

ISSUE

15

March 22, 2009

WEEKLY MESSENGER

CHRIST CHURCH IN SHORT HILLS

66 Highland Avenue, Box C
Short Hills, NJ 07078
973.379.2898

www.christchurchshorthills.org

CLERGY

The Rev. Scott T. Holcombe, Rector
scott.holcombe@ccshmail.org, ext. 205
(personal email: sthccsh@gmail.com)

+

The Rev. Lisa Green, Assistant Rector
lisa.green@ccshmail.org, ext. 204

+

The Rev. Elizabeth Wigg Maxwell
Parish Minister & Sunday School Dir.
elizabeth.wiggmaxwell@ccshmail.org
ext. 209

+

The Rev. Dr. Karen Rezach,
Assistant Minister
krezach@yahoo.com

STAFF

Andrea Hidalgo,
Administrative Assistant to the Rector
andrea.hidalgo@ccshmail.org, ext. 201

James Johnson, Physical Plant Manager
james.johnson@ccshmail.org, ext. 208

John Pivarnik, Organist and Choirmaster
johnpivarnik@optonline.net, ext. 211

Jennifer Schiffll, Youth Advisor
schiffllje@edu.elizabeth.k12.nj.us

Barbara Pepe, Director
Christ Church Nursery School
christchurchns@verizon.net
(973) 379-6549

A PASTORAL LETTER FROM THE BISHOPS OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH meeting in Hendersonville, North Carolina, March 13-18, 2009 to the Church and our partners in mission throughout the world.

I have learned to be content with whatever I have. I know what it is to have little, and I know what it is to have plenty. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being well fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me.
-Philippians 4:11b - 13

As the House of Bishops gather at the Kanuga Camp and Conference Center for our annual Spring Retreat, we are mindful of the worsening financial crisis around us. We recognize there are no easy solutions for the problems we now face. In the United States there is a 30% reduction of overall wealth, a 26% reduction in home values and a budget deficit of unprecedented proportions. Unemployment currently hovers at over 8% and is estimated to top 10% by the end of the year. There are over 8 million homes in America that are in foreclosure. Consumer confidence is at a 50-year low. Unparalleled corporate greed and irresponsibility, predatory lending practices, and rampant consumerism have amplified domestic and global economic injustice. The global impact is difficult to calculate, except that the poor will become poorer and our commitment to continue our work toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 is at great risk. A specter of fear creeps not only across the United States, but also across the world, sometimes causing us as a people to ignore the Gospel imperative of self-sacrifice and generosity, as we scramble for self-preservation in a culture of scarcity.

The crisis is both economic and environmental. The drought that grips Texas, parts of the American South, California, Africa and Australia, the force of hurricanes that have wreaked so much havoc in the Caribbean, Central America and the Gulf Coast, the ice storm in Kentucky—these and other natural disasters related to climate change—result in massive joblessness, driving agricultural production costs up, and worsening global hunger. The wars nations wage over diminishing natural resources kill and debilitate not only those who fight in them, but also civilians, weakening families, and destroying the land. We as a people have failed to see this connection, compartmentalizing concerns so as to minimize them and continue to live without regard to the care of God's creation and the stewardship of the earth's resources that usher in a more just and peaceful world.

In this season of Lent, God calls us to repentance. We have too often been preoccupied as a Church with internal affairs and a narrow focus that has absorbed both our energy and interest and that of our Communion – to the exclusion of concern for the crisis of suffering both at home and abroad. We have often failed to speak a compelling word of commitment to economic justice. We have often failed to speak truth to power, to name the greed and consumerism that has pervaded our culture, and we have too often allowed the culture to define us instead of being formed by Gospel values.

While our commitment to the eradication of extreme poverty through the eight Millennium Development Goals moves us toward the standard of Christ's teaching, we have nevertheless often fallen short of the transformation to which Christ calls us in our own lives in order to live more fully into the Gospel paradigm of God's abundance for all.

Everyone is affected by the shrinking of the global economy. For some, this is a time of great loss—loss of employment, of homes, of a way of life. And for the most vulnerable, this "downturn" represents an emergency of catastrophic proportions. Like the Prodigal who comes to his senses and returns home, we as the people of God seek a new life. We recognize in this crisis an invitation into a deeper simplicity, a tightening of the belt, an expanded Lenten fast, and a broader generosity. God's abundant mercy and forgiveness meet and embrace us, waiting to empower us through the Holy Spirit to face the coming days.

In a time of anxiety and fear the Holy Spirit invites us to hope. Anxiety, when voiced in community can be heard, blessed and transformed into energy and hope, but if ignored, swallowed or hidden, fear and anxiety can be corrosive and lead to despair. We Christians claim that joy and hope emerge for those who have the courage to endure suffering. In his letter to the Romans, St. Paul goes so far as to boast of his suffering, because "suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us." Our current crisis presents us with opportunities to learn from our brothers and sisters of faith in other parts of the world who have long been bearers of hope in the midst of even greater economic calamity.

