

Services

Sunday

8:00 am Eucharist with hymns
9:00 am Fellowship
9:15 am Forum
10:00 am Sunday School
10:15 am Sung Eucharist
11:15 am Fellowship
5:15 pm Contemplative Eucharist

Wednesday

10:00 am Eucharist (Chapel)

Daily

7:30 am Morning Prayer (Chapel)
6:30 am Friday Morning Prayer (Chapel)
(no Saturday service)

Music Rehearsals

St Thomas Singers

Thursdays, 7:30 pm
Sundays, 9:15 am

Sinfonia

Selected Thursdays, 6:30 -7:30 pm

Calendar

June 4 & 11

10:00 am, Baptismal Preparation
Conference Room

June 5

10:15 am, Choristers Sing
11:45 am, Come to the Quiet, *Chapel*

June 12 • Day of Pentecost

Bagpipers! Highland Dancing! Ice Cream!

June 18

8:00 am, Men's Breakfast, *Great Hall*

June 19

Josh Hosler's Last Sunday
Father's Day

June 22

1:00 pm, 4th Wednesday Bridge Club
Great Hall

THE

COLLECT

June 2011

St Thomas Episcopal Church • P. O. Box 124 • Medina, WA 98039
425.454.9541 • www.stthomasmedina.org

From the Rector: Good-Bye and Hello

by the Reverend Lex Breckinridge

Our lives are full of good-byes. Every relationship that we have, beyond the most casual, will have, as a piece of it, saying good-bye. The good-bye might be temporary or it might be permanent. The English language does not really recognize this, but lots of other languages do. In France, when you tell someone, "Au revoir," you are saying "Till we meet again." If you were to say "Adieu," which literally means, "To God," your good-bye would be more permanent.

Personally, I always liked the way Roy Rogers and Dale Evans said good-bye to me every Saturday morning when I was a little boy. "Happy Trails to you, until we meet again." It was "au revoir" and not "adieu." Good-byes can be sorrowful or joyful or both, full of anxiety or full of anticipation or both. They can range from the fearful to the exhilarating and capture every emotion in between. The best good-byes leave us with hearts grateful and full of the other person. The worst good-byes leave us frustrated, feeling misunderstood or abandoned, or full of regret about things unsaid or left undone. The worst good-byes of all are sometimes the ones that never take place. People part, a relationship is ended, and the parting does not get acknowledged—maybe because we are too busy or we fear what the other person might say to us—or because it is simply too painful to let go of the other person.

The time between now and June 19 is a time for saying good-bye to Josh Hosler, our gifted and faithful Associate for Christian Formation, spouse Christy, and daughter Sarah, as they set off for Virginia Seminary. I confess that it's hard for me to say good-bye. I don't like to let go. But letting go is sometimes the only way to continue to encounter the great purpose that God has for each of our lives. In fact, healthy good-byes allow us to see that God always has something new for us just around the corner. Healthy good-byes allow us to see that each chapter of our lives ends not with a period but with a comma. Easter reminds us that this is also true about death. Death is not a period. Death is a comma. God always has a new chapter waiting for us. So as we say good-bye to Josh and to Christy between now and June 19, we can all look with hope and confidence to the future. God has a new chapter written for Josh, for St. Thomas, and for each one of us. "Vaya con Dios" is how it's said in Spanish: "Go with God."

And now say "Hello" to Brian Gregory, our new Associate for Youth Ministries. God is writing a new chapter in Brian's life by calling him to this ministry at St. Thomas. Brian has a BA in Theology and Educational Ministry from Seattle Pacific University and is currently a part-time MDiv student there. Brian has previous youth ministry experience with Young Life, and for the last year or so has

(continued on page 2)

Vestry Views

by J. Stephen Reid, Junior Warden

been on a journey into Anglicanism. He and his spouse, Kelly, a teacher in Issaquah, have been worshipping at Emmanuel on Mercer Island, and Emmanuel's Rector, Hunt Priest, says he is mad at us for taking such a bright and dynamic young couple from them! Our Search Committee chaired by Karen Haig and including Margaret Chorlton, Mike Eggenberger, Lou Bush, Tammy Waddell, Anne Corley, Tonya Farr, Kyle Craig, and Kyra Farr found Brian to be highly relational, highly energetic, and with a deep passion for youth ministry. We believe he will be a great fit for us at St. Thomas and he will begin his work here in mid-June. Josh has left a solid foundation. We are looking forward to Brian building on that foundation. Please welcome Brian and Kelly to our community.

