



The Bellringer

E-mail: august@bestweb.net Website: www.stacroton.org

February 2010

Rector:
The Reverend Bradley C. Dyche
Priest Associate:
The Rev. Dr. Beth Glover
Deacons:
The Rev. Deacon Keith McKenna
The Rev. Deacon Sharon Manning-Lew

St. Augustine's Episcopal Church ♦ 6 Old Post Road North, Croton on Hudson, NY 10520 ♦ 914-271-3501 (Parish Office)

February 2010

| | | | |
|---------|--|------------|--|
| 6 | Saturday | 9:00 a.m. | Vestry Retreat |
| 7 | <u>Fifth Sunday after Epiphany, the Rev. Bradley C. Dyche preaching and celebrating</u> | | |
| | | 9:00 a.m. | Rite II with music |
| | | 9:45 a.m. | Coffee Hour |
| | | 10:30 a.m. | Children's Service |
| | | 11:15 am | Sunday School Teacher Training |
| 14 | <u>Last Sunday after Epiphany, the Rev. Deacon Keith McKenna preaching</u> | | |
| | | 9:00 a.m. | Rite II with music |
| | | 9:45 a.m. | Coffee Hour |
| | | 10:15 a.m. | Sunday School begins, Mite Boxes Distributed |
| | | 10:30 a.m. | Rite II with music |
| | | 11:00 a.m. | Sunday School ends, children join service |
| 15 – 19 | | | Cleanup from soot in the Parish Hall |
| 17 | Wednesday | 12:00 Noon | Ash Wednesday Imposition of Ashes and Holy Eucharist II |
| | | 7:00 p.m. | Ash Wednesday Imposition of Ashes and Holy Eucharist II |
| 21 | <u>First Sunday in Lent, the Rev. Dr. Beth Glover preaching and celebrating</u> | | |
| | | 9:00 a.m. | Rite II with music |
| | | 9:45 a.m. | Coffee Hour |
| | | 10:15 a.m. | Sunday School begins |
| | | 10:30 a.m. | Rite II with music |
| | | 11:00 a.m. | Sunday School ends, children join service |
| | | 11:15 a.m. | <i>How the Read the New Testament</i> , led by Father Brad |
| 23 | Tuesday | 6:45 p.m. | Compline with Stations of the Cross in the Church |
| 24 | Wednesday | 8:00 p.m. | Vestry Meeting |
| 28 | <u>Second Sunday in Lent, the Rev. Bradley C. Dyche preaching and celebrating</u> | | |
| | | 9:00 a.m. | Rite II with music |
| | | 9:45 a.m. | Coffee Hour |
| | | 10:15 a.m. | Sunday School begins |
| | | 10:30 a.m. | Rite II with music |
| | | 11:00 a.m. | Sunday School ends, children join service |
| | | 11:15 a.m. | <i>How the Read the New Testament</i> , led by Father Brad |

Compline with Stations of the Cross: Beginning February 23rd, and all Tuesday evenings during Lent. At 6:45, we will gather in the Church for a 15-20 minute service called Compline. Compline, in monasteries, is the last service of the evening, the completion of the day. Compline is often known as the most beautiful service in the BCP. It is a way of giving thanks for what has been and gathering ourselves for the following day. We are looking for assistance with leading this simple but meaningful service. If you would like to help, please contact Father Brad.

Annual Report, *from the Rector:* (given at the 9:00 and 10:30 Services)

State of the Church Address, for year 2009:

Truth telling serum time: Last year, I dreaded making an annual report. Last January, even thinking about our financial future was painful. I had great confidence in the members of this community, but I was scared, financially terrified, as were many of you. In short, my Rectorial glass was half empty, at least in terms of budgets and programs. But in the midst of that fear, last January, I also tentatively had hope and a vision. I had hope for a community that would come together. I had hope that we would not lose sight of our vision of a loving God, and I did have faith... in resurrection and in our ability to share God's love with one another and the world. I hoped that the Grinch would not steal St. A's.

This year, I am **excited** about my report... because of the good things that have happened here in the year. I am proud of us and our hope. The Grinch did not steal St. A's. We have stopped the financial bleeding. We have stopped pay cuts. We have been able to surpass our budgetary goals, and we have loved and been loved in this place. That does not mean that we do not have growing edges. We do. But still, I AM PROUD OF US. {Insert Presidential State of the Union type standing ovation here... or not}!

