishings.

One related conclusion is that the reading and proclamation of the Word should take place at a single location, unlike the common arrangement of a separate lectern for the readings and pulpit for the sermon. Accordingly, after Christmas, in the season of Epiphany, we will experiment with using the lectern as the single focal point for the Ministry of the Word, for reading as well as preaching. It should be noted that our lay preachers already use the lectern for this purpose.

Again, we will observe this practice for a season, then resume preaching from the pulpit for purposes of comparison. Then, we will reflect and converse about the impact of such a change and the possible implications for our worship. --*Jonathan Hutchison*

Practical Spirituality Corner: “People Who Don’t Get It”

You may understand the true nature of reality, perceiving deeply that we are all essentially one, and that we are here on earth to love one another. To understand this true nature of the self is a blessing. Nevertheless, people who just don’t get it are seemingly everywhere, often in positions of power. It can be frustrating and painful to watch them behave unconsciously in our families, at work, and in public life. It is easy to feel intolerant of these people, wishing we could be free of them, even though we know that our separation from them is an illusion.

It helps sometimes to think of us all as different parts of one psyche. Just as within our own hearts and minds we have dark places that need healing, the heart and mind of the world has its dark places. The health of the whole organism depends upon the relative health of the individuals within it. We increase harmony when we hold onto the light, not allowing it to be darkened by judgment, anger, and fear about those who behave unconsciously. Don’t focus on the negative qualities of others, but focus instead on increasing our own light, which will increase the light of the whole.

When dealing with people who seem very unconscious, it helps to remember that every one must find their own way to awakening and that the experiences they are having are an essential part of their process. Holding them in the light of our own energy may be the best way to awaken theirs. At the same time, we are inspired by their example to look within and shed light on our own unconscious places, sacrificing the urge to judge and surrendering instead to humble self-inquiry.

Adapted from *The Daily OM*, November 10, 2006

If we train and discipline our faculties and our whole being, it is in order to deepen and expand our capacity for experience, for awareness, for understanding, for a higher kind of life, a deeper and more authentic life in Christ and in the Spirit. The purpose of discipline is not only moral perfection (the development of virtue for its own sake) but self-transcendence, transformation in Christ from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.

The death and crucifixion of the old self (the routine of self-seeking and conventional social life), leads to the resurrection in Christ of a totally new person, who is one Spirit with Christ. As new persons, we are not just the old persons entitled to a reward. We are no longer the same, and our reward is precisely this transformation that makes us no longer the isolated subject of a limited reward but one with Christ and, in Christ, with all people.

The purpose of discipline is then not only to help us understand the inner dimensions of existence, but to transform us in Christ in such a way that we completely transcend our routine existence. Yet in transcending it, we rediscover its existential value and solidity. Transformation is not a repudiation of ordinary life but its definitive recovery in Christ.

Thomas Merton, *Contemplation in a World of Action*, Doubleday, 1971

For the past several months, we have spoken the following words at the Breaking of the Bread during Communion: "Behold what we are...May we become what we receive." Mindful of that powerful invocation, Tim Fleck submitted this column from "Good News from The Society of St. John the Evangelist", an online newsletter from that Episcopal monastic order.

We Become What We Yearn After

David Vryhof, SSJE

The Society of St. John the Evangelist has a long history of ministry in India, and over the years we learned a great deal from the life and culture of that great country. I have long been an admirer of Mohandas Gandhi, the great political and spiritual leader of India in the last century. One quotation of his that has particularly caught my attention is this: We become what we yearn after, said Gandhi, Hence the necessity for prayer.

Now I am sure that Gandhi did not mean to imply that we get whatever we want in life. We may well yearn to be wealthy or famous or even beautiful and yet fail to become any of those things, in spite of our yearning. No, this is no recipe for instant gratification or success. Rather, it is the recognition of a principle that governs the shaping of our inward selves: We become what we yearn after.

What Gandhi is suggesting, I think, is that our desires, wishes and aspirations have a way of shaping us; of determining, for good or for evil, who we are and what we will become. If we desire wealth above all else, for example, even if we never succeed in becoming wealthy, the fact that we have desired wealth above all else will profoundly affect our lives. We will become wealth seekers, and from that moment on, all our choices how we choose to spend our time, with whom we choose to associate, even what we choose to wear will to some extent be shaped and governed by our decision to seek wealth. We will have become, in some deep and internal way if not in actual fact, that which we are seeking.

We become what we yearn after, said Gandhi, Hence the necessity for prayer. Gandhi recognized that prayer allows us to step back and examine the desires that govern and control our lives. Prayer gives us the space to reflect upon, and even to choose which desires will control us, which yearnings will shape us. Prayer gives us an opportunity to focus our desires.

Jesus recognized the necessity for prayer as well. In the gospels we read of him withdrawing from active ministry for periods of reflection and prayer. We see him seeking silence and solitude, especially at times when he seems to be struggling to know and to do God's will. We read of him encouraging his followers to engage in this kind of reflection as well. Come away, he says, rest a while. Take time to regain your focus, to recapture your vision, to clarify what it is that you are seeking.