Faithfully,

My quest for spiritual value in my life began as a teenager. Between my graduation from high school and the beginning of my freshman year at Dartmouth College, I went on a crash reading program which included many of the great classics of literature, including the Bible (from cover to cover). I was searching for certainty, which was as elusive as quicksilver. Not finding "proof" led to frustration and doubt. Yes, there was ample evidence that some higher power created the universe and all that is within it, and this higher power could reasonably be called God, but I was trying to validate my being a Christian, and while I admired the tenets of the church and the love-based teachings of Jesus, there were certain aspects of it all that defied logic. This quest for certainty caused me to resist a real commitment to organized religion for much of my early adult life, even as I was attending church to appease my wife.

One Sunday when I our church had a named Grahame known as the TV galloping gourmet." of the congregation back row of the a blindfold. He then and to everyone else, her through the front where he to have faith that he fall or even bump into way. The audience with voice instructions directly up to where he stood.

"...certainty is a temporal, or worldly, value, limited by time and place; whereas faith is an infinite, spiritual value, boundless and without limit."

was in my mid-forties, guest preacher Kerr, who was well personality "the He had a member stand up in the church and put on explained to her, that he would lead crowd up to the stood. She just had would not let her anything along the watched as he deftly, and without a hitch, led her

Kerr then explained that the key to Christian belief is to have faith, and that just as the woman who followed his instructions believed he would not allow her to be harmed, we need to believe that God, through Christ, has an unconditional love for us that defies logic. For the first time, it occurred to me my quest for certainty was misdirected.

I have heard Father Lex say that faith is actually the opposite of certainty, that faith removes the burden of solving everything by yourself, and I have wrestled with what he meant. I think he meant that certainty is a temporal, or worldly, value, limited by time and place; whereas faith is an infinite, spiritual value, boundless and without limit. Certainty is limited to what we understand at any particular time. One need only look at the evolving beliefs of the human race to realize that what seemed certain in the past has been proven to be entirely wrong time and time again.

For anyone with self-assurance, faith is often hard to accept, until the vicissitudes of life rear their ugly heads. When I came to realize that all my failures, weaknesses – all my sins – were forgiven, and that, in spite of them, I was unconditionally loved, I knew a peace that has shaped my life ever since. Once I accepted the reality that I didn't have total control, and that I didn't need to have total control, the temporal goals that used to dominate my life became less burdensome. I have become more forgiving of myself and of others.

So, for me, only through faith can logic-defying beliefs such as resurrection and eternal life be accepted, even if not fully understood, and that has made a difference in how I live my life.

Financial Report

APRIL 2011

	Budget	Actual
Income	\$63,600	\$70,777
Expense	\$99,446	\$105,603

YEAR TO DATE

Income	\$377,888	\$368,259
Expense	\$379,541	\$385,495

You Are the Body of Christ

by the Reverend Karen Haig, Priest Associate

“I can spot clergy anywhere,” she said. And I replied, “Peace be with you.” ... I was sitting at a little table in the lobby of my hotel and had just settled in to write an article for our *Collect*. I thought I would write about summer Sabbath, but it seems that wasn’t to be.

The woman who spoke was unknown to me, but like me, she was one of thousands of preachers who had gathered in Minneapolis for the 19th annual Festival of Homiletics, a preaching conference that draws teachers and preachers from all over North America and beyond. All of us come together because we know something of the power of God’s Word, because we love to proclaim that Word, and because some of the most gifted English-speaking preachers in the world are here, sharing their gifts and telling their stories.

