

Services

Sunday

8:00 am Eucharist with hymns
9:00 am Fellowship
10:00 am Sunday School
10:15 am Sung Eucharist
11:15 am Fellowship

Monday

9:00 am Centering Prayer, *Chapel*

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

Junior Choristers

Tuesdays, 4:00-4:45 pm

Senior Choristers

Tuesdays, 4:45-5:30 pm

St. Thomas Singers

Thursdays, 7:30 pm

Sundays, 9:15 am

Calendar

February 4

9:00 am, DOCC Opening Retreat, *Campus*

February 5

11:45 am, Come to the Quiet, *Chapel*
5:15 pm, Communion & Community,
Church/Great Hall

February 18

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

February 20

Presidents' Day
OFFICE CLOSED

February 21

6:30 pm, Mardi Gras, *Great Hall*

February 22 • Ash Wednesday

Holy Eucharist & Imposition of Ashes
7:30 am, *Chapel*
10:00 am and 7:00 pm, *Church*

THE

COLLECT

February 2012

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

From the Priest Associate—Our Children: Creating a Safe Environment

by the Reverend Karen Haig

A few weeks ago, a group of St Thomas folks gathered in the Great Hall on a Sunday afternoon – Sunday School teachers and assistants, a vestry member, a childcare provider, Youth Group leaders, and other engaged parishioners. All gathered because they are committed to the care and nurturing of our community, particularly the little ones among us. We know the children of St. Thomas are a gift to our community, and we seek to ensure that all children feel loved and cared for in this place. We want St. Thomas to “feel like home” for children as they grow, and even after they’re all grown up. Our love of and faithfulness to these children take many forms. On this particular Sunday afternoon, faithfulness to the children of St. Thomas took the form of our diocesan training, *Safeguarding God's Children*.

Safeguarding God's Children is a program that was developed by the Church Pension Group in conjunction with Praesidium, Inc., a national leader in abuse prevention. While it is an unfortunate reality that we need to protect the vulnerable among us against emotional and sexual abuse, it is indeed a reality. *Safeguarding God's Children* is the church's response to some very nasty but very real circumstances of our lives. The training is required for all who minister with children and youth and encouraged for the whole congregation. Moving far beyond prudent rules and regulations, *Safeguarding God's Children* takes participants into the lives of victims and their families and offers a candid view of those who would perpetrate abuse.

The *Safeguarding God's Children* training makes clear the reality that awareness of the issues of sexual and emotional abuse is an important first step for church communities, and it recognizes that the environment we create *as a community* is our greatest tool for the care and protection of all, particularly the most vulnerable among us. The combination of presentation and discussion provides participants the opportunity for rich conversation as well as the tools necessary to protect the vulnerable, to create safe environments, to recognize signs of abuse, and to bring healing when a child has been hurt.

As Christians, we seek to live our lives in ways that are consistent with our values – and because we are Christians, we do that in community. Our lives are rooted in our baptisms, formed in communion and community, and lived out in faith, service, and love. Each time we baptize someone into the Body of Christ, our whole community makes a commitment to uphold this newest Christian in his or her life in Christ. And as a community, we join with the newly baptized, renewing our vows again and again, each time committing to seek and serve Christ in all people, to strive for justice and peace among all people, and to respect the dignity of every human being. These are our promises. They are promises that we lovingly and willingly make, promises that demand our very best, promises that give

[continued on page 2]

us a glimpse of God’s kingdom . . . a kingdom where all know themselves to be safe, cared for, blessed, and beloved. Abundant thanks to all of you who share in bringing God’s kingdom among us.

Faithfully,

Safeguarding: A Community Commitment

by Brian Gregory, Associate for Youth Ministries

As Karen has expressed, we take safety very seriously at St. Thomas, especially when it comes to our children and youth. We take every available step to ensure that this community will be a place where children and youth are protected as much as humanly possible from those who seek to harm the most vulnerable among us. Every youth leader, Sunday School teacher, and anyone who has access to children and youth is screened, trained, and expected to follow detailed guidelines about appropriate interaction with children.