In our monastery in Cambridge there is an icon in the Holy Spirit Chapel which has special significance for our community. It is an image of the Beloved Disciple, resting on the breast of Jesus. It is there because it reflects the desire of our community to be, like our patron saint, intimate companions of Jesus. This is our desire. This is what we yearn after. And gazing upon this icon in silent prayer is one way of deepening and solidifying that desire within us.

What is it that you desire? What is it that you are yearning after? What is it that you wish to become? What is it that you seek? Sometimes it's difficult to know, isn't it? We are often such a confused mass of desires and wants and needs. But here is a place to start. Look to Jesus. He is the icon of the invisible God, St Paul tells us (Col 1:15), the One who most perfectly manifests the beauty of God, the love of God, the forgiveness of God, the self-offering of God. Because looking on him, gazing on him, will make us like him. Beholding the glory of the Lord, St Paul says, (we) are being changed into his likeness (II Cor 3:18), we are taking on his image, we are ourselves becoming icons of God. We become what we yearn after. Yearn to be an icon of God.

Bishop's Committee Selects Long Range Planning Leaders

The Bishop's Committee appointed six members to the St. David's Long Range Planning Committee and named two ex-officio members and a consultant for the committee at the regular meeting November 20.

Leaders of the planning process are Mike Day, Sandy Fittz, Deborah Hutchison, Maggie Linscott, and Gene Niednagel. The Vicar and Senior Warden, Jonathan Hutchison and Phyllis Sindlinger, will serve ex-officio. Bishop's Committee named Gene Niednagel as chair of the committee and Debbie Asberry of Communication Works as consultant.

The primary role of the committee will be to coordinate, integrate, and manage the planning and visioning process. This group will work with the congregation throughout the process, creating sub-committees as needed to get certain tasks completed. The committee will be accountable to the Bishop's Committee and the congregation. The mandate for the Planning Committee is to report its specific findings and recommendations to the Bishop's Committee and then to the congregation for action and implementation.

The committee expects its work to take six to eight months to complete. Planners will take a look at the mission of St. David's, what programs support that mission, and the facilities needed to accomplish our goals.

Debbie Asberry and the Bishop's Committee agree that a significant amount of work has already been done in the congregation as preparation for the planning task. Mrs. Asberry was consultant to the parish for the 2002 visioning process that has led to changes in our worship, hospitality, evangelism efforts, community development and outreach. During Lent and in discussions about the John McKinney Fund, the congregation has had a chance to introduce ideas about worship, programs, facilities, and priorities for funding.

The Bishop's Committee and planning group expect that long range development plans will be acted on appropriately as they are completed in the process rather than waiting for the end of the planning period. For example, the Bishop's Committee will move ahead with plans to add more land for development and a possible septic field as soon as possible, and conclusions about the mission direction of St. David's will need to be acted on and program ideas developed in order to determine facility needs.

Discovering God's plan for St. David's is the primary focus and motivation for the planning work, according to Bishop's Committee members. A question for all of us to consider is "What are the next steps in our ministry and outreach to each other and to the larger community as we try to be God's faithful community in this place?"

---Gene Niednagel

What is Spiritual Direction?

It seems particularly appropriate to consider the practice of spiritual direction as we move into the season of Advent, that time of going within, self-examination, and holy pregnancy. I've often heard spiritual direction compared to mid-wifery, helping the seeker give birth to a stronger and clearer sense of self as a spiritual being. Another description likens spiritual direction to "helping people tell their sacred stories everyday." In either case, the emphasis is on creating a holy and nurturing environment where what is already present within can be expressed and, thereby, understood and claimed.

As a practicing spiritual director, I confess to feeling a little uncomfortable with the “director” part of the title. It’s a holdover from the original purview of this practice, the monastic communities of the Middle Ages. There, a spiritual director was an experienced monk or priest who provided the “directee” with specific instruction in practices that were designed to deepen his or her connection with God.

My sense of the spiritual direction as it is lived out in the 21st century resembles something more like companionship on the path, a kind of “holy listening” where the director helps the person with whom he or she is working pay attention to the events and experiences of daily life in order to begin to see God’s presence at work in all aspects of life in this world.

The organization Spiritual Directors International, lists these potential reasons for entering into direction:

To identify and trust your own experiences of God.

To integrate spirituality into your daily life.

To discern and make difficult choices.

To share struggles, losses, or disappointments.

To find encouragement and affirmation.

To grow in relationship with God, self, others, and creation.

Most directors have extensive training and formation, and continue to nurture their own spiritual growth through education, supervision by peers, and regular meetings with their own spiritual directors. When you enter into a relationship with a director, the common practice is to meet once a month for an hour or so. Some directors request a fee, some ask for a free-will donation, and some offer their time.

