

# ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



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## Youth Group



"Hunger Hikers"

St. John's youth group raised the second highest amount of all youth groups walking in the Hunger Hike.

## ***The View from the Big Pew***

Dear Friends,

As you may be aware, the Vestry has begun a review of the various methods we use to communicate and is exploring the possibility of more communication via email or web page, rather than relying almost exclusively on snail mail or word of mouth as we do now. To that end you will find in this month's newsletter a brief survey soliciting your input for that review. I hope you will take the time to complete and return it. (And for us all: Thanks to the folks who are working on it.)

Under the communications umbrella, soon you will find a much more useable calendar feature on our web page. Teresa has put in quite a bit of time stalking and studying the best calendar option and then perfecting it for us. Other staff has had their input as well. The calendar we ultimately selected is the one used at Christ Church Cathedral. It has much to offer us. It will for example allow lectors to access readings for their assigned Sunday, tell persons what room/area a particular meeting will gather in, allow for much more detail about the content of an educational or musical offering, allow one to search for all Outreach activities in a given period of time, and so forth. Staff will have the capability of changing information about a particular event as needed, so that (famous last words...) this conceivably might be a calendar which is always current and accurate! We hope this new feature meets many needs in our common life.

This communications review of course includes *The Eagle*. One of the major elements of the present newsletter is this piece you are reading right now, authored by me, and currently entitled "The View From The Big Pew." I've written this piece (not always under this title) more or less monthly since 1991 and have found that most of the time I enjoy doing so. The times that I don't enjoy writing tend to be those when time is tight and I haven't thought something through clearly, am honestly uninspired or when I know I'm enormously late for the deadline and I can feel the vibration of the editor's drumming fingers from the other side of the river.

What I do like about the writing is the discovery over the years that it has become less an exercise in information sharing (imparting parish news) and more an exercise in sorting out and sharing some of my thoughts (inviting you to join me in thinking something through) or even sharing some of my personal faith journey.

My sense is that many of you are quite tolerant and some perhaps even appreciative of this, but that sometimes I may be too wordy or too informal (as opposed to conforming to standard conventions of writing) for others. In addition and in light of our current review I have come to wonder if perhaps my "piece" binds *The Eagle* to a certain format. As we review communication within the parish I'm wondering if inclusion of "The View..." doesn't hinder more full exploration of possible options and formats for the newsletter.

(continued on page 7)

## ***Evensong at St. John's: What, When and Why***

For the past six or seven years, the choir and Music Director of St. John's have established a tradition of presenting two Evensongs a year, one in the fall and one in the spring, celebrating various events in the church year. Several times these presentations of the musical settings for Evening Prayer have included musicians from the church and community before the service itself and also utilized the talents of visiting organists. Two years ago we were able to present a joint effort with the choir and organist from Trinity Church in Indianapolis. The Bishop of Brasilia was the preacher.

Many parishioners participate by reading lessons and ushering. Other members of the Lafayette community have also joined us to glory in the Anglican traditions established so long ago. Over the years, the offerings have gone to help many organizations in our community whose mission it is to help various groups of people: Mental Health Association, Tippecanoe Community Health Clinic, CASA, Family Service Agency, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Planned Parenthood Educational Programs, the Diocese of Bor and CHAPS, among others too numerous to mention. These have averaged \$500 - \$600 each occasion.

We are committed to glory in the tradition of worshipping God with music at the close of the day. We hope you will join us on All Saints' Sunday, November 2 at 4:30pm. The *Reeds of Mariah* woodwind trio (clarinet, oboe and bassoon) will play, and at 5:00pm the service will commence. The organization to be the recipient this time is a group called "Caregiver Companion". This is a network of interfaith volunteers who strive to assist caregivers of the sick, frail and disabled.

## ***Pro Ecclesia Dei***





**ATTENTION!! ATTENTION!! ATTENTION!!**

Next *Eagle* Deadlines

**November 10, 2008**

**December 8, 2008**

Please take time to fill out and turn in the communications survey that the Vestry has formulated. Please take a minute and let me know what you think. Is the *Eagle* obsolete??