Downtown Minneapolis is an amazing place for so many reasons. Old and new architecture meld beautifully. Combinations of colors and cultures of people abound (much like what I think heaven must look like). And there are churches – really big mainline churches – everywhere; even places that aren’t churches seem to claim Jesus. Today, as I was walking through downtown and peering through window after church window, I happened upon a sort of social service agency, a building with the words “Feed the poor and heal the sick” over the entryway. No denominational affiliation was given, no proper scriptural reference noted – just “Jesus” ascribed as the author of that mandate.

Downtown Minneapolis – with its myriad churches and public proclamations of faith – feels like a place where church is the norm, a place where soccer practice isn’t scheduled on Sundays, where sleeping in isn’t essential, and where people don’t prefer yoga or cycling or convening at the altar of

Starbucks (I haven’t seen Tully’s here) to worshipping God on any given Sunday morning. Downtown Minneapolis feels like a place where it’s even sort of “normal” to go to church. This must be what it’s like when you don’t live in the most unchurched part of the country,” I thought.

And then, of course, I thought of you ... you, who, like myself, live in the most unchurched part of America ... you who are in church on Sunday morning when there are many other things that beckon your families ... you who see yourselves not only as individuals but as communion and community and part of something bigger than yourselves ... you who long to engage the mystery, who want to see Jesus ... you who arrive week after week because something that matters to you, whether or not you can name it, is happening here.

You are the ones I thought of. You come to church on Sunday mornings, not because being in church is the social norm or the culturally correct thing to do, or because it is somehow expected of you, but because it is exactly where you mean to be: you are here on purpose. Perhaps you are here because you are nourished by the body of Christ and are learning that you, yourself, are an integral part of that body. Perhaps you are here because you’ve found a safe haven, a place where you can fall into God’s loving embrace and let go for just a little while, or because this is a good and safe place for your children to be nurtured by the teachings of Jesus and the boundless love of God. Perhaps you are here because God’s Word goes straight to your heart in the midst of a psalm gloriously sung or the Gospel illuminated. Perhaps you are here because your conversations with the people of God at church are rich and real, making sacred stuff out of the ordinariness of daily life.

The American mainline church world is inundated these days with numbers and statistics and data that tell us the stories of average Sunday attendance, numbers of baptisms measured up against numbers of funerals, and about all manner of other things that may or may not matter. But from here, in my little hotel lobby, I’m thinking not so much about how many people are in church, but about how we go about being church. And that’s why I’m thinking of you who are the church. I’m thinking of you and praying for you and feeling so very grateful for you ... not just for the blessing of serving in your midst, but for the gift of you who open yourselves again and again to the extraordinary reality that you are the Body of Christ. And I thank our God for the gift that is each and every one of you.

Faithfully,

Karen +



Life Center at St. Thomas

by Tracy Bennett, Fundraising Consultant to the Center at St. Thomas Project

As spring arrives with its visible signs of growth and beauty, our work to similarly bring growth and beauty to our parish through the construction of the Center at St. Thomas continues in high gear. Led by co-chairs Sue and Robert Collett and Vest and Ev Lloyd, a group of committed volunteers is engaged in sharing our vision with community leaders and organizations. The response has been enthusiastic and encouraging, and our plans to expand our programs for neighborhood youth and families as well as outreach to those in need have been well received.

We are currently focused on developing innovative partnerships that can provide enrichment activities in the Center. For example, the Bellevue Boys and Girls Club could offer after-school programs in math, science, technology, arts and music for area children. Hopelink (with whom we currently collaborate for our Thanksgiving meal and our work with Congregations for the Homeless) could provide adult education classes and service opportunities. And of course we look to further strengthen our relationship with Alcoholics Anonymous and the Boy Scouts, who have long utilized the Great Hall for meetings and activities.

Lex and others are meeting with potential donors about opportunities to support this exciting project. The generous campaign giving from our parish sends an important signal about our commitment to making the vision of the Center a reality, and we are hopeful it will inspire others to step forward with gifts. We are submitting proposals to a number of foundations as well. Given people outside the St. Thomas community are not familiar with the Center, we must take the time needed to share our plans and excitement, listen to their feedback, and then begin a dialogue about how they can help build this much needed community asset.