In my mind, we have succeeded because we have been good at two things. First, we have clearly defined our mission and priorities based on our vision of who God is. And secondly, we have wisely allocated our scarce, sometimes extra scarce, resources of time, talent, energy, and money toward those ends. And for my Rectorial Report (which I know sounds like something a doctor would do to you) I want to focus on those two things.

First, defining our mission. I realize that it seems a little "corporate culture" and maybe even trite to have a mission statement, but last year, I felt like we needed to clearly define who we are and what we stand for. We needed to define our mission if only so that any cuts we made budget-wise would not cut our sense of mission. But to do that, we had to know what our mission is. The Vestry came up with this:

We at St. Augustine's Episcopal Church joyfully embrace this mission: to celebrate the love of God by ministering to those in need; stewarding the earth; supporting one another; studying, praying, and laughing together; and practicing the liturgy of the Episcopal tradition. We warmly welcome all those of every background and orientation who wish to worship God in our company and join in our efforts to live out Christ's example in our own lives.

I have dissected that statement in previous *Bellringer* columns, but just know that each word was carefully parsed and reflected upon. It shows our belief in a loving, Jesus like, God (as opposed to a Zeus-like, punishing God). And it reflects our desire to lead lives which follow that God, together. And subsequently, each decision that we made last year was carefully parsed with this mission statement as our guide. And so, we have focused on laughing, being together, studying, praying, ministering to those in need as well as attempting to be more Jesus-like. And I believe that our commitment toward that mission is why we have ended 2009 with a financial and hopefully emotional surplus. This mission is also what I want to continue to dedicate our time, talent, energy, money, and efforts toward.

Which gets me to my second point: I believe that we have allocated our resources wisely this past year. First, we planned events for our parish family, events that were cheap, fun, brought us together as a community, and we made the church or some other outreach efforts, like the Peekskill Soup Kitchen, some much needed funds.

We had the Chile Cookoff, the Lasagna Dinner, the Pub Quiz, the 5K run and the Harvest Dinner and Auction, thanks in no small part to Cathie Elliott, Suzanne Smith, Jenn Latham and countless others. This is all on top of the already hard working June-fest and other crews. But these events helped us laugh together and spend time together. They helped us remember what is important, that we help and care and love one another.

We also focused on things which did not cost money but still embraced our mission. Sunday School, Recessionistos, and Book group, just to name a few. But we are making places for people to learn and grow. And we are also making space where individuals in pain and grief can feel less isolated and alone. This is what being a church is about.

On the more practical side, vestry members, especially Greg Kaebnick, David Wixted, and Duncan Cleary helped apply for grants, so that we could continue to offer well rounded services and opportunities here, even as our budgets shrank. We received a grant for 7,500 dollars from the diocese to help cover the additional costs of our 9 AM service, which is growing. We also are applying for a grant which could renovate the Parish Hall.

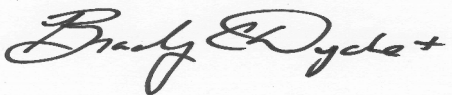
Of course, it must also be said, though, that this time, we have had to make difficult decisions. We discontinued the 5 PM service. We still do not have the resources or human-power to make that service happen. We also had to replace a boiler in the Rectory, and replace a copier in the parish office.

But even with that said, I believe that in the past year we have become a better community. We did without money but not without hope, faith, an able bodied vestry, and love. Even yours truly only fell more in love with this place and with you. We were like the Who's in Whoville who still sang on Christmas morning. I got to know many of you at a deeper, more soulful level. I know that many of you have done the same. True, not all of us are out of the woods yet. But we have done good work. And I want that work to continue.

Even if we feel more comfortable financially, let us not forget how much we need each other, and how much more whole our lives are with good strong relationships and with St. Augustine's. I would take a pay cut any day to have some of this time together.