It is suggested that you interview at least two directors, choosing the person with whom you feel the most comfortable. The Spiritual Directors International website (www.sdiworld.org) provides a list of questions to ask prospective directors. It is advisable that you evaluate the relationship after three or four sessions. Whether your relationship continues for many years or only for a short period of time, what is shared in these sessions is held in confidence.

There are several spiritual directors, including myself, resident in or near Brown County. I encourage you to consider giving yourself the gift of spiritual companionship. When we offer the time and the space, God shows up and our lives are enriched and transformed.

Questions? Please call or write: 812-988-7672 or chesed2@msn.com

~ Deborah Hutchison

Don't be afraid that your life will end, be afraid that it will never begin.

~anonymous~

Stewardship News

Something is cooking at St. David’s and I do not mean the good food that was served this morning at the Thank Offering Pitch-in Dinner. Whatever it is shows in the pledge payments that have been received so far in 2006 and the pledges for next year.

In a letter that was included in the pledge drive packet, I said that as of the end of September actual pledges received were running 5% ahead of target when they are typically 6% behind! This trend has actually accelerated into October. As of the end of October, pledge payments actually received are now 6% ahead of target! As I said in the letter this is a combination of people being more current paying their pledges and new people contributing. Let’s keep up the good work!

Pledges had hit a plateau; the last three years they were \$103,830, \$105,400, and \$104,400. So far, with just ¾ of the pledges received, the total is \$103,000! It is good that St. David's pledges for 2007 are well ahead of 2006, because the proposed Bishop's Committee budget has an 11.5% increase. Right now I believe that we can make the 11.5% increase; in fact I am hoping that we will charge right through it. A year ago we had to make serious cutbacks in many areas so we could give the staff a raise when we actually had a decrease in pledge income. I am hoping that we can restore some of those items and fund areas that we had not even dared to consider when this budget was prepared. --
Jim Huber

Glad Tidings from the Vicar

Dear Members and Friends of St. David's,

Advent is a time of new beginnings and St. David's is on the verge of something special. After several conversations with our friend and former bishop, **Ted Jones**, having the support of Bishop Cate and our Bishop's Committee, I have invited Bishop Jones to serve among us now as an esteemed priest associate, sharing with me in the ministry of word and sacrament.

Ted, as he likes to be called, will preach on occasion and celebrate Holy Eucharist. And, he will contribute, in other ways still to be determined, to our ongoing formation as a Christian community. We will all benefit from Ted's long experience in the Church, where he has served and provided wise and gracious leadership at the highest levels. Because of certain other Sunday commitments, Ted will not always be present with us - but we'll gladly receive him when we can.

Bishop Ted has always enjoyed a warm relationship with St. David's, and his affection and appreciation for this place is clear.

To honor this developing bond, and to add your blessing, please make a special point of being in church on **Sunday, December 3, the First Sunday of Advent, when we will welcome and commission our friend for this new ministry.** On that day, Ted will preside at God's holy table for the first time as our new priest.

With gratitude for this opportunity and in joyful anticipation,

Jonathan

And Then It's Winter

It seems just yesterday that I was young, just married and embarking on my new life with my mate. And yet in a way, it seems like eons ago, and I wonder where all the years went. I know that I lived them all... And I have glimpses of how it was back then and of all my hopes and dreams.. But, here it is...the winter of my life and it catches me by surprise...

How did I get here so fast?

Where did the years go and where did my babies go? And where did my youth go?

I remember well... seeing older people through the years
and thinking that those older people were years away from me
and that winter was so far off that I could not fathom it or imagine fully what it would be like...

But, here it is...

My age is beginning to show and we are now those older folks that we used to see and never thought we'd be.

Each day now, I find that just getting a shower is a real target for the day!
And taking a nap is not a treat anymore...it's mandatory!
Cause if I don't on my own free will...
I just fall asleep where I sit!

And so, now I enter into this new season of my life unprepared for all the aches and pains and the loss of strength and ability to go and do things.
But, at least I know, that though the winter has come, and I'm not sure how long it will last...This I know, that when it's over...its over....!

Yes, I have regrets .There are things I wish I hadn't done ,,,,,things I should have done. But indeed, there are many things I'm happy to have done. Its all in a lifetime.. .

So, if you're not in your winter yet...let me remind you, that it will be here faster than you think.

So, whatever you would like to accomplish in your life please do it quickly!

"Life is God's gift to you.
The way you live your life is your gift to God, and those who came after.
Make it a fantastic one."

--from Marilyn Day

Seek the Fresh Anointing

Open your heart to Me and I will pour in fragrant oil.
Lift to Me your cup and I will fill it to overflowing
with the waters of life.
Bring to Me all your needs and I will supply abundantly
out of My fullness.

I am not a man that I should be limited, but I long to
give and to give again and again.

This is not a matter of My granting to you one great
supply to be stored up little by little as needed,
but I give to you a fresh outpouring as each need
arises, yea, and before the need arises, that you
may prepare in advance and that in each emergency
you may have no lack.

I give to you in order that you may serve Me as a
channel of blessing to others.