We can also learn from our spiritual ancestors, who found themselves in an economic and existential crisis that endured for forty years – on their journey from Egypt to Israel. While they groaned in Egypt, they murmured at Sinai – at least at first. And then after their groaning, complaining and reverting to old comforts of idol worship, they were given Grace to learn and understand what the Lord wanted to teach them.

They learned that they needed the wilderness in order to recover their nerve and put their full trust in God--and to discover their God-given uniqueness, which had been rubbed away during their captivity in Egypt. They adopted some basic rules that enabled them to live in a community of free people rather than as captives or slaves – the God-given Ten Commandments. And perhaps most importantly, our spiritual ancestors discovered that the wilderness is a unique place of God's abundance and miracle, where water gushed out of a rock and manna appeared on the desert floor – food and drink miraculously provided by God.

As we go through our own wilderness, these spiritual ancestors also point the way to a deep and abiding hope. We can rediscover our uniqueness – which emerges from the conviction that our wealth is determined by what we give rather than what we own. We can re-discover manna – God's extraordinary expression of abundance. Week by week, in congregations and communities around the world, our common manna is placed before us in the Eucharist. Ordinary gifts of bread and wine are placed on the altar, and become for us the Body and Blood of Christ, which, when we receive them, draw us ever more deeply into the Paschal mystery of Christ's death and resurrection.

As our risen Lord broke through the isolation of the disciples huddled in fear for their lives following his suffering and death, so too are we, the Body of Christ, called to break through the loneliness and anxiety of this time, drawing people from their fears and isolation into the comforting embrace of God's gathered community of hope. As disciples of the risen Christ we are given gifts for showing forth God's gracious generosity and for finding blessing and abundance in what is hard and difficult. In this time the Holy Spirit is moving among us, sharing with us the vision of what is real and valued in God's world. In a time such as this, Christ draws us deeper into our faith revealing to us that generosity breaks through distrust, paralysis and misinformation. Like our risen Lord, we, as his disciples are called to listen to the world's pain and offer comfort and peace.

As we continue our Lenten journey together we place our hearts in the power of the Trinity. The God who created us is creating still and will not abandon us. The Incarnate Word, our Savior Jesus Christ, who in suffering, dying and rising for our sake, stands in solidarity with us, has promised to be with us to the end of the age. God the Holy Spirit, the very breath of God for us and in us, is our comforter, companion, inspiration and guide. In this is our hope, our joy and our peace.

COMMITTEE BEING FORMED!

A new CSH Worship Committee is now forming! If you're interested in joining this committee, please let Vestry liaison Lisa Gadsden (logadsden@aol.com) or Andi Hidalgo (andrea.hidalgo@ccshmail.org) know.

THE ANNUNCIATION

We will be celebrating the Feast of the Annunciation at the 7:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist on Wednesday, **March 25**. Our worship will feature readings and music in honor of this important Holy Day, one of seven "Feasts of our Lord" noted in the Prayer Book for special observances



Sunday SCHOOL

Nursery News!

Please join in welcoming Holly Syracuse to our Sunday Nursery Staff. Holly is a recent graduate of the University of Hartford, with a major in Communications. A life-long member of Christ Church, Holly has assisted her mom, Audena, in the Godly Play class for a number of years. Holly joins Katie Tamaki in caring for infants through 3-year-olds, in room 212.



7th & 8th Grade Class brings food to needy

Nine members of the 7th & 8th grade class trekked to West Orange recently to bring supplies to the St. Mark's Food Pantry. The young people and their families donated over 300 items for needy persons in our area. Class teacher, Dan Graves, organized and led the trip, accompanied by Christ Church Sexton, James Johnson and Assistant Rector, Lisa Green.

March Sunday Nursery Family Helpers:

March 22 :: Reilley

March 29 :: Amarante

Sunday School Advisory Group will meet on Sunday, March 29 at 10:45 in Room 206.



CHRIST CHURCH SUNDAY SCHOOL LENTEN PROJECT 2009

Malaria Kills A Child Every 30 Seconds, But It Doesn't Have To...

Christ Church Sunday School is raising money for *NetsforLife*. During Lent, children will be decorating their own coin boxes to collect money. They will take home their boxes, along with a booklet entitled "How do I thank you? Let me count the ways." Each day, families can read the brief devotion and make a donation in the coin box in thanksgiving for all of God's blessings. On Easter Sunday, children will bring their coin boxes to church as an offering to God for the important work of *NetsforLife*!

EVENSONG AT GENERAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Wise Women invite women of the parish to attend a Sung Evensong at General Theological Seminary on **March 26**. We plan to leave from the church about 3:30 p.m. If you are interested, please email Jane Houston as soon as you can at jhouston@comcast.net.

RECORD OF CONTRIBUTIONS

With our new accounting system, we are able to email your record of contributions the first week of April. If you would prefer to receive it by USPS mail, please let Andi Hidalgo know. She can be reached by email at andrea.hidalgo@ccshmail.org and/or 973.379.2898, ext. 1.