And so, in 2010, let us continue the good work that we have begun. Let us continue to invest ourselves here, in all ways. And importantly, come to church. Only by us being here can we make this place and our community a prism of God's love, reflecting and refracting that love in the world. And even though you might not realize it, we need you here. We need to see each other's shining faces, and each other's tears, so that they might shared. And like this last year has taught us, being a church is like a door prize at a carnival; we have to be present to win.

God's Peace



Bradley

Treasurer's Year-end 2009 Report

We ended 2009 with a small surplus rather than the deficit contained in the budget, most of which was attributable to the success of Fundraising, the reduction of our Diocesan Assessment, and a generous year-end gift, and despite some unexpected major purchases at yearend (discussed below). We did an excellent job in managing our expenses, which also attributed to our improved operations. Additionally, we applied for a grant from the Diocese to help offset the added expense of offering music at both services. Our application was successful, and will help to reduce the music expense both last year and this year (receipt of this grant was not included in the 2009 budget but is included in the 2010 budget). JuneFest was budgeted to generate \$14,000 for operations; we actually made just over \$22,000 (we did not budget for a dinner and auction during JuneFest this year). Also, FoodFest brought in just under \$3,000. These three sources of revenue helped get us through the summer months, when pledge income dropped significantly. The dinner dance this Fall brought in \$9,600, of which \$9,000 was budgeted, and our wreath sale brought in the \$2,400 expected. Unfortunately, our office copier (20+ years old), finally gave out, and we have had to replace it at a cost of \$6,000 (it should last another 20 years). Shortly thereafter, the boiler in the Rectory gave out, and replacing it cost us another (unbudgeted) \$8,700. Not good news, especially since we ended the year with a \$12,000 shortfall in budgeted pledge income (the budget assumed receipt of \$130,000 in pledges, as compared to the less than \$120,000 that was actually pledged). But with the strength of our financial operations and the support of our Parish community we overcame those obstacles, and even managed to replenish some of the reserves we used to pay for unbudgeted expenditures at yearend.

The fact that we ended the year with a surplus, rather than the \$10,000 deficit that became apparent once final pledges were received was in and of itself a small miracle, and a testament to our support for St. A's and its mission and programs. The outlook for St. A's in 2010 seems much rosier than it did a year ago. The amount pledged actually exceeds the amount we assumed in the budget, so we will not have the prospect of a huge deficit hanging over our heads for the year before us. Having weathered one of the toughest years in our recent history (during 2009 we had to reduce programs and services and each employee experienced a cut in hours or salary, including Father Brad), 2010 should prove to be a year when we can attempt to regain that which we had to do without last year.

| Financial Operations through December 31, 2009: | | | |
|--|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| | <i>Expenses</i> | | <i>Revenues</i> |
| | <i>Paid</i> | | <i>Received</i> |
| Administrative | \$ (37,678.94) | Fundraising | \$ 40,675.66 |
| Contingency | \$ (9,000.00) | Plate | \$ 25,232.48 |
| Priest | \$ (84,132.25) | Pledge | \$132,060.02 |
| Service/Program | \$ (21,914.12) | Space | \$ 5,920.00 |
| Diocese | \$ (21,877.00) | Investments | \$ 7,948.88 |
| Outreach | \$ (2,749.00) | Mem Funds | |
| Property | \$ (34,257.01) | | |
| TOTAL | \$(211,608.32) | TOTAL | \$211,837.04 |
| (deficit)/surplus | \$ 228.72 | | |
| budgeted deficit | \$ (974.00) | | |

2010 Pledge Update

Thank you to the parishioners who have pledged for 2010. To date, we have received 82 pledge cards, for a total of \$133,661 pledged.

Lenten Events:

Hosting a House Church Meeting

Would you like to host a house church meeting? We are currently organizing some house church gatherings, akin to the way early Christians met in one another's homes to worship and share time together. At these gatherings, the host generally provides an entree, and guests bring other additions. Then, there is Eucharist and discussion. The dinners are usually light and fun. Suggested dates for the gatherings are Sunday, February 28th, Sunday March 14th, Thursday March 11th, and Tuesday March 2nd. If you would like more information, or to sign up, please contact the parish office. More information to come.

» » Thank You » »

Thanks to Everyone who helped make Christmas spectacular here at St. As': The choir, Laura Ravotti, acolytes, altar guild, flower guild, all who donated flowers, all who served as ushers, readers, and Eucharistic Ministers. Thank you!