We look forward to keeping you apprised of our progress in the coming months, and are grateful for your continued support and enthusiasm!

Property Committee Corner

The Property Committee of St. Thomas is commissioned to keep our campus in good repair, and that means keeping our tools in top shape and well organized.

If any of you has bookcases that you no longer need, they may be of enormous help to us. We would install them in our tool room to store our tools properly.

In addition, if you are contemplating reducing the number of your tools, we'd be pleased if you were to donate your surplus to the Committee. We could use more tools for helping us work on our extensive yards and grounds and keep up the condition of our buildings.

If you have bookcases and/or tools, please call Donn Foreman at (425) 454-0766, or Fred Pneuman at (425) 454-2956.

Hymn 507: Praise the Spirit in Creation

by Charles Rus

My first encounter with David Hurd, who wrote the music to this hymn, was in 1978, when the organ-building company I worked for was building him a custom pipe organ for his house. I worked on the tracker action and case work and various other things. Then we sent the organ off and that was that, I thought. Seven years later I had done my Bachelor of Music degree and was intending to get a Masters in Divinity—I wanted to be an Episcopal Priest! After a year of spiritual direction with a priest in Rochester, I traveled to New York to have my interview at General Theological Seminary.

After the interviews I was walking out of the campus, and lo and behold, there was David Hurd, who teaches there. We recognized each other. He asked me why I was there. I said I wanted to be a priest. He said, come with me.

We went to his apartment right there on the campus. I saw the organ I helped build for him, and we sat and had coffee and talked for an hour. I no longer remember one single detail of that conversation. All I remember is that when I walked out I never again thought of becoming a priest. Never crossed my mind again. These are the facts. No interpretation.



Project Outreach

St. Thomas to Sponsor Congregations for the Homeless in July

by Margaret Waterfall, St. Thomas Coordinator for Congregations for the Homeless

Note: St. Thomas has been providing funds through Project Outreach grants, donations in kind, and the use of our facilities to Congregations for the Homeless on the Eastside since its founding. This year a new level of personal participation on the part of parishioners is encouraged. The article that follows describes the opportunities for parishioners to participate at a more personal, caring level beyond financial and/or in-kind donations.

— Curt Young
Project Outreach Steering Committee

+++++

In July, St. Thomas will again host a group of 30 homeless men, providing a safe shelter and three nourishing meals each day. The men are under the care of Congregations for the Homeless, which was established in 1994. Its mission is to help end homelessness in East King County by assisting men to successfully make the transition from homelessness to permanent housing. Its program has three major parts:

- An emergency shelter for 30 men located at one of 12 host congregations. It operates daily from 7 pm to 7 am and offers a variety of services including showers, laundry facilities, medical and dental services. The shelter program moves to a new congregation at the beginning of each month. Each host congregation has 1-3 support congregations that help provide food for the men during that month.
- A complete case management and life-coaching program provided by professional case managers. Examples of the kind

of help they offer are: 1) one-to-one assistance during the entire program stay; 2) job search assistance; 3) connection to mental health and medical resources; and 4) budgeting and financial literacy education.

- A housing program that provides permanent housing with time-limited subsidies to shelter residents.

For many years, many folks have faithfully delivered food to St. Thomas to help feed our homeless guests. St. Thomas has a reputation for serv-

“I encourage you to come and experience the blessing and give the blessing of sharing a meal and time with the men at the shelter each evening.”

ing good food and doing so generously. As important as the food is, there is more that we can do.

Shelter Director, David Johns Bowling, writes:

“Your church has been hosting the Congregations for the Homeless men’s shelter every July since 1994. The men have been deeply blessed by your church providing an abundance of good food and a warm, safe place to sleep and rejuvenate.

I am sure you have felt the blessing in giving your space and food to the men, but the deeper bless-

ing can be gained by coming to the shelter in the evenings and sharing a meal and conversation with the men. To hear these **men’s stories will challenge you** to love your own story and to love those around you more richly. You will be moved by their faith, by their struggles, their failures, and successes. You will also deeply bless them with your presence. Sharing a meal and conversation with them lets them know that they matter, that they are worth enough to sit with and want to know. This opens them to a sense of hope, dignity, and purpose in their lives.

