



Pages 10 and 11 are the month's calendar which is in a separate attachment.

The Episcopal Church of the Ascension

800 Northshore Drive
Knoxville, Tennessee 37919
865-588-0589
fax: 865-584-7922
www.knoxvilleascension.org

The Rt. Rev. Charles G. vonRosenberg, Bishop of East Tennessee
The Rev. Dr. Howard J. Hess, Rector
The Rev. Robert P. Travis, Associate Rector
The Rev. Brett P. Backus, Assistant to the Rector
The Rev. Mary Lee Bergeron, Priest Associate
The Rev. Amy H. Morehous, Deacon

June 2009

VBS '09 ROCKS GO, SAH	VBS 2009 
	REGISTER NOW! JUNE 8 - 11 . 9:00 AM - 12 Noon
	CALL Ascension, 588-0589, OR download registration form from website: www.knoxvilleascension.org OR stop by VBS Corner. <i>Registration deadline extended until Thursday, May 28.</i>
	More volunteers are needed! Volunteers are key to the success of VBS ~ Please contact Lynn Wise.  VBS Giving Tree: Monetary donations are very much needed! You can help make VBS happen by making a monetary donation ~ visit our Giving Tree at the VBS Corner.
QUESTIONS & MORE INFORMATION... Lynn Wise: email: lynn@knoxvilleascension.org ★ phone: 769-4930	

Deadline for July Parish Paper: June 17

Service Schedule for June

Sunday, June 7 - Trinity Sunday

8:00 AM Holy Eucharist I

10:30 AM Holy Eucharist II - with Confirmation

Appointed Readings: Isaiah 6:1-8; Psalm 29; Romans 8:12-17; John 3:1-17

Sunday, June 14 - Pentecost II, Proper 6

8:00 AM Holy Eucharist I

10:30 AM Holy Eucharist II

Appointed Readings: Ezekiel 17:22-24; Psalm 92:1-4, 11-14; 2 Corinthians 5:6-10, (11-13), 14-17; Mark 4:26-34

Sunday, June 21 - Pentecost III, Proper 7

8:00 AM Holy Eucharist I

10:30 AM Holy Eucharist II

Appointed Readings: Job 38:1-11; Psalm 107: 1-3, 23-32; 2 Corinthians 6:1-13; Mark 4:35-41

Sunday, June 28 - Pentecost IV, Proper 8

8:00 AM Holy Eucharist I

10:30 AM Holy Eucharist II

5:00 PM Holy Eucharist III

Appointed Readings: Wisdom of Solomon 1:13-15; 2:23-24; Lamentations 3:21-33; 2 Corinthians 8:7-15; Mark 5:21-43

The Rt. Rev. Charles G. vonRosenberg, Bishop of East Tennessee, will be here on Sunday, June 7. At the 10:30 service he will confirm, receive, and reaffirm a good group of adults and young people.

A reception to welcome the Bishop and the confirmands will follow the service.

a letter from Father Howard —

May 17, 2007

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I am sitting at the computer in my church office at approximately 5:00 p.m. on Sunday evening, May 17th. The church is particularly peaceful this afternoon. The echoes of our worship services this morning are in my ears, and I'm listening to a concert by The African Children's Choir as I write this letter to you. I am pondering the fine words of Father Rob this morning who encouraged us to go to a deeper level in our friendship with Jesus. And I am remembering the announcement of Father Brett who continues to give us opportunities to participate in Ascension's upcoming mission trip to Boliva. And I'm reflecting on a meeting after church led by our Deacon Amy who had to leave another church early to get here to lead us in considering what to offer next year in adult education classes. We are a blessed community. If I were writing a legal brief, which I have never done and will not do here, I could describe in a very full and very specific way the manner in which God has blessed Ascension. We are many of us aware of the nature of these blessings and of the importance in living out our gratefulness to God in response.

It is about demonstrating our gratefulness that I am writing today. One of our parishioners shared a recent detailed analysis of our financial giving patterns at Ascension. It was a multi-year analysis and showed that we tend in our parish to slow down in our giving in May and June. One can speculate about what the reasons might be. This has tended to leave the parish in the position of having to borrow money from some source to tide ourselves over. This challenge is somewhat more serious in that we are already going into the summer months with more of a deficit than we did in 2008. I would like to ask you to make this a different kind of May and June and give with a generosity that reflects the way that we perceive that God has blessed us, our families, and our parish.