Many thanks to Ross Watson for his contribution that appears on page 6. Now there are two members of the congregation who have answered one of the frequent calls for other points of view.

Notice that page 9 is blank. Surely there are more of us that have something to say of interest to us all, Just think that blank page could have been filled with your news, opinions or feelings

Begunked: bewildered, surprised, disappointed

Guess who??

STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN 2008 is “officially” drawing to a conclusion. Over the course of the last month we have sent four letters outlining an approach, which we hope you have perceived as being positive and encouraging. We have challenged you all to consider the following in your lives: ...**Relationship... Covenant... Partnership... Stewardship**. We hope that you can see our belief that we are all connected – connected as children of a loving, generous God, connected with each other as members of this church family, connected with the larger world as citizens of that world, and connected as we support each other in our lives in Christ. All of this finds a home for us in this particular building, served by a dedicated staff, focusing on specific programs, and sharing ourselves with others who join us under this roof (for whatever reason). The great abundance of God, shared with each of us, allows us to continue to do this.

We ask you to prayerfully consider your pledge for the coming year. The larger church encourages a 10% tithe. We, also, would encourage you to consider this. We still have shortfalls from past years to work with, we have plans for future years, we need to be able to fund repairs and pay salaries. We face uncertainties from incoming bills and concern about from whom and from where our income will come.

As we conclude this campaign on SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2008, PLEASE RETURN YOUR PLEDGE CARD AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. Doing so will allow us ample time to formulate the budget and be as accurate as possible. You may mail it to the church office, place it in the offering plate on Sunday morning, or put it in the plate in the Commons. WE CANNOT DO THIS WITHOUT YOU! We need everyone to do his or her part. We do not have an endowment to pay the bills. They come out of our operating budget, just as yours do.

Please help us to continue to meet the needs of St. John's, to keep the doors open, the staff paid, our programs growing, and our arms open to those in the community who need us.

**Stewardship is what we do with what we've got, all the time.**

Thank you for your help,

Tom Brush, George Moore and E. Linda Jeffries  
St. John's Stewardship Committee

$S=W^2DW^3G(\infty)$

## ***What St. John's Means to Me***

***Ross Watson.***

St. John's Episcopal Church means many things and many different things to me. I would like to share one with you. The start of this meaningful thing dates back to the time when my growing-up days were spent in the Moravian Church in North Carolina. During those days we would sometimes have a visiting minister who would deliver the sermon. I still remember one such visitor (I was about twelve years of age at the time) and part of his message.

His message was of a pastor back in the hills of North Carolina in a small community with a small church. One of the residents of that community and a member of the church, at least on the books, was a gentleman named Mose. Most people of the community knew Mose. He was known as a fine gentleman, very well liked and respected. Most people acquainted with him called him Uncle Mose. Uncle Mose lived alone in a small simple cabin away from town. The cabin was a simple structure with a large stone fireplace. The heat for the cabin was provided by coal burned in that large stone fireplace. One cold day the pastor of the church paid a visit to Mose. The pastor and Mose sat in front of the fireplace with the glowing red coals radiating warmth throughout the cabin. After a time of talking about the weather, the past harvest season and other current events, the pastor informed Mose that he had not been seen in church for some time. Mose was quick to reply that he really did not need to go to church. He said that he lived a good honest life, worked hard every day, read the Bible, prayed daily and was always helping his neighbors, friends, and anyone else who might be in need of help. Thus, he did not feel it important that he go to church.

The pastor did not verbally reply. He quietly took the coal tongs from next to the fireplace, picked out one lump of coal and placed that lump of red burning coal in front of the fire on the fireplace hearth. Nothing was said. After sitting quietly for several minutes, the glow of that single lump of coal on the hearth was slowly cooling down and the glowing red coal soon turned a cold black. Of course, the fireplace was still a large bed of bright red glowing coals and every single coal was radiating heat throughout the cabin.

Mose looked at the roaring fire and looked at the single cold black coal. He looked up at the pastor and said, "Pastor, I'll see you in church on Sunday."