The *Safeguarding God’s Children* training is a remarkable first step, but the work of maintaining a safe community is ongoing. We recognize that sexual abuse is not the only way that our children and youth are harmed, and thus we seek to protect and nurture their emotional, spiritual, and physical wellbeing. The more we discuss the safety and wellbeing of our children and youth, the safer and more aware our community becomes. So we invite everyone in the St. Thomas community into dialogue around protecting and caring for our young people. The work of spiritual formation is the work of a community – so is the protection of the community.

Parish Life

Loaves ‘n’ Fishes: Cultivating Community

by Beth Zobel

I got a call. “From God?” Well, yes – but it came through the Internet . . . actually, from our Pastoral Care Coordinator, Heather Smith. She told me about a family with a medical issue that has turned them sideways and who could really use a few meals to cushion the blow life has dealt.

When a parish family is stressed from a medical crisis, grief, or even the joy of childbirth, our community has a ministry designed to be of practical use. Loaves ‘n’ Fishes is a ministry whose members are willing to take a meal to someone’s home, and it was the first ministry I joined after coming to St. Thomas. I joined because I had young children and all the insanity that accompanies that life stage. But I wanted to be of use, to serve, and to get to know some parishioners. I enjoyed this participation because I could do it when my schedule allowed. I also like cooking and REALLY like to provide some tangible loving-kindness to folks when they are suffering.

A few years ago, I received a call inviting me to coordinate the Loaves ‘n’ Fishes ministry. When I first took the job, the chef roster was full. In recent years, membership has waned and I now have only a few cooking soldiers to call when a need arises. I am looking for people who are willing to join this effort. The amount of time required is small, but the reward is great.

If you like to cook, have a certain dish that people enjoy, and have the desire to bring TLC to someone’s doorstep, please contact Beth Zobel: 425-503-4036 or email: ewzobel@comcast.net.

Thank You

On behalf of my family and myself, I want to express our great appreciation for the many cards, calls, emails, handshakes, hugs, and prayers expressing your concern for Vesta’s passing and your continuing support for all of us. I find no adequate words to express how much your thoughtful words and actions have meant to help us through this difficult period. Thank you and bless you. — Ev Loyd



Vestry Class of 2015

Candidates' Biographies

Patrick Bannon



Originally from Overland Park, Kansas, Patrick moved to Southern California as a teenager. There, he learned to drive, attended college at Pepperdine University, worked in a public relations firm, and met his lovely (and wise) wife, Sunni, who grew up in Billings, Montana. At one point, they both taught English in Hokkaido, Japan. They moved to the Seattle area as newlyweds 12 years ago, and are now hugely blessed by their son, John Patrick (JP), and daughter, Clara. Today, he works for the Bellevue Downtown Association and wonders when he'll ever find time to play golf again. Patrick says, "I'm grateful for opportunities to serve on the Project Outreach Steering Committee and as 2011 Stewardship co-chair with Sunni."

Kurt Del Bene



It's a joy and an honor to be considered for the vestry of St. Thomas. I have been a lifelong Episcopalian and active in the church all of my life. I grew up in Tucson, Arizona, where our family was fortunate to have attended St. Phillips in the Hills, and where I served as an acolyte for many years. Suzan and I were married in St. Mark's Cathedral, where I served on the vestry and as their senior warden in my last year. Having always been passionate about the needs of those less fortunate, I've also served on the board of Episcopal Relief and Development, one of our church's great treasures. I am very much looking forward to serving our community - to help us to grow in our role as an

open house of faith and fellowship for the Medina and greater Seattle area. I believe that we can, and should, aspire to grow and strengthen our family, both in size and diversity. We have been blessed in so many ways, and we have a real opportunity to share God's love through our welcoming fellowship and the sharing of our own good fortunes.