I am fully aware that this is for many of us a challenging or, to say the least, a disconcerting time financially. We are all being called upon to examine our lifestyles, income streams, and projected expenses. I also know that when it is time to bring the first fruits of our labor to God, we are tempted to wait and put off that expenditure until we see how the rest of that month's budget will unfold. We all struggle with the human tendency to hang on tighter when the going gets rough. Do believe me when I tell you both from my theology and my personal experience that God honors our faithfulness in giving and that God promises to walk with us through this period of economic turbulence.

It remains quiet here this Sunday afternoon. I am remembering that God has called us to be together here at Ascension and that God will continue to make clear to us what steps in ministry we are to take together. I am grateful to be with you. I am grateful that God has sent Fathers Rob and Brett here, that God has sent the Reverends Mary Lee and Amy to be here. Most recently Deacon Larry Beach has come to assist us as well. I am grateful for a talented lay staff and for all the volunteers that help Ascension function. Please pray about your giving this Spring and step forward in faith to support us all in doing the work that God has called us to do.

Thanks Be To God,

Father Howard

We would like to acknowledge the following contributions to the Martha Window:



In memory of her husband, Jim, by Joan Rose

In honor of their mother, Jeannie, and in honor of Susan Pannell, by John, Richard, and Bob Pannell

in memory of Rhett Rodgers and in honor of Donie Green by Bebes Claiborne, Leslie Crowson, Jeannie Davis, Francie Elrod, Doris Grayson, Susan Hawthorne, Lillian Jones, Carolyn Koefoot, Betty Leverett, Jane Maddox, Sabra Martin, Jeannie Pannell, Susan Pannell, Clara Parman, Carol Schmid

The Beauty of Anglican Worship

I truly believe that we are blessed in The Episcopal Church by the rich liturgy we have inherited from the generations of faithful Anglicans who have come before us. We hold this liturgy in trust. Even though there are differences in how the liturgy is conducted from one Episcopal Church to another, a core dimension of what binds us together as a denomination is the shared nature of our liturgy. This is captured most centrally in *The Book of Common Prayer*. Our sacramental theology, our reliance upon Scripture, and our deep, deep belief in the efficacy of prayer are central to all our worship liturgies and to the Prayer Book. The Adult Education Commission met on Sunday May 17th, and is already formulating designs for adult classes next year that will help us embrace and articulate the fullness of our traditions as Episcopalians.

In the interim, I would like to invite us to approach our worship services at Ascension with awe and reverence. We are very glad to see one another on Sunday mornings and many of us literally pour through our narthex in the last few minutes before our 10:30 service begins. We greet one another with enthusiasm and warmth, and for that I am grateful. One of the things I like most about us is our affection for one another and for the visitors God sends to worship with us. Our new coffee hour has been an outstanding "hit." If you have not yet ventured forth to the parish hall following worship, come down and see how much we are enjoying one another.

Back to the awe and reverence. I would like to ask that when you leave the foyer and enter the narthex before worship, that you begin to transform yourself into a place of openness to meet God in worship. Please come early enough that you can pray before the service begins and maintain a quietness so that others may pray in an undisturbed way around you. I particularly suggest that you invite God's Spirit to come to you and to us as a community as we prepare to worship. If there are worries, agitations, or distractions, lift them up and give them to God and openly ask God for the transformation that worship is meant to give us. Some kneel in prayer while others sit and pray. Adopt those practices that open you most fully. You may wish to pray your own prayers at that time or use the prayers provided to us in *The Book of Common Prayer*. Prayers for use before, during, and after worship are located on pp. 833 and 834.

There is a particularly beautiful prayer found on the bottom of page 833. I commend it to you:

O Almighty God, who pours out on all who desire it the spirit of grace and supplication: Deliver us, when we draw near to you, from coldness of heart and wanderings of mind, that with steadfast thoughts and kindled affections we may worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Father Howard

Community Chest Collection Day

Saturday, June 6, 2009

10:00 - 11:30 AM in the church parking lot

REPORT FROM THE VESTRY

As we pass the busy Easter season and head toward summertime, let us not forget that the work of this parish continues and must be sustained. Hopefully, each of us will have the opportunity during the coming season for some rest and relaxation, but as we do, please do all you can to enable our parish family to continue to carry on with its work. Please make a special effort to maintain your active support of the work of the parish by both your participation and by keeping up with your pledge. By doing so, we