I encourage you to come and experience the blessing and give the blessing of sharing a meal and time with the men at the shelter **each evening.”**

When you come to deliver your dinner contribution, please consider staying for dinner and talking with our guests. If you have breakfast or lunch food to deliver, bring it by in the evening and plan to stay. If you live nearby or happen to be in the area, please join us. Let us enlarge St. Thomas’ reputation to include warm and caring fellowship.

David will speak at the June 5th Forum and present a video about the work of the Congregations for the Homeless. You will find it most enlightening.

Sign-up for food donations will begin in June – look for us in the Great Hall.

Taste and See

La Dolce Vita and Pasqua, Italian Style

by Anita Crocus, Parishioner

Pasqua – Easter – in Italy is always special. I expected Easter in Lombardy to be somber because Milan is the engine, brains, the financial heart of the country. Italian Pasqua lacks grisly spectacles and penitent processions but not passion. *Passionate* describes Italians, whether food, politics, opera, wine, family, friends, or laughter. No hoods, blood, thorns, and chains, except maybe at President Silvio Berlusconi's house. Italian Madonnas are pale and peaceful, not dark and dour. One has the feeling they are going to sip a glass of sweet Chianti after the parade. Frescoed angels in the style of Fra Angelico cling to the walls of ancient chapels like diaphanous pastel butterflies. Even when their news is not good, you still feel better.

Milan's Duomo (cathedral) is the third largest in the world – 135 spires of Lombardian Gothic adorned with 3,400 statues. Mark Twain couldn't find a caustic pun to utter. "So, grand, so solemn, so vast yet so delicate," he gushed. The massive rose-hued structure gives the impression of a lacey prehistoric bird that could fly. Even dressed in mourning, she didn't disappoint.

Easter concludes on La Pasquetta, the Monday after Easter. The day has no religious significance and should be called "Easter Lite" – a day of outdoor fun where life imitates art in a visual of Seurat's "La Grande Jatte," music by Sondheim: "Sunday in the Park with Georgio." Recovering from the gastronomic excesses of Easter Day, families lounge like pods of seals in parks with picnic baskets. Those still ambulatory hike alpine trails or stroll villa gardens while the urbane Gucci-Pucci café crowd master the

art of caressing the cappuccino accompanied by playing of the unofficial national anthem, "Va Pensiero."

Verdi's "Va Pensiero" from Nabucco is considered an anthem for Italian



patriots, but that's not the full story. The piece embodies strange universal appeal, much like Dvorak's "Largo" from his Ninth sentimentally tagged "Going Home." Verdi composed the music after losing his wife and children. The untranslatable "Al di là," a place beyond which we see, is what Verdi captures musically. The message that we're all really exiles on this earth makes "Va Pensiero" a powerful Easter supplication.

"Lend them your golden wings
Every fear will fly away
Take them by the hand
Help 'em find an easy way
Lead them back to the light."

Italy can't really brag or complain about a multi-cultural past. They suffered with their homogeneity. Virile political feuds have existed between neighboring villages for hundreds of years. Temperaments vary greatly and everything south of Rome is notoriously ungovernable. Pope Benedict said, "The Catholic faith and the church's presence remain the great unifying factor of this beloved nation." The Church and Italian culture

are a tightly interwoven fabric, but significant cracks have surfaced.

Italian life is a Felliniesque tragic-comedy – an interplay of life drama both fascinating and poignant. Fellini cinematically attacked the hypocrisy of the church, blaming the Catholic-Italian upbringing for the "complexes" of the people but perhaps it's the reverse.

The Kohler commercial about the dying Italian mama captures Italian irony best. Surrounded by a loving family, mama expresses happiness for living a good life, no regrets. She's ready to pass peacefully when a door opens and she notices her old bath fixture replaced with the Ferrari of all faucets. She sits up, shakes her fist, and curses her fate. Like the famous last lines of the tragic opera "la commedia e finite," Italians view poverty, hunger, misery, old age, dying, and death through the lens of the ironic absurdity of life.