Kathy Smith



I am a cradle Episcopalian. St. Stephen in Seattle was my church the first ten years of my life and St. Thomas the next ten. My husband and I were married here 41 years ago and returned 6 years ago. Prior to attending St. Thomas, I was Education Director at St. John in Kirkland from 1987 to 1998. Since joining St. Thomas, I have served on Project Outreach and on the Call committee that recommended Fr. Lex to the vestry. I have taught at St. Thomas School since 1999 and am currently the chairperson of the Chapel committee at the school. My husband Jon is a nurse at Seattle Cancer Care Alliance. We have two sons. Patrick is a software project manager, and Joshua is a student in the Physician Assistant program at Duke University. I look forward to the opportunity of serving on the vestry.

Beth Zobel



Beth Zobel was raised an Episcopalian in a small mid-Missouri town. She joined St. Thomas soon after moving to Bellevue in 1998. Her husband and sons are members of Temple de Hirsch Sinai. Since joining St. Thomas, Beth has participated in resettling a family from the War in Kosovo (Fall 1998). She has been a member of Women's Bible Study since Summer 2000. She has served on a discernment committee, completed EFM's four-year course, and coordinated Loaves 'n' Fishes Ministry for the last eight years. She served as liaison for Congregations for the Homeless for five years and has recently joined the Thanksgiving Ministry planning team. She joined the Flower Guild last summer. When not attending services or activities at St. Thomas, Beth enjoys long walks with her dogs and "Law & Order" re-runs.

Financial Report

2011 YEAR TO DATE

	Budget	Actual
Income	\$1,009,050	\$977,547
Expense	\$1,007,377	\$1,011,906

Project Outreach

Engaging the World

by David Paranchych, Project Outreach Member

“The...task of the church is to encourage and inspire every member of the church to engage in some kind of activity that is motivated by Christian faith...to brush everything aside with the excuse of being busy is as foolish as to refuse to eat because you're too busy.”

Such was the challenge of Dr. Clinton Ostrander in his sermon at University Congregational Church in Seattle on June 4, 1950, which inspired a group of his parishioners to form the Friends of Youth, an organization that today delivers a range of therapeutic services for youth, young adults, and families.

One of the Project Outreach Easter grants extended the operation of a Friends of Youth shelter called The Landing, which provides a meal and a place to stay for homeless young people aged 18-24. I visited The Landing as part of the grant review process, and a staff member showed us around what is really just a room in the Bellevue YMCA that gets transformed into a shelter with the help of foam mattresses and sleeping bags. These are not palatial accommodations. Volunteers provide a donated meal for the guests each night, and the young people lie down wherever they can find space on the floor to get some sleep. Previously, The Landing only operated Sundays to Thursdays, and the staff would watch the guests leave on Friday knowing that some of them would have nowhere to stay on the weekend. Thanks in part to the generosity of St. Thomas, The Landing now operates seven days a week.

As Project Outreach prepares to distribute the Christmas offering, we again find ourselves faced with far greater need than we have money to provide. However, in my short time as part of the committee, I have been impressed with the thoughtful and prayerful process our members use to determine which organizations (of those who have applied) will receive support. By following Dr.

Ostrander's advice and “engaging in the activity” of reaching out to our community, we are providing real help to those who most need it.



Project Outreach Committee 2012-2013

Candidates' Biographies

Janice Cornforth



Janice has attended St. Thomas for four years and became a member in 2011. As a representative of her former parish, St. John's Kirkland, and then as an at-

large member, Janice worked with Kirkland Interfaith Network (KIN) for seven years, serving as Secretary for three years. With KIN she participated in the Crop Walk, Hopelink's food bank and school supply distribution, Tent City dinners, the Thanksgiving food drive and, for four years, was co-chair of the Holiday Alternative Gift Fair. Janice has taught English as a Second Language to students of all ages for the past 30 years, including an eight-year stint at an American School in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Currently an employee of the Bellevue School District, she works as an ESL Facilitator at the elementary level. Originally from the Midwest, Janice—with her husband and daughter—moved to the Seattle area in 1991. In her spare time, she enjoys gardening, cooking and yoga. Janice has assisted with St. Thomas' Thanksgiving dinner project for the past three years and has provided lunches to Congregations for the Homeless. She is honored to be a candidate for Project Outreach and looks forward to using her community networking and teaching experience in this capacity.