CHILDREN'S CHOIR AND CANTERBURY CHOIR REHEARSAL SCHEDULES

Sunday, March 29 - rehearsal at 10:45 a.m. to prepare music for Palm and Easter Sunday

The Children's Choir will rehearse on Sunday March 29 at 10:45 a.m. in preparation for Palm Sunday And Easter. Please plan to attend, John

To all Canterbury Parents,

*The Canterbury Choir will rehearse during Godly Play class every week for the first 10-15 minutes. There will be a rehearsal on Sunday 3/29 after church at 10:45 a.m. in the Sanctuary. We have 2 songs to learn since we'll be singing on both Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday. I will have song sheets available for you to take home on Sunday morning. Hope you can make arrangements for your children to stay. Thanks as always for your help!
Sue*

CHILDREN'S AND CANTERBURY CHOIRS SINGING AT 9:30 A.M. EUCHARIST:

Please note: Children should arrive in the choir room by 9:05 to get robed and rehearsed. Thanks so much for your support!

Sunday, April 5 – Palm Sunday

singing 'Blessed is He Who Comes in the Name of the Lord'

Sunday, April 12 – Easter Sunday

singing 'Now the Green Blade Riseth'

CHANCEL CHOIR REHEARSAL

Sunday, March 22 – rehearsal at 10:45 a.m.

BIRTHDAYS

03/19 Julia Draper
 03/20 Jennie Graves
 03/20 Gary Busacca
 03/20 Ridley Lindstrom
 03/22 John Sogliuzzo
 03/22 Sophie Wang
 03/23 Amy Schott
 03/24 Alex Pelham-Webb
 03/24 Katie McChesney
 03/26 Peter Hansen
 03/26 Robert Arnold
 03/26 Caroline Richardson
 03/27 Patrick Haggerty
 03/28 Valerie Boyle
 03/30 David Graziano



ANNIVERSARIES

03/26 Anne + Peter Hansen
 03/27 Peggy + Robert Arnold
 03/29 Eileen + James Paduano

LENTEN CROSSES

Once again we are offering the small wooden pocket crosses that have become a tradition here at Christ Church. You will find them in a bowl on the shelf at the back of the sanctuary. We invite you to take a cross and carry it with you in your pocket. Somewhere along the line, you will meet someone who needs your cross more than you do. Give the cross to them and come get another. If you have not tried this form of pastoral care and evangelism, take the chance this year to make a difference in someone's life by showing them the reality of God in this world.

MEMORIAL FLOWERS

March 22

Barbara Morehouse
 Christina Sinclair
 Elizabeth & Murray Sinclair

March 29

Laird Stephen Schober
 Albert E. Schober
 Myrtle Hager

EASTER FLOWERS!

During this Lenten period we look forward to seeing the altars once again decorated with flowers at Easter. If you would like to remember a loved one by making a contribution to the Easter Flower Fund, please send your donation to the Church office with the names of those to be remembered by April 6. Thank you.



HAVE A NEW KID BY FRIDAY

The Wednesday evening book study "Have a New Kid by Friday" has concluded! Thanks to all who attended and contributed to lively discussions and to sharing the challenges and satisfactions of parenting! Extra books are still available for purchase in the church office (\$12). Our two other classes will continue on Wednesday evenings at 7:45 p.m. through April 8.

ARE YOU GREEN?

If you would like to receive the Weekly Messenger by email only, please email Andi.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>22</p> <p>8:00am - Holy Eucharist</p> <p>9:15am - Sunday School + Nursery Care</p> <p>9:30am - Holy Eucharist</p> <p>10:45am -Coffee Hour</p> <p>11:00am - Adult Forum</p>	<p>23</p> <p>9:00am - Yoga</p>	<p>24</p> <p>10:30am - Staff meeting</p> <p>7:30pm - Education for Ministry</p>	<p>25</p> <p>9:30am - Education for Ministry</p> <p>7:00pm - Holy Eucharist</p> <p>7:45pm - Lenten Classes</p>	<p>26</p> <p>3:00pm - Wise Women ETS sung evensong</p>	<p>27</p> <p>9:30am - Interweave Bible Study "Why Did Jesus Die?"</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29</p> <p>8:00am - Holy Eucharist</p> <p>9:15am - Sunday School + Nursery Care</p> <p>9:30am - Morning Prayer</p> <p>10:45am -Coffee Hour</p> <p>10:45am - SS Advisory Committee</p> <p>11:00am - Adult Forum</p>	<p>30</p> <p>9:00am - Yoga</p>	<p>31</p> <p>10:30am - Staff meeting</p> <p>7:30pm - Education for Ministry</p>	<p>1</p> <p>9:30am - Education for Ministry</p> <p>7:00pm - Holy Eucharist</p> <p>7:45pm - Lenten Classes</p>	<p>2</p> <p>9:30am - Altar Guild</p>	<p>3</p> <p>9:30am - Interweave Bible Study "Why Did Jesus Die?"</p>	<p>4</p> <p>8:30am - Careers in Transition</p>