A British cousin and I sailed to Easter Mass at the Church of the Ascension at Cadenabbia, the first Anglican Church in Italy. The once vibrant British colony there needed somewhere to confess their sins for living in such an idyllic setting. Lacking funding from the diminishing purse of Lambeth Palace, the treasury is bare, the fine post-service teas are gone, the congregation scant but the wondrous gold mosaic altar remains. Like Tennessee Williams' Blanche DuBois, the church relies on the "kindness of strangers" for support. One could legitimately debate whether the once jewel of a church with its perfectly preserved and disciplined service has become irrelevant in our Age of Narcissism or whether the world outside is of little substance.

(continued on page 7)

Know Your Church: Art at St. Thomas

The Pulpit

And Ezra the scribe stood on a wooden pulpit which they had made for the purpose... And Ezra opened the book (the law of Moses) in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above them; and when he opened it, all the people stood up... Then Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," lifting up their hands. Nehemiah 8:4-6

A lovely chorus of Alpine and village bells proclaiming the resurrection accompanied our boat ride back. The sun had turned the water into a sheet of diamonds. The greatest minds of Western civilization have drawn inspiration from that landscape, making the dead far more interesting than most of the living.

Rebirth is a quiet endeavor. Freeing ourselves from all distractions, not the least being the albatross of things we spend the first half of life collecting, the second half trashing. Watching nightly news is just another testimonial to human failure. People come and go in our lives, some stay too long, others never long enough. Escaping the facelessness of Facebook and the plague of communication tools that have become ends in themselves with capacity to share knowledge and ignorance at lightning speed with too many unable to discern the difference.

Easter rebirth involves unity with the elements of the earth, an exhilarating freedom. It's a solitary journey from the familiar, the comfortable into a challenging new reality—a glorious transcendence into transparency.

The hill where Pliny the Younger's summer villa once stood loomed ahead. The boat glided toward the dock. We all know endings are really beginnings. The door closes, a window opens, but hallways can be hell. The goal is to shorten the hallway. Easter is a moveable feast, but some of the things we take from that feast remain in our hearts and minds forever.

[Ed's note: "Taste & See" is an occasional column celebrating the beauty and abundance of life as experienced through travel, literature, music, the arts, and food.]

The octagonal pulpit is made of oak with panels around the front. The top of each panel is carved with symbolic foliation:

- ◆ The lily, a symbol of the Lord's human nature (panel 1)
- ◆ The evergreen, a symbol of immortality (panel 2)
- ◆ The pomegranate, a symbol of the unity of the church (panel 3)
- ◆ The thistle, a symbol of sin (panel 4)
- ◆ The rose, a symbol of Messianic hope (panel 5)
- ◆ The olive, a symbol of the grace of the Lord (panel 6)

The center front panel has a larger rose carving, a traditional symbol of Christ. In addition, each panel has a motif symbolizing an important event in the life of St. Thomas:

- ◆ The fish symbolizes his early vocation (panel 1)
- ◆ The rising sun symbolizes St. Thomas' travels east to do missionary work (panel 2)
- ◆ The builder's square symbolizes St. Thomas' activities as a church builder (panel 3)
- ◆ The castle symbolizes a legend that St. Thomas, commanded to build a castle for the King of the Indies, instead used the money as alms for the poor (panel 4)
- ◆ The hand of Christ with the nail wound denotes the Crucifixion (panel 5)
- ◆ The spear symbolizes the martyrdom of St. Thomas (panel 6)

During the Middle Ages, pulpits were installed in churches, but sermons rarely were preached from them. More emphasis was given to the sacraments than to preaching.

The pulpit became more prominent during the Protestant Reformation, when the preaching of God's Word became the main focus of worship. In some places, the pulpit was two-tiered, with only the Gospel and the preaching being delivered from the highest level.

Inspired by the designs of Christopher Wren, the pulpits in Anglican churches in early America were located where everyone in the congregation could hear the readings and the sermon. In a cruciform church such as St. Thomas, the pulpit is placed on the north side, at an intersection of the transept and the main body of the church (nave). This location symbolizes authority because when viewed from the altar, the preacher is 'on the right hand of God' and sharing God's message.