Margaret Nichols



Margaret is an executive coach in private practice and also works as a career counselor at Bellevue College. She has helped over 200 senior

level executives transition into new careers during difficult economic conditions. She is originally from Chicago and has a Master's degree in counseling from DePaul University. She has been attending St. Thomas for the past six months and enjoys the congeniality and warmth that is so consistently present here. Her passion for outreach includes volunteering as an ESL teacher, serving on the board of a foster care organization, working in a baby boutique for the homeless, and providing career coaching for substance abusers intent on getting back in the workforce. She is delighted to be joining Project Outreach. This is her first volunteer activity with our congregation, with the exception of delivering Thanksgiving meals this past November.

Thomas Springston



Thomas has been attending St. Thomas for the last two years and is happy to have found a church home. Since graduating from the University of Southern

Mississippi with a degree in hospitality, he has worked for Marriott, Starbucks, and currently Home Depot. In his free time he enjoys spending time with his daughter Cooper, playing golf, and working out. Thomas has really enjoyed becoming part of the St. Thomas family and looks forward to the opportunity to be of service through Project Outreach.

Fred Williams



Fred and his family have been attending St. Thomas since 2007, and he's served as a Sunday School teacher for the last couple of years. Fred

is an attorney and works at Clearwire Corporation. In his free time he enjoys traveling, reading, and spending time with his wife Mary and their children, Isabel and Connor. He has long been impressed by the work done by Project Outreach and is looking forward to joining the Committee.



Life Center 2011: Progress

Faithfulness and A bundance!



Good news is fun to share, and we have much of it to report.

First, thank you for your faithful support of the vision for the Life Center at St. Thomas. Each gift is vital and an honored part of moving us forward to begin construction in 2013. With two years still left in the campaign, we have collected \$2,477,129 in pledges to date. This amount exceeds what we had anticipated receiving by the end of 2011 because of some very faithful donors who have paid their entire pledge, increased their pledge, or applied matching gifts from their employer to St. Thomas.

Second, the campaign received an important gift in December that demonstrates the wider community's appreciation for the Life Center as a resource beyond our parish. The Medina Foundation, a family foundation established by Norton Clapp to "improve the lives of those in need by fostering positive change and helping people attain independence and dignity," made a grant of \$100,000 to the Life Center. This generous grant is one of the largest grants ever provided by the Medina Foundation.

So, we are very encouraged and enthusiastic about our goals for the Life Center. We are on track to meet or exceed our pledge commitments from within the parish, and we continue to build relationships and seek support from donors outside of the parish who have an interest in the Life Center project. Each gift is very important.

With your continued support, we expect to break ground for the project in the summer of 2013. A few commitments for 2011 remain outstanding. To paraphrase Mother Teresa, we are not called to be perfect; we are called to be faithful. If you have not fulfilled your pledge for 2011, please let us know if we can be helpful in any way; it is not too late. And you can now donate on line securely using a credit card or Paypal account:

http://www.stthomasmedina.org/DonationPages/donation_foundation.htm

Look for more updates on Life Center progress in the weeks and months to come, and feel free to ask questions of anyone at Sunday coffee hour wearing the "Ask Me" button.



The Quiet Corner

Time Away

by The Rev. Kathryn Ballinger, Deacon, Associate for Spiritual Direction & Parish Visitor

The time after Christmas is a down time. Little is happening, the weather is dreary, and the doldrums set in. Sure, Valentine's Day and Presidents' Day brighten February, but not everyone celebrates those occasions. And we know Lent is around the corner and comes all too soon.