I know those who shall come, and I know the specific
need of each individual case, and thus I give you
exactly what will be suitable for each one.
So be diligent to come, for why should I send anyone
to you if you are not prepared?
And if you are prepared, I will not fail to send to
you the very ones for whom I have made the provision.

You need not seek them out.
How, verily, can you know?
But I, Myself shall send whom I choose and you shall marvel.
Thus shall you surely know that it is My work, yea,
the work of God the Father.
This is doing the will of God.

As it is written, "He that doeth the will of God
abideth forever" (1 John 2:17)

Service to Me by the will of the flesh is temporal,
but the doing of the will of God is eternal.
And this is the will of God, that you be about the
Father's business, that you work the works of Him that
has called you and now sends you, even
as did Jesus when He walked among men.

Leave all else to Me.

Seek the fresh anointing and I will do the rest.

--from Becky Morrison

Hoosier Hearts to Gulf Homes

This was the theme for a Diocesan project to send workers to the Gulf area to help reconstruct hurricane-damaged homes in October. Dave and Karen Richards and Sandy Ridenour were part of a group of 16 Hoosiers who drove to Camp Coast Care in Long Beach, Mississippi to be part of this effort. We were joined by 43 others from California, Oregon and Virginia. (As we left, groups from Ohio and Georgia were arriving to take our places.) You may remember that the Diocese sent a semi-trailer full of small furniture, bleach, water and homemade linens and other heirlooms. We would like to thank each one from St. David's who sent something, as well as Mike Day for transporting our contributions to the Diocesan convention. The social case-workers were thrilled to see the quilts, dishes and other pretty things which would become very special Christmas gifts for hurricane victims.

Camp Coast Care is a joint project of the Episcopal Church in the United States and Lutheran Social Services of Mississippi. The camp is on the grounds of an Episcopal school and is housed in the large gymnasium as well as several temporary structures on the grounds. Roughly two-thirds of the gym has been transformed into "dormitories" (long rows of cots, divided into sections for men and women, as well as a mixed section). The remaining area served as a dining room, where we gathered for meals and evening socializing. And, yes, there were working toilets and showers, for which we were all grateful.

After arriving on a Sunday afternoon we were given an opportunity to tour some severely damaged areas near Pass Christian, Miss. We were amazed at the extent of the damage and the lack of progress in rebuilding and repair. Many homes looked as if the hurricane had just occurred. The Pass Christian Episcopal Church was completely destroyed by the 28-foot storm surge, except for the cross at the top of the bell tower, which was just a bit higher than the waters reached. We visited with the priest and her deacon (now her husband as of a few weeks ago!) and viewed their temporary sanctuary (a Quonset hut). It was touching to note on the bulletin board an invitation to a wedding shower for the priest and deacon, which included their request that gifts be selected for the church kitchen.

Each morning after a 7:00 breakfast we were given our work assignments for the day. On the first day Karen worked in the kitchen from 5:30 A.M. until 8:00 P.M. helping to prepare three meals for the group. Tuesday she helped sand the drywall “mud” seams on newly erected wallboard. Those on drywall teams came back to camp with aching arms and shoulders every evening! On Wednesday and Thursday she made trips to the hardware store for small supplies, sanded more drywall, swept floors and picked up glass from broken windows that was embedded in the yards. Her injuries included being bitten by fire ants when she inadvertently stepped on a colony of them.

A German contractor from Virginia, Walter, moved to the area last November with a goal of rebuilding 20 homes for people with no insurance. He sold the horses on his farm and closed down a business to do this because he felt a calling from God to go to Mississippi to help. He was an inspiration to all of us. He currently had four houses in progress and four Camp Coast Care teams worked with him each day.

Dave was the designated driver for one team. The house they worked on was four blocks from the Gulf, but the first three blocks consisted only of concrete slabs to indicate where houses had been. Even where houses remained more or less intact they had to be gutted completely because of mold. The owner of the house Dave’s team worked on was an elderly gentleman named Jack, who wandered around asking why anyone from Indiana would want to come help him. Another group had already installed some drywall, so Dave’s team finished the project, then fixed a number of electrical problems, cleaned up and mowed the front yard and installed a new mailbox.

Sandy’s first day was with a team whose job was to construct a wooden playground on the grounds of another Episcopal church. It was a beautiful day and a fun assignment. Sandy claims to have been the most important person on the team because she READ THE INSTRUCTIONS, at times causing her to challenge the intuitive approach of some of the guys. The remainder of the week she worked with two other volunteers helping Sherman, the grounds-keeper.

We helped unload and catalog the contents of the semi truck when it arrived. We moved lots of furniture from one building to another, as they were still in the process of setting up administrative offices, and we hauled what seemed like tons of garbage generated by the camp. We also constructed a wooden deck to connect two of the manufactured buildings which were to house various offices and Sandy learned to use a screw gun.