St. Thomas Episcopal Church

Vestry

Bob Webb, *Senior Warden*
Fred Barkman, *Treasurer*
Jim Blundell, *Chancellor*
Linda Hendrickson, *Clerk*

Paul Birkeland	Bill McSherry
Christopher Breunig	Bonnie Pearce
Joanne Del Bene	Delphine Stevens
Brian Evison	Steve Reid
Rose Magee	Mary Williams
Kim Malcolm	

Staff

The Right Rev. Greg Rickel,
Bishop of the Diocese of Olympia
The Rev. Lex Breckinridge, *Rector*
The Rev. Stephen W. Best, *Associate for
Couples & Family Life*
The Rev. Karen Haig, *Priest Associate*
The Rev. Kathryn Ballinger, *Deacon*
Associate for Spiritual Direction & Parish Visitor
Josh Hosler, *Associate for Christian Formation*
Charles Rus, *Associate for Music &
Liturgical Arts*
Marion Anderson, *Director of Children &
Youth Choral Activities*
Danielle Brzusek, *Childcare Coordinator*
Erica Flores, *Childcare Coordinator*
Kim Malcolm, *Ministries Coordinator*
Phyllis Ross, *Newcomers Coordinator*
Heather Smith, *Pastoral Care Coordinator*
Torrey Musicant, *Sexton*
Doug Anderson, *Day Porter*
Gerry Gallaher, *Business Manager*
Laura Gregg, *Executive Assistant to the Rector*
Bob Simeone, *Building Project Manager*

The Collect

Shirley E. Deffenbaugh, *Editor*
Elizabeth Ward, *Assistant Editor*
Laura Gregg, *Layout and Production Editor*

Deadline: For the July issue, June 13. Please submit copy to Shirley Deffenbaugh, sedeffenbaugh@comcast.net or leave in the drawer marked "Collect" at the church. All articles will be edited. Questions? Please call Shirley at 425-455-4817.

Christian Formation

Showing Up and Sticking with It

by Josh Hosler, *Associate for Christian Formation*

I enjoy saying that Episcopalians always meet again; at least, that's been my experience. The girl I had a crush on in grade school is now a priest in Wisconsin with a son exactly the same age as my daughter. My church campmates from high school are having a great time these days tagging old photos on Facebook. When my family moves to Virginia, we'll spend a night or two in Idaho with Episcopalians I met when I was 4. And when we reach our destination, we'll get reacquainted with both the Danielses and the Hoskinses, St. Thomas families we dearly love who moved out there ahead of us.

Still, it's tough to make this transition, and perhaps the toughest time has been at communion. I sit in the pew singing, and I look out at all the faces. I see teenagers who were young children when I arrived. I see former youth group members, home from college, looking remarkably like men and women. I see Wednesday Bible Study members whose knowledge and wisdom have deepened, sometimes through thrilling experiences, and sometimes through tragedy. There are parish stalwarts who've been here for generations, seemingly unchanged since my arrival, though I know we've all aged exactly the same number of years. I see and hear babies and toddlers, already making their indelible mark as ministers in the St. Thomas community as they remind us of the joy of living in the Kingdom. And I also know the presence of the many whose light has changed, who are feasting with us eternally.



It's this eternal nature that comes through most clearly at communion. Somehow God knits us together in community, if we only show up and stick with it. We mess up and hurt each other's feelings. We get passionate about some ministry or some other aspect of church, only to find that not enough people want to keep it going exactly that way. Leaders move on; friends move on; newcomers arrive and refresh our ranks. They bring with them their own questions and gifts, and hopefully, we decide they are of value to us, even if they are different from what we knew before. If we only show up and stick with it, we will ride the tide of all these changes and allow God to surprise us with new gifts every day.

Christy, Sarah and I are stepping out into the unknown. Somehow, it's not quite enough to know that many other families have done exactly what we're doing. Seminary life is a challenge, we are told again and again. It will change our marriage, our family dynamics, and our very souls. Like all of you who remain at St. Thomas, we also will need to show up and stick with it. We must keep our hands open to let old gifts go, so that we can receive new gifts that flow perpetually from the hand of God. And while we will certainly keep communicating, we will miss you all. We are deeply grateful for your financial support, but most especially, we need your prayers.