As providence would have it, Philip attends a series of meetings in California during this time. I jump at the chance to sit in the sun. As I'm writing this in Newport Beach, I'm looking out the hotel window through fronds of a palm tree that casts lovely shadows across the ceiling. Beyond is the ocean and the morning mist is still rolled up on the horizon like a giant down comforter. It will burn off by lunch time, leaving the sea dappled and sparkling with sun dollars.

I'm a consummate Pacific Northwest person, but this setting is nice, although a bit too rich for my blood. Yesterday, I walked by a white Rolls Royce, a yellow and then a red Ferrari – there are herds of these horses here. I like the Spanish architecture, the white stucco houses with red tile roofs, the palms and eucalyptus trees, and bougainvillea tumbling over walls.

Philip, on the other hand, says he hates California, but he equates the whole state with Los Angeles. I point to Laguna Beach, the wine country, and the Bay area and say, "Now, isn't this nice?" Oh, well.

Respite from the often hectic rhythm of our lives nourishes the heart and soul. We all need time away to listen to our lives and to be replenished. Our noisy lives muffle the still small voice within that we can only hear in silence. Silence may come on a retreat, but our silent time could be time spent in nature – a walk in the woods or on a beach. But even if that isn't possible, one can set aside a space at home.

A chair in a quiet corner will do with perhaps a table with a candle, cross, or devotional book. Make a practice of setting aside 10 to 20 minutes each day to place yourself in the presence of God. It doesn't matter if it's morning or evening. We each have our own rhythm of what works best. The best time for a friend of mine is on the treadmill. Even walking the dog can be quiet time.

I know that if I don't have my quiet time each morning, my life unravels and I become resentful and grumpy. Mornings are best for me before the day gets busy. After Philip leaves for work, I pour a cup of coffee and sit in the living room. I light a candle to signify the Holy Spirit's presence and gaze out at the seasonal changes in the green strip across our drive. Wally fetches a toy and lays it at my feet. Sometimes I read a bit to set the tone, but usually I just sit in silence. This quiet time revitalizes and grounds me and often inspires me.

I invite you, too, to carve out time to be with the God who loves you dearly and desires to spend time with you.

[Ed's note: The editor regrets the error in "The Quiet Corner" for January. The correct book reference is God in the Dark: Suffering and Desire in the Spiritual Life by Susan Pitchford.]



Centering Prayer: Finding the Key to Your House

by Zonnie Breckinridge

Thomas Keating, one of the foremost teachers of contemplative prayer in the Christian world, shares a wonderful Sufi tale in relating the “human condition,” and thus why we are called to this transformative prayer discipline.

A Sufi master had lost the key to his house and was looking for it in the grass outside. He got down on his hands and knees and started running his fingers through every blade of grass. Along came eight or ten of his disciples. They said, “Master, what is wrong?”

He said, “I have lost the key to my house.”

They said, “Can we help you find it?”

He said, “I’d be delighted.”

So they all got down on their hands and knees and began running their fingers through the blades of grass.

As the sun grew hotter, one of the more intelligent disciples said, “Master, have you any idea where you might have lost the key?”

The Master replied, “Of course. I lost it in the house.”

To which they all exclaimed, “Then, why are we looking for it out here?”

He said, “Isn’t it obvious? There is more light here!”

Fr. Keating goes on to note that all of us have lost the key to our house. We no longer live there and are looking for the key in the wrong place. The house in the parable represents the place of true happiness, the place where we are one with God. Without the experience of intimacy with God, “nothing else quite works.” This is the human condition – to be without the true source of happiness, the constant presence of God in our lives. (Thomas Keating, *The Human Condition: Contemplation and Transformation*.)