Thanks to Jill Mader and all our faithful cooks who have completed two years of monthly lunch preparations for the Peekskill Soup Kitchen.

Thanks to our outgoing Vestry Members, Ed Godek, and Greg Kaebnick. A special thanks to Duncan Cleary who will be leaving as our Senior Warden. Your commitment to the life of this parish is astounding!

Thanks to our Block 4 Sunday School Teachers! Elizabeth Hoffman, Michael Steger, Margaret Mahoney, Debbie Ramsey and Mary Ellen O'Neil.

Thanks to all who helped at the Croton Caring Committee's Luncheon in January.

Thanks to all who went to Mississippi!! Congratulations!

Thanks to all who cooked, cleaned & attended our Martin Luther King, Jr. Service.

Thanks to everyone who has pledged: the life of this parish is possible because of you!

» » Thank You » »

Adult Education

How the Read the Gospels, led by Father Brad. In this two session class, meeting on Sundays February 21st and 28th after the 10:30 service, we will be looking at some themes and ideas of the Gospels.

How do you read those darned things? We will follow the book, "*How to Read the New Testament*" by Etienne Charpentier.

Copies are available for 12 dollars in the parish office. Sign up and pre-reading of the book is encouraged.

Sunday, March 14th after 10:30 service, The Reverend Deacon Keith McKenna will be presenting an Adult Education session titled *Pilgrims in their Own Land, the indigenous Christian Churches of America*.

Sunday, March 21st: after 10:30 service, The Reverend Deacon Keith McKenna will be presenting the second Adult Education session titled *Pilgrims in their Own Land, the indigenous Christian Churches of America*.

A Look Ahead in Adult Education

In the Easter Season, we look forward to Deacon Keith and Elizabeth Hoffman leading a session on Church Architecture, the book group will be reading, "The Guernsey Literary Potato Peel Society" by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Burrows, and there will be a continuation of the course, "How to Read the New Testament".

Third Annual 5K Run

The 3rd running of the St. A's 5k and newly added Fun Run will be held on **May 1** with the start and finish at Senasqua Park. We will be having an organizational meeting soon and invite anyone who would like to volunteer to chair a committee (it's not as serious as it sounds) to contact Jenn Latham 248-0524 (jennlatham68@yahoo.com). We're looking forward to another great race. The proceeds this year will go to the Cortlandt Food Bank.



Carpenter's Kids Pledges

We are in the process of compiling St A's 2010 offering to Carpenter's Kids. Pledges (\$50.00) for 2010 are due on March 22nd. Place your pledge in the offering plate with **Carpenter's Kids 2010** in the memo section of the check. If you need to know the status of your pledge please contact the Parish Office.

Carpenter's Kid's is a program which sponsors children in Africa orphaned by HIV/AIDS. The program provides these children with food, clothing and school supplies.

Second Parish Chili Cook-off!

Saturday, March 6th

For a second year we will be having a Championship Chili Cook-Off. Event attendees will be the real winners, as they will be asked to taste and vote on all the entries in order to determine our Parish Chili Champ!

Doors open for registration and setup at 6:00 pm for the contestants, 6:30 pm for the attendees. \$15 per contestant/ \$10 per attendee/ \$5 for children. Please bring a salad, cornbread or dessert.



We are in need of babysitters for the Chili Cookoff on Sat., March 6. We need two sitters 2-3 hours. You will be paid \$10 per hour. If you are interested please contact Suzanne Smith at hortonsmitty@verizon.net or 827-9394.

Book Group Notes

Our next book will be, The Help, by Kathryn Stockett. We will meet on **Sunday, March 7th**, after the 10:30 AM service.

Three ordinary women are about to take one extraordinary step. In pitch-perfect voices, Kathryn Stockett creates three extraordinary women whose determination to start a movement of their own forever changes a town, and the way women—mothers, daughters, caregivers, friends—view one another. A deeply moving novel filled with poignancy, humor, and hope, The Help is a timeless and universal story about the lines we abide by, and the ones we don't. - Amazon

FoodFest Update

Did you win a dish or dessert from FoodFest? It has been six months since JuneFest, yet many winners have yet to call in their just desserts. If you've been holding off, perhaps it's time to pick a date and order in – your cook is waiting for your call! A complete listing of items and winners is posted on the bulletin board in the kitchen, should you need to refresh your memory on the status of your winning bids.