Thank you for seven amazing years. I will know that my time here was well spent if I return to St. Thomas and find it to be a very different place ... because that will mean St. Thomas is a place that always keeps its hands open for the next divine gift.

The Quiet Corner: Cars

By the Rev. Kathryn Ballinger, Deacon, Associate for Spiritual Direction & Parish Visitor

My dad loved cars. Saturday would find him washing, polishing, and buffing his beloved Pontiac. After church and Sunday dinner, he could be found in the car reading the paper or taking a nap.

New car openings in the fall were a big deal. He would take me to the show rooms and we would look at all the new models. American cars in the 40s, 50s and 60s were beautiful, with lots of chrome and whitewall tires. He and I could identify every model and year on sight.

I grew up loving cars too, and I loved to drive fast. Cars, like clothes, were an expression of my personality. There have been many red cars (and tickets) in my past. And because I loved to drive, my cars were stick-shift.

Since moving back here, I've mellowed out some and become more practical about what I drive. I needed a vehicle for the dog, and downtown hills in Seattle are tricky without an automatic transmission. So I've become comfortable with my very faithful and totally dependable but rather boring Honda CRV.

My husband, Philip, doesn't feel that way about cars, but he realizes that I, deep down, still do. "Someday dear, you'll have a nice car again" he'd say, trying to cheer me up.

This year he was in South America on my birthday. Also, our 20th wedding anniversary is coming up in June. He came home with a beautiful shawl from Bogotá and mentioned that something else was on its way; I presumed by mail. About three o'clock that afternoon, his brother Greg phoned that he would be dropping by. As he was pulling into our drive, Philip announced the arrival of the rest of my gift. Into the driveway comes this gorgeous white Jaguar convertible. I don't know which was more beautiful, the car or the look of pleasure and love on my husband's face.

Philip had seen the car in Spokane while visiting his mom. It is a 2000 XKR super-charged, with 38,000 miles on it, in perfect condition. For months in secret, he had been working on the deal and having the car checked out.

That's not the end. An hour later, after a spin in the car, my three children arrived with dinner. They also had been in on the big surprise.

This car is more than I would ever have indulged in, and I'm almost scared to drive it, except that it is so much fun. Philip is still so pleased with his gift. And I'm having a hoot roaring out of the church parking lot with the top down. I even have GU plates with ZAG JAG on it.

I believe God is the giver of all gifts. Not that God hands out cars, but my husband, children, and my very life are all gifts. And I believe giving brings God joy, just as Philip experienced joy in giving me something he knew I would enjoy. For my part, I am filled with love and gratitude.



Sunday Forums

At 9:15 each Sunday morning during the program year, St. Thomas staff members, parishioners, or special guests offer presentations related to faith, community, peace & justice, and more. You can find recordings of our Forums on our blog: <http://stthomasonlinecoffeehour.blogspot.com/>

June 5. Congregations for the Homeless. The shelter director for Congregations for the Homeless, David Johns-Bowling, will describe the many ways this organization helps men become self-sufficient and independent. St. Thomas will host 30 men from CfH in July.

June 12. The Day of Pentecost. No forum today, but stick around after the 10:15 service for bagpipers, Highland dancing, and ice cream!

June 19: The Diocesan School of Ministry and Theology (DSOMAT). We'll hear from the Rev. Josh Thomas, the new dean of this remarkable diocesan resource.

Practicing the Hospitality of God

in this issue:	From the Rector, p. 1	Life Center, p. 4	Art at St. Thomas, p. 7
	Vestry Views, p. 2	Project Outreach, p. 5	Christian Formation, p. 8
	You Are the Body of Christ, p.3	Taste and See, pp. 6-7	Quiet Corner, p. 9

St. Thomas Episcopal Church
P.O. Box 124
Medina, WA 98039

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



*Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Medina, WA 98039
Permit No. 1*