Centering Prayer is a sure path to the experience of God’s presence in our lives, and it has deep roots in the Christian tradition. As Cynthia Bourgeault points out in her illuminating book on the subject, *Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening*, the spiritual practice of the Desert Fathers and Mothers in the third through the sixth centuries and the Benedictine tradition of praying the scriptures through lectio

The Practice of Centering Prayer

Centering Prayer is a meditation practice, though not a concentrative one, as we don’t focus attention on a *mantra* or breath with the purpose of keeping the mind alert. Rather, it is a practice of *intention* to be totally available to the presence of God down to our innermost being. It is how we begin, practice, and end our prayer, with nothing more than our intention to surrender entirely to God.

The practice consists of sitting quietly, in a relaxed position, closing your eyes and letting go, surrendering all thoughts, feelings, emotions, ideas, plans, images, and whatever else comes up, preferably for 20 minutes once or twice a day. Of course, in practice, we soon find ourselves caught up in some mental or emotional scenario, which is perfectly normal and quite acceptable. When you catch yourself thinking about something, you simply let it go, without any judgment or criticism. Having a “sacred word” to come back to each time you find yourself in the middle of a thought can be a helpful tool to jog the memory to let go of the thought and come back to the intention of being with God. The word should be simple and not emotionally charged,

as its purpose is solely to remind you to let go of the distraction and return to the presence of God.

Centering Prayer can be practiced alone or in a group. As you may know, we have a Centering Prayer Group that meets every Monday morning at 9:00 am in the chapel. We gather for a few minutes, share a scripture passage, poem, or other sacred reading, and then sit quietly together for 20 minutes. All who participate have remarked that the 20 minutes passes like a fraction of the time, as the singing bowl calls us out of our silence. We close with a prayer said aloud, which sends us out into our day and week a little more relaxed and better prepared for the ups and downs that life brings us.

Fr. Thomas Keating teaches us that Centering Prayer moves us toward inner freedom, as we open ourselves to God and allow ourselves to rest in a silent place beyond thinking. It becomes a rich oasis in our busy lives. Through a regular discipline of Centering Prayer, we are able to draw upon that well of God-centeredness rather than the usual self-centeredness that more often drives our journey through life and constantly frustrates us along the way.

Book Notes

A Review of *An Altar in the World: A Geography of Faith* by Barbara Brown Taylor

by Harriett Gill

Barbara Brown Taylor is an Episcopal priest who left the confines of full-time parish ministry to focus on teaching (and obviously writing, for she has written many books). In *An Altar in the World: A Geography of Faith* she beautifully limns the ways in which we encounter our Lord through everyday living. In twelve chapters she discusses various practices that bring us closer to our Lord. They include vision, reverence, incarnation, groundedness, wilderness, community, vocation, sabbath, physical labor, breakthrough, prayer, and benediction.

While walking on the big island of Hawaii, Taylor had an epiphany that the whole earth is the House of God. With that feeling, how can one dare to do something which one knows will not please the Lord? She reminds us that anything we say about God is inadequate.

Taylor is not afraid, as most of us are, to reveal her own inadequacies. Her chapter, "The Practice of Wearing Skin" (on incarnation), is amazing. It deserves to be read again and again.

In another chapter, "The Practice of Walking the Earth," Taylor describes her initial reluctance and then her experience of walking the labyrinth. I found her comments very illuminating: "You don't have to know what you are doing, the doing teaches you what you need to know." The labyrinth may have a set path, but it does not have a set experience.

Surely the Lord is present in this place and I did not know it. In the chapter on getting lost, we ponder the strange fact that the times when we are lost in the wilderness are the times that strengthen our lives.

Reading this book was such a joy. I do hope many of you will have the same blessed experience.

divina are the direct forebears of Centering Prayer. These practices, in turn, were derived from the spiritual teachings and practices of Jesus himself.

Throughout the Gospels, Jesus' pattern was to move from action to contemplation. Both prior to and following each great teaching moment and experience in Jesus' life, we are told that he retreated to a quiet place where he could pray to his Father.