This story summarizes one thing that St. John's means to me. For me St. John's is that large stone fireplace and all its members are those bright red glowing coals, radiating warmth around the church and wherever they go. I have the good fortune to be in the middle of that fireplace surrounded by all those glowing coals both within St. John's building and elsewhere that I go.

During the past two years I have had a chance to really learn how important that glowing fire of St. John's happens to be. Due to an injury about two years ago, an illness about seven months and another injury just recently, I was somewhat cut off from being able to be in the middle of the roaring fire that the members provide. It was easy to feel that I had been placed on the hearth. But there was no need for me to fear. I found that so many members of St. John's extended the warmth and glow of that St. John's fire by jumping out of the fireplace and joining me on the hearth in order that I did not become a cold black coal. They did that by lifting me up in prayer, phoning me to stay in touch, sending cards, checking up on me, providing meals, sharing their own experiences, visiting and letting me know that they were, and still are, supporting

me. They really cared about me, making me feel that I was still surrounded by all those red glowing coals from that big St. John's "Large Stone Fireplace."

Even when I did not feel that I was in the middle of that big fireplace of St. John's, many members went out of their way to surround me with their warmth and they continue to do that every day. By regularly attending St. John's and being surrounded by all of the flaming glowing coals of all its members, I feel that I can go about my daily life without becoming a "cold black coal."

### What does St. John's mean to you?



(The View From the Big Pew continued from page 2)

Moreover, while I enjoy the freedom to do some exploration in my piece, I confess that sometimes when I read the *Eagle* as it arrives in the mail I discover that one upcoming parish event or another might have been included but wasn't. This causes my personal neurosis, *excessive sense of responsibility*, to engage and I kick myself for having written what I did instead of what it now appears I *should* have. And then I fret.

So I'm going to try to kill two birds with one stone. With this current offering I announce a furlough from writing for *The Eagle*. My hope is twofold: that this will enable a much more open and unhindered look at the possibilities of style, content, format and medium for our newsletter. The second hope is that I will feel free to write more – on more broad topics, even – as I proceed in my own creative venture.

In other words, if you want to know what's cooking in my mind, "Check out my blog" as they say. I'm at [www.theviewfromthebigpew.blogspot.com](http://www.theviewfromthebigpew.blogspot.com), and while I'll try to stick to a monthly posting schedule, my personal deadline might move around a bit. For those who don't have access to the internet and who want to stay current with my thoughts let me or the office know and we'll find a way to have some print copies available at the church for you.

In fact this month's offering is a reflection on a vacation stop that some might enjoy and is waiting for you in my own corner of the blogosphere. ENJOY!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lou Angan".

## **St. John's Book Discussion**

### **Wednesday November 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm**

This month the focus will be on a paired selection: Jonathan Weiner's, **His Brother's Keeper** and Jodi Picoult's **My Sister's Keeper**.

**His Brother's Keeper**, written by a Pulitzer Prize-winning science writer, is a true story of an older brother's single-minded quest to use the tools of modern biological science in search of a cure for Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS, or Lou Gehrig's Disease) from which his younger brother suffers. Weiner describes his book as "an allegory from the edge of medicine."

Picoult's book has been on the New York Times Best Seller list for quite some time. **My Sister's Keeper** is a work of fiction that probes the impact on a child of having been conceived as a "designer child." Her parents, using pre-implantation genetic diagnosis, brought her into life to be a source of matched bone marrow to use in hopes of curing her older sister, who suffers from leukemia. Though this particular book is a work of fiction, the science is real. Both books provocatively probe the effects on individual human beings of new technologies that offer, on the one hand, power and hope to circumvent disease, but that also raise serious ethical questions.

In addition to exploring the books in and of themselves, I want to focus special attention on three questions Weiner asks in his opening chapter:

*How much of life can we engineer?*  
*Are there any lines we cannot or should not cross?*  
*What would you do to save your brother's life?*

These questions are equally apt for exploring both books. If you only have time to read one of the two, pick one and read it and come to discuss!

Enter through the garden door. We'll meet in the Commons for an hour-long discussion.

**REMINDER.** Our group 'skips' December. On January 21, we'll meet for a **Nevada Barr evening**. Nevada Barr writes the Anna Pigeon mysteries. Anna is a park ranger and the mysteries take place in national parks all over the country. There are 14 titles to choose among.