If you would like to receive envelopes for your pledge please contact Kim in the Office.

Sophia Steger Performs

Sophia Steger will be performing at the Miller Recital Hall at Manhattan School of Music, msmnyc.edu, on Saturday, March 27th at 12:00 pm. She will be performing in the Dorothy Hales Gary Scholarship Concert.

Save the Date

Saturday, April 10th - Cabaret Night

Saturday, October 9th - Harvest Moon
Dinner Dance and Auction

From Trinity Church, Ossining. Community Ringing of the Bells for the Environment

Dear Friends:

I am attempting to organize a Landmark parish event that will combine liturgy with awareness of the global environmental crisis. The liturgy involves ringing church bells 350 times, (50 for each of the seven days of creation). "350" is the maximum number of carbon particles per million that the science community believes the earth can sustain. Currently the earth is at approx. 380 and is expected to go up to over 700, unless drastic steps similar to those proposed but not adopted at Stockholm are put in place. (see attached liturgy). Check out the site for "350.org", particularly the section for Faith communities. <http://www.350.org>

We have a great opportunity to bring our message of stewardship, action and hope to our community and the world with this exciting project. Looking forward to working with all of you.

For more information please contact the Parish Office.

Soot Cleanup in the Parish Hall

The week of President's Day, February 15 – 19, ServPro, a professional cleaning company will be in the Parish Hall cleaning up from the soot backup from the burner in October.

Be aware that this will no way effect the distribution of ashes on Ash Wednesday, February 17th.

Lenten Events 2010

Sunday, February 14th Mite Box distribution at Sunday School. Mite boxes will be distributed to raise money for children in Africa who are orphaned by the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Tanzania through the Carpenter Kid's program. The money raised will be used for school supplies and clothing.

Ash Wednesday, February 17th

Noon: Holy Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes.

7 PM: Holy Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes

Sunday February 21st, After the 10:30 Service, *How to Read the New Testament*, led by Father Brad

Tuesday, February 23rd and all Tuesday evenings in Lent: 6:45 PM Compline with Stations of the Cross.

Sunday, February 28th, After the 10:30 service, "*How to Read the New Testament*", led by Father Brad

Saturday, March 6th, 2nd Annual Chile Cook-off! Not exactly Lenten, but a good time for all!

Sunday, March 7th, 10:30 is a Children's Service for Lent

Sunday March 7th, after the 10:30 service join the St. A's Book-Group as we read "The Help" by Kathryn Stockett

Sunday, March 14th after 10:30 service, Keith Presenting Adult Ed "Pilgrims in their Own Land," the indigenous Christian Churches of America.

Sunday, March 21st: after 10:30 service, Keith Presenting Adult Ed "Pilgrims in their Own Land," the indigenous Christian Churches of America.

Holy Week

Palm Sunday, March 28th: 9:45 Liturgy of the Palms in the Parish Hall. Children's Event will be held during the service.

Maundy Thursday, April 1st: Agape Meal and Maundy Thursday Liturgy. Enjoy a meal with friends. The church will provide some mainstays, and invites you to bring some simple, Middle-eastern fair for this traditional meal followed by the service. The meal starts at 6:30. The service begins at 7:30. The Rev. Dr. Beth Glover will be preaching.

Maundy Thursday Overnight Vigil, April 1st - 2nd beginning at 9:00 PM: Following the Maundy Thursday Liturgy, sign up to keep vigil in the Sanctuary overnight.

Good Friday, April 2nd Good Friday Liturgy at 12 Noon.

Holy Saturday, April 3rd Come to the Easter Vigil, the holiest liturgy of the year, complete with candles, a and a bonfire. During this service, we commemorate the passing from death to life. Service begins at 7 PM.

Easter Day: April 4th, Easter Day: services at 9 and 11 AM. Children's activities will be provided during the sermon. Easter Egg Hunt will happen BETWEEN the 9 and 11 AM service.

Easter Day: At services, ingathering for Carpenter's Kids Mite Boxes.

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