Jesus also taught us the importance of praying in silence. In Matthew 6:5, Jesus emphasizes that real transformative prayer is offered in secret:

"And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners, to be seen by men... But when you pray, go into your room, close the door, and pray to your Father who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you."

In this teaching, I believe Jesus is showing us the best way to continue on our life-long journey of letting go of our self-determined programs for

happiness "outside the house" and thereby opening the door to the presence of God in our lives. That is, we must "die to self" so that the Divine Life within us can be born. (Matthew 16:24-25, "Whoever wants to save his life will lose it and whoever loses his life for me will find it.") Dying to self, of course, means dying to our own will so that we might be open to God's will. But, I believe, it also means dying to our "core sense of identity and the egoic processes that keep it in place." (Cynthia Bourgeault, *Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening*, p. 81.)

When we enter into the silence of Centering Prayer we let go of our inner thoughts, fears, wants, fantasies, images, and so on. These are our "mini deaths" to self. In letting go of these emotional and egoic programs for happiness, we allow a true inner awakening to the presence of God. It is in the silent place that we "lose our life" and find the true life of the Divine Indwelling that exists deep within us and is always available if only we can get out of the way.



St. Thomas Episcopal Church

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or leave in the drawer marked "Collect" at
the church. All articles will be edited. Ques-
tions? Please call Shirley at 425-455-4817.

Christian Formation

A Transformational Encounter

by Brian Gregory, *Associate for Youth Ministries*

Several months ago, as part of a class I took at Seattle Pacific University, I had the privilege of sharing a conversation over lunch with Eugene Peterson, author of *The Message* translation of the Bible. "Pastor Pete," as the congregations he has pastored over the years affectionately know him, is a remarkably brilliant man. However, what radiates from him more than his knowledge is his passion for the Bible. After a couple of hours over lunch with Pastor Pete, it was easy to see that this is a man whose life has truly been transformed through scripture and he is committed to seeing others' lives transformed as well.

If you have not done so already, I would encourage everyone to listen to Lex's two-part forum series on Anglican Perspectives on the Bible. Anglicans, along with Eugene Peterson, believe that the Bible is intended for transformation rather than information. The Bible is not a self-help book, a religious encyclopedia, a history book, or a divine rulebook. The Bible is a collection of writings that tell the story of God's saving work in creation. It is through scripture that we encounter the living God who is revealed through the text. When we encounter God, we are transformed.

As Episcopalians, we hear and encounter scripture quite often. We hear four readings each Sunday morning and our prayers and liturgy are saturated with scripture. For scripture to transform through scripture, we need to live in and



Encouragement to read with suspicion in the Episcopal Church. We fear that others will con-

fundamentalist congregations who use words like "inerrancy" and are always telling others to simply read their Bibles more often. Or perhaps we are suspicious of the difficult parts of scripture. We like the heart-warming stories, but what do we do with the stories of violence, oppression of women and minorities, and discussion of God's judgment? Rather than avoiding scripture because of these things, what if, as a community, we committed to reading and discussing what we find?

The "Collect for Holy Scripture" in *The Book of Common Prayer* says, "Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life. ..." Inwardly digesting scripture sounds remarkably close to Eugene Peterson's chosen metaphor for scripture – "eat this book." What lies before us in scripture is a feast for our hearts and our minds. One doesn't nibble on a feast – it is intended to be savored, enjoyed, and consumed. What is keeping us from feasting on scripture?

This is a question that we have been asking in regards to the youth group. We engage scripture and discuss scripture as a youth group, but we need to do more than this. We need the whole community. Youth need living examples of lives shaped by and fashioned after scripture. They need conversation partners. I think we all will be surprised by the insight and wisdom our youth bring to the table if we read and talk about scripture together. Youth also need to hear about others' experiences of scripture – they need to be invited into the story by people who are already living in it. The best way for youth to begin being transformed by scripture is to be surrounded by others who are nourished by the feast that is always before us.