Many families have been in very small FEMA trailers for 15-18 months now—tight quarters for a family of four. A visiting psychologist from California told us that although people are thankful to be alive, depression is a big problem. Many lost most of their belongings, have no jobs, had no insurance—or, in many cases, had insurance but were denied payment of their claims. Some homes have been rebuilt or repaired because the owners signed up early for help or had enough savings to rely on. Contractors estimate that it will be five to ten years before rebuilding is finished.

This was a very satisfying experience for all of us. We have heard that there may be another trip planned for February and hope that St. David’s might once again be represented. *[Dave, Karen and Sandy all contributed to this article.]*

The Gift of Life

Looking for a gift that may truly make a difference? Please consider giving a loved one the new American Heart Association *Family and Friends CPR Anytime* course. This DVD driven course is designed to teach basic lifesaving CPR skills in the comfort of your own home in less than one hour! The course costs \$29.95 and comes complete with a personal inflatable CPR manikin, a 22- minute CPR DVD, and the *Family and Friends CPR* student book. The system can be ordered online from Channing Bete @ <http://aha.channing-bete.com/family-friends/cpranytime.html> or by calling 1-800-611-6082. If you have questions see Desiree Hensel. The life someone learns to save from your gift may be your own!

St. Nicholas Drama Opens Advent sponsored by Evangelism Commission

Stories surrounding the life of St. Nicholas will come alive at 4 p.m., Saturday, December 2, as storytellers and musicians present Nicholas, A Garland of Tales for the Nights before Christmas.

Written by Pamela Grenfell Smith and directed by Ed Fleming, the one-act play is offered as a family event for the entire community, our second evangelism event of the year.

St Nicholas has been passed down through the generations as an alternate name for Santa Claus. Throughout the presentation, the history and legend of St. Nicholas weaves a story of a man who used his entire fortune in his service to God and his help for the needy, the sick, and the suffering. Nicholas' work was particularly with children and families, sailors, and the poor, hungry and homeless. Foremost on his mind were issues of justice and mercy. For admission and in keeping with the theme of caring for others, each is asked to bring a can of food for Mother's Cupboard.

Featured during the Nicholas performance will be Jonathan and Deborah Hutchison, and St. David's choir singing medieval hymns arranged and directed by Joe. Cheryl Fleming will be the featured storyteller, assisted by Jim and Judy Huber. Bishop Ted Jones will play Nicholas.

St. Nicholas Day is observed December 6 by many Christian traditions at the beginning of Advent when we are preparing for the coming of Christ into our lives. Hospitality during the play and a festive reception in the parish hall after the performance will be organized by Carol Ruffin and Coral Hamlin.

--Gene Niednagel

St. David's Dinner Theatre

On Sunday, December 10th at 2 PM, St. David's will attend the new performance of the Coachlight Musical Theatre downtown. It is called "A Brown County Christmas." Tickets are available for \$15 per person. Please see Judy Huber to sign up or call her at 988-4007. The performance will be followed by dinner in the Parish Hall. Please feel free to bring your friends, aunties, uncles, grandmas and grandpas, neighbors...or come by yourself. --Judy Huber

An Important Message From Your Treasurer:

I will be out of town most of December. Many of you send checks to me near the end of the year. It is especially important this year that any checks mailed after Nov. 30 be sent to the church at P.O. Box 1798, Nashville, IN 47448. Tom Hensel, my much-appreciated assistant treasurer, will see that your checks are deposited in a timely fashion. Additionally, please note that the final deposit for 2006 will be made on Friday, December 29. Please do not ask that checks written in January be credited to your 2006 giving statement. Should you have any questions about the status of your giving for 2006, please call me before December 5! Thanks to all who have so faithfully fulfilled their financial commitment to St. David's. Sandy Ridenour, Treasurer. (lasalle@scican.net or 597-0135.)

Dinners for Eight (or Nine)

The response to our first round of dinners for eight has been very positive. Unfortunately, one group wasn't able to find a mutually agreeable date, so we'll let that group stand as is for the next round. We will be mixing the groups up so that we will all have an opportunity to get better acquainted with more people and we are hoping to have new volunteer hosts and hostesses. Your responsibilities as hosts/hostesses include calling the members assigned to your group, setting a date, preparing the main course and drinks. Your guests will complete the meal with salad, vegetable and dessert. Remember that Sunday lunch after church is an option for those who aren't comfortable driving at night. We would like these dinners all to occur during the month of January. If you are interested in hosting please contact Sandy Ridenour, 597-0135 or lasalle@scican.net. There will be sign-up sheets available in the narthex if you would like to attend, or you can get your name on the list by calling Sandy.

Worship & Music for Advent and Christmas

The first Sunday of Advent will be December 3, the beginning of the new year in our church's liturgy. There will be candles in the Advent wreath and the Weekly Readings and Announcements will be printed on paper of an ethereal lilac tone. The choir's anthem for that Sunday has been written for St. David's by Julian Livingston, a friend of Joe Ridenour, and he will be there to worship with us that Sunday.