Karl Brandt

## Nursery News

It has been a busy few months in the St. John's nursery. Averaging about 10 – 12 children per Sunday our new sitters Angie Cotton and Sara Fulks have their hands full! Sara is a senior at Purdue and is studying Elementary Education. She will be student teaching Kindergarten at Klondike Elementary beginning in January. Graduation will be in May. She has lived in Lafayette since childhood and has two dogs and four cats who are her "kids". Angie grew up in Bloomington, Indiana and after graduating from Purdue with a B.A. in History got married and settled here in Lafayette. She has worked with kids for many years (from Pre-School to girl scouts) and enjoys spending time with her large family. She currently works at the Silver Dipper, so stop in and say hello.

Important Upcoming Dates are as follows. Nursery Care is provided during the times listed:

Mom's Group: October 23, 2008 (10 – Noon)  
Work Day: November 1, 2008 (9 – Noon)  
Even Song: November 2, 2008 (4:45 – 6:30 PM)  
Mom's Group: November 6, 2008 (7 – 9 PM)  
Mom's Morning Out: November 13, 2008 (9 – Noon)  
Mom's Group: November 20, 2008 (10 – Noon)  
Parents' Night Out: November 22, 2008 (5 – 8 PM)

Finally, a big thank you to two very helpful people who helped clean and re-organize the nursery this past Saturday. It was awesome to have the help and the company! Thank you Heidi Osborne and Kimberly Powers!

Best Regards,  
Annie Schreiber and Angela Mosier

## *Liturgical Calendars*

Follow the course of the church year at home with the Episcopal Church Calendar for 2009. The calendar is edited to conform to the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer*, with the calendar dates in the proper color for the day.

On the back of each month's calendar sheet are printed the lessons and psalms for each Sunday and major feast days, along with liturgical notes and suggested concluding collects for the Prayers of the People. Under the calendar pad is found Tables of Feasts and Fasts, together with useful information about lessons and psalms.

Call the parish office by November 21st at 742-4079 to reserve your calendar at the cost of \$5.00 each. Calendars will be ordered **only** for those who request them.

## ***Creating Your Own Prayer Book***

Are you looking for a spiritual project to do this Advent? How about making your own prayer book? You don't know how to go about it? Well we have the class for you!

December 7th and the 14th Hilary and I will be teaching a class between the services on making your own prayer book.

What are prayer books made of? Does it have to look like the Book of Common Prayer? How do I make a prayer book that reflects my personality? What should be in a prayer book?

A prayer book is a way to bring yourself closer to God. It can be like a binder with articles, prayers, photographs or personal writings. It can be like a scrapbook with prayers, artwork, fabric from important clothing (example a baptism gown), and fun things like bumper stickers or cartoons. The prayer books are filled with things that connect you with God and bring you closer in your faith.

Last May, I found a wonderful article in the Episcopal Life newspaper about making your own prayer book. I don't know how to scrapbook but I have kept favorite prayers, hymns and psalms in my Bible at home. Putting these important items together in my own prayer book was a wonderful idea and cleaned up my Bible for easier reading! It can be a fun family project to make a family prayer book or each of you make your own prayer books.

On December 7th, Hilary and I will talk about prayer books and give you ideas on what to collect to make your own prayer book. I will be putting out pamphlets in November in the Commons for you to look over to get ideas. We have each made our own prayer books to give you an idea how individual they can be. Then on the 14th, you can bring in your supplies and we can put the prayer books together and then share them with each other.

If you would like to know more, you can ask Hilary or myself on Sunday mornings. We hope you can join us for this spiritual journey in prayer books.

Kristin Dell

## ***UTO***



The fall Ingathering to support UTO will be Sunday, Nov. 9, 2008 at both services. Every penny of these thank offerings is used for grants! These grants extend blessings of caring and grace to those with compelling human need and the expansion of the mission and ministry of the church.

United Thank Offering information is on the chest outside the kitchen. Please help yourself to a blue box and any of the informative materials there.

Yours in Christ,

Mary Louise Davis