February 2012 @ St. Thomas

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 7:30a Morning Prayer 9:00a Sandwich Makers 9:30a Yoga 10:00a Holy Eucharist 11:00a Bible Study	2 7:30a Morning Prayer 12:30p Film Fellowship 7:30p Choir	3 6:30a Morning Prayer	4 9:00a Altar Guild 9:00a DOCC Opening Retreat 10:00a CampFair (School)
5 8:00a Holy Eucharist 9:15a Forum 10:15a Holy Eucharist 11:45a Come to the Quiet 5:15p Communion & Community	6 7:30a Morning Prayer 9:00a Centering Prayer 8:00p AA	7 9:30a Needlepointers 10:30a Bible Study 4:00p Choristers 7:00p Boy Scouts	8 7:30a Morning Prayer 9:30a Yoga 10:00a Holy Eucharist 11:00a Bible Study 5:30p DOCC	9 7:30a Morning Prayer 9:00a DOCC 12:30p Film Fellowship 7:30p Choir	10 6:30a Morning Prayer 8:00p AA/Alanon	11 9:00a Altar Guild
12 8:00a Holy Eucharist 9:15a Forum 10:15a Holy Eucharist 11:30a Moms' Group	13 7:30a Morning Prayer 9:00a Centering Prayer 5:00p Property Comm. 6:30p Finance Comm. 8:00p AA	14 9:30a Needlepointers 10:30a Bible Study 4:00p Choristers 7:00p Boy Scouts	15 7:30a Morning Prayer 9:30a Yoga 10:00a Holy Eucharist 11:00a Bible Study 5:30p DOCC	16 7:30a Morning Prayer 9:00a DOCC 12:30p Film Fellowship 7:30p Choir	17 6:30a Morning Prayer 8:00p AA/Alanon	18 8:00a Men's Breakfast 9:00a Altar Guild 10:00a Choristers' Choir Day
19 8:00a Holy Eucharist 9:15a Forum 10:15a Holy Eucharist Choristers	20 PRESIDENTS' DAY OFFICE CLOSED 7:30a Morning Prayer 9:00a Centering Prayer 1:30p Tai Chi 8:00p AA	21 9:30a Needlepointers 10:30a Bible Study 4:00p Choristers 6:30p Vestry 6:30p MARDI GRAS	22 ASH WEDNESDAY 7:30a Eucharist/Ashes 9:30a Yoga 10:00a Eucharist/Ashes 11:00a Bible Study 5:30p DOCC 7:00p Eucharist/Ashes	23 7:30a Morning Prayer 9:00a DOCC 12:30p Film Fellowship 7:30p Choir	24 6:30a Morning Prayer 8:00p AA/Alanon	25 9:00a Altar Guild
26 8:00a Holy Eucharist 9:15a Forum 10:15a Holy Eucharist Choristers 11:30a Moms' Group	27 7:30a Morning Prayer 9:00a Centering Prayer 1:30p Tai Chi 8:00p AA	28 9:30a Needlepointers 10:30a Bible Study 4:00p Choristers 7:00p Boy Scouts	29 7:30a Morning Prayer 9:30a Yoga 10:00a Holy Eucharist 11:00a Bible Study 5:30p DOCC	7:30p Choir	8:00p AA/Alanon	
<p>These are just some of the events happening on the St. Thomas campus this month. To schedule meetings or other activities, please call or email the church office • 425-454-9541 • office@sthomasmedina.org A link to the complete calendar can be found on the Parishioners' Page at our website. Church Office Hours: Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm</p>						



Mardi Gras/Shrove Tuesday Celebration

Tuesday • February 22 at 6:30 pm

The whole family will enjoy our annual Mardi Gras/Shrove Tuesday celebration. Please respond to your emailed Evite when you receive it. If you are unable to RSVP online, or if you do not have access to email, call the office and we'll put your name on the list! You won't want to miss the pancakes, music and mask-making.

Cost: \$4/person, \$10/family of 3 or more.

Practicing the Hospitality of God

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