We'll be decorating the church for Christmas after Sunday morning worship on December 24. That's likely to be a busy day for people so if you are able to stay and help, your help will be much appreciated.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion will be at 7 PM on the 24th and will, as usual, include as many carols as we can squeeze in. The Christmas Day service will be at 10:00 AM.

At Christmastime when I was a little girl, the dining room buffet was decorated with an ivory plastic church about ten inches tall. It had plastic stained-glass windows and a hole in the back – where the altar would be – for a tiny light bulb. When plugged in, this arrangement glowed with a warm, golden light. It was a particular yearly concern of mine to get my hands on it and take it apart, so I could see whether there were any little people in there and what they were doing. I broke quite a few light bulbs that way.

At night when our lights are on, St. David's also glows with a warm, golden light. Christmas is a time of year when people do look in to see what we are doing – and there we are inside the church, singing, lighting candles, eating cookies, taking our holy stories seriously and lovingly, stewards of the whole tradition. It isn't always comfortable to have strangers pick up our church and peer inside, but they are surely welcome to all the light we have to give.

Pamela Smith, 323 1817

Mother's Cupboard Annual Campaign

Mother's Cupboard Community Kitchen, Inc. begins it's annual fund raising campaign in November. Please consider making a generous contribution today.

A gift of \$10 will feed a family of 5 for a day; \$50 will feed 5 families; \$120 keeps the doors open one day; \$1,000 keeps them open for a week. Every gift is important.

All gifts are fully tax deductible; make checks payable to Mother's Cupboard. Mail your gift to Mother's Cupboard, PO Box 825, Nashville, IN 47448.

Funny Pages - Bible Sale

A pastor concluded that his church was getting into serious financial troubles. While checking the church storeroom, he discovered several cartons of new bibles that had never been opened and distributed. So at his Sunday sermon, he asked for three volunteers from the congregation who would be willing to sell the bibles door-to-door for \$10 each to raise the desperately needed money for the church.

Jack, Paul and Louie all raised their hands to volunteer for the task. The minister knew that Jack and Paul earned their living as salesmen and were likely capable of selling some bibles. But he had serious doubts about Louie who was a local farmer, who had always kept to himself because he was embarrassed by his speech impediment. Poor Louis stuttered badly. But, not wanting to discourage Louis, the minister decided to let him try anyway.

He sent the three of them away with the back seat of their cars stacked with bibles. He asked them to meet with him and report the results of their door-to-door selling efforts the following Sunday.

Anxious to find out how successful they were, the minister immediately asked Jack, "Well, Jack, how did you make out selling our bibles last week?" Proudly handing the reverend an envelope, Jack replied, "Using my sales prowess, I was able to sell 20 bibles, and here's the \$200 I collected on behalf of the church." "Fine job, Jack!" The minister said, vigorously shaking his hand. "You are indeed a fine salesman and the Church is indebted to you."

Turning to Paul, "And Paul, how many bibles did you sell for the church last week?" Paul, smiling and sticking out his chest, confidently replied, "I am a professional salesman. I sold 28 bibles on behalf of the church, and here's \$280 I collected." The minister responded, "That's absolutely splendid, Paul. You are truly a professional salesman and the church is also indebted to you."

Apprehensively, the minister turned to Louie and said, "And Louie, did you manage to sell any bibles last week?" Louie silently offered the minister a large envelope. The minister opened it and counted the contents. "What is this?" the minister exclaimed. "Louie, there's \$3200 in here! Are you suggesting that you sold 320 bibles for the church, door to door, in just one week?" Louie just nodded. "That's impossible!" both Jack and Paul said in unison. "We are professional salesmen, yet you claim to have sold 10 times as many bibles as we could."

"Yes, this does seem unlikely," the minister agreed. "I think you'd better explain how you managed to accomplish this, Louie."

Louie shrugged. "I-I-I re-re-really do-do-don't kn-kn-know f-f-f-for sh-sh-sh-sure," he stammered.

Impatiently, Peter interrupted. "For crying out loud, Louie, just tell us what you said to them when they answered the door!"

"A-aa-all I-I-I s-s-said wa-wa-was," Louis replied, "W-w-w-w-would y-y-y-you l-l-l-l-l-like t-t-to b-b-b-buy th-th-th-this b-b-b-b-bible f-f-for t-t-ten b-b-b-bucks ---o-o-o-or--- wo-wo-would yo-you j-j-j-just l-like m-m-me t-t-to st-st-stand h-h-here and r-r-r-r-r-read it t-to y-y-you??"

Remember when the funniest jokes were the clean ones? They still are! A cheerful heart is good medicine... --from Gail Hyde

Inspiration

A little food for thought...

Just up the road from my home is a field, with two horses in it. From a distance, each looks like every other horse. But if you stop your car, or are walking by, you will notice something quite amazing. Looking into the eyes of one horse will disclose that he is blind. His owner has chosen not to have him put down, but has made a good home for him. This alone is amazing.

If nearby and listening, you will hear the sound of a bell. Looking around for the source of the sound, you will see that it comes from the smaller horse in the field. Attached to her halter is a small bell. It lets her blind friend know where she is, so he can follow her.

As you stand and watch these two friends, you'll see how she is always checking on him, and that he will listen for her bell and then slowly walk to where she is, trusting that she will not lead him astray. When she returns to the shelter of the barn each evening, she stops occasionally and looks back, making sure her friend isn't too far behind to hear the bell.

Like the owners of these two horses, Friends do not throw Friends away just because we are not perfect or because we have problems or challenges. He watches over us and even brings others into our lives to help us when we are in need. Sometimes we are the blind horse being guided by the little ringing bell of those friends placed in our lives. Other times we are the guide horse, helping others see. --by *Marylin Day*

A Dog's Life from a Four Year Old

Being a veterinarian, I had been called to examine a ten- year old Irish Wolfhound named Belker. The dog's owners, and their little boy were all very attached to Belker and they were hoping for a miracle.

I examined Belker and found he was dying of cancer. I told the family we couldn't do anything for Belker, and offered to perform the euthanasia procedure for the old dog in their home.

As we made arrangements, the mother and father told me they thought it would be good for the four-year-old son to observe the procedure.

The next day, I felt the familiar catch in my throat as Belker's family surrounded him. The little boy seemed so calm, petting the old dog for the last time, that I wondered if he really understood what was going on. Within a few minutes, Belker slipped peacefully away. The little boy seemed to accept Belker's transition without any difficulty or confusion.

We sat together for a while after Belker's death, wondering aloud about the sad fact that animal lives are shorter than human lives. The little boy, who had been listening quietly, piped up, "I know why." Startled, we all turned to him. What came out of his mouth next stunned me. I'd never heard a more comforting explanation.

He said, "People are born so that they can learn how to live a good life -- like loving everybody all the time and being nice, right?" The four-year-old continued, "Well, dogs already know how to do that, so they don't have to stay as long."

Live simply. Love generously. Care deeply, Speak kindly. Leave the rest to God.

St. David's Famous Recipes

Sandy Ridenour Reveals Secret of her Famous English Toffee:

Since I won't be making my English toffee this year I am compelled to let you find out how easy it is to do yourself. Yes, you can even try this at home!

1 cup (2 sticks) butter (no substitutes and a warning that some really cheap butter doesn't work)

1 cup sugar

1/4 cup water

Bring to a boil in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat, stirring constantly. Just as it begins to turn a nice caramel color it will also begin to smoke. Remove from heat and stir like crazy until you can get it poured onto a 10x15 jelly roll pan.

4-5 ounces Hershey's milk chocolate, broken in pieces

1/2-1 cup finely chopped pecans

Top the hot toffee with the chocolate pieces. When they are soft enough to spread, spread the chocolate evenly over the surface of the toffee. Sprinkle with chopped pecans. It helps to press the nuts down into the chocolate with a flat spreader. When cool, break into pieces. It's important to test the quality of each batch by eating a few pieces yourself! Enjoy. With love, Sandy Ridenour

Desiree's Super Easy Pie Crust

1 1/2 cup flour

1/2 cup oil (I use canola)

1/2 tsp salt.

Mix in a bowl with a fork until all the flour is moist. May use more oil if needed. Press the crust into a 9 inch pie plate.

Jane's Linguine with Artichokes and Leeks

2-3 leeks

2 12-oz. jars artichoke hearts

3 T olive oil

1 T lemon juice

3 t Kosher salt

1 t cracked pepper

1 lb. linguine

1/2 C freshly grated Parmesan

Halve leeks lengthwise and cut into 1 inch pieces (white and light green parts only). Drain artichokes and cut to similar size of leeks (if needed). Heat olive oil in large skillet, add leeks and artichokes and cook to slightly browned. Remove from heat and stir in lemon juice, salt and pepper. Cook and drain linguine. Toss veggies and pasta in a large bowl. Add half the parmesan and chill. Add remaining parmesan and serve. Can also be served hot, just add all the parmesan at once.

Note: the original recipe called for ultra fancy marinated giant artichokes from a specialty store, save your money by getting regular canned artichokes in water, spend it on a good grade of Parmesan!

Gramercy Tavern Gingerbread (from Pamela Grenfell Smith)

Empty into a large saucepan:

one 12-ounce bottle Guinness stout
one 12-ounce bottle molasses

Bring gently to a boil, remove from heat, and add, stirring,
one-quarter teaspoon baking soda

Stir until foaming dies down and allow to cool to room temperature.

While you're waiting, blend these dry ingredients:

three cups all-purpose flour
two and one-quarter teaspoons baking powder
three tablespoons powdered dried ginger
one teaspoon cinnamon
pinch of cardamom
pinch of mace
one-half teaspoon salt

If you prefer gingerbread with large white powdery lumps in it,
you may omit sifting the dry ingredients.

Blend these ingredients in another bowl:

four eggs
one cup canola oil
one and one-half cups brown sugar
one and one-half cups white sugar

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Generously grease and flour a nonstick Bundt pan.

When stout-and-molasses mixture is at room temperature, blend all ingredients together. The batter will seem thin compared to a cake batter. Pour into pan and bake.

Start hovering over the gingerbread after about an hour. Test every few minutes with a skewer to see if it is done. Do not permit the gingerbread to get overdone as scorching will spoil the taste of the gingerbread.

New Secretary at St. David's

Susan Showalter has taken over secretarial duties at St. David's. She is a long time member of the active Brown County art community with an interesting history of journalism, design, photography, crafts, social work, and social and environmental activism. Susan sent me some great information about herself which I have greatly condensed to provide a peek at the "artist in our midst".

The daughter of teacher Laura Whitcomb Showalter and attorney Sidney Harrell Showalter, Susan Whitcomb Showalter was born in Columbus, Indiana on April 17, 1947. She wrote a daily column for the *Evening Republican* newspaper during her senior year in high school and graduated from Columbus High School in 1965.

Majoring in journalism, Ms. Showalter attended Indiana University then transferred to The Fashion Institute of Technology, State University of New York in New York City, New York in the fall of 1967.

An Apparel Design major, Showalter graduated with honors in a ceremony at Carnegie Hall in New York City, New York in June 1968.

Susan moved west to take a position as Assistant Designer at Lorrie Deb, Inc., a bridal and evening gown manufacturer in San Francisco, California. She relocated to Toronto, Ontario, Canada in January 1969. She traveled and worked in London, Glasgow, Naples, Venice and St. Moritz, Switzerland.

Returning to her native Indiana in 1970, Susan opened The Stoney Lonesome Bazaar in a log cabin on Antique Alley in Nashville where she sold her handmade clothing, leather goods, candles, weavings and other American-made crafts. She sold the store in 1975.

Susan married her Stoney Lonesome neighbor, artist/musician Jack Brubaker, and moved to the forest in Brown County's Van Buren Township where they built an organic dairy goat farm (Goat Hill), grew their own food and continued making crafts.

Showalter helped to organize local artists and craftspeople in 1978. These nine professional craft workers founded The Brown County Craft Guild and The Brown County Craft Guild Gallery, a cooperative retail store located on East Main Street.

Showalter was the first Executive Director of Housing Partnerships, Inc., a not-for-profit organization which builds and re-habs homes for low income people in Columbus, Indiana. She divorced in 1993 and worked part time as a teacher in Columbus while taking care of her ailing mother and her young daughter.

During her recovery from being seriously injured in an auto accident in February 1998, Susan met Jonathan Hutchison who was at that time chaplain at Columbus Regional Hospital. Showalter and her daughter, Laura, returned to their Brown County, Indiana Goat Hill Farm in September 1998 after both of them were seriously injured in a second auto accident.

Reviving her writing and photography career in 2000, Ms. Showalter's feature stories and photos have appeared in Nashville and Columbus newspapers and in Discover Columbus, The Zone, She, Our Brown County and Into Art magazines. Her fine art photography is exhibited at Nashville Gallery in the Calvin Place and Gallery by the Green and at gift shops in Abe Martin Lodge and the T. C. Steele State Memorial.

A political activist and environmentalist, Ms. Showalter is an active member of the Artists' Alliance of Brown County, Bloomington Photography Club, Writers, Readers and Poets Society of Brown County, Brown County Poets Against the War and Brown County's Mother Earth Day Committee. She presently serves as Vice President of The Winding Waters. --Jane Herr/Susan Showalter

Birthdays and Anniversaries

DECEMBER

- 1 – Erin Fleser
- 4 - Caleb Miller
- 9 - Anniversary of Ray & Judy Laffin
- 12 - Donna Neidnagel
- 15 - Charlene & Daniel Folz Anniversary
- 27 - Anniversary of Jim & Janet Drum
- 28 - Phyllis Sindlinger
- 29 - Deborah Hutchison
- 29 - Benjamin Hensel
- 30 - Mark Niednagel
- 30 - Anniversary of Scott & Hazel Olive
- 30 - Anniversary of John & Mickie Williams

JANUARY

- 7 - Cody Woods
- 16 - Michael List

Sunday	Dec. 3	Bishop Ted commissioning service	9:30 AM	St. David's
Sunday	Dec. 10	Theater outing	2 PM	Coachlight Square
Sunday	Dec. 24	Fourth Sunday in Advent <i>the greening of the Church follows the service</i>	9:30 AM	St. David's
Sunday	Dec. 24	Christmas Eve Festival Eucharist	7:00 PM	St. David's
Monday	Dec. 25	Nativity of Our Lord	10 AM	St. David's
Sunday	Feb. 4	St. David's annual meeting <i>(Superbowl kick-off @ 6PM, still time to attend!)</i>	after service	St. David's
Sunday	Feb. 4	Lenten newsletter deadline		
Wednesday	February 21	Ash Wednesday (<i>Lenten season begins</i>)		St. David's
		Prayer Service and Imposition of Ashes		7 AM
		Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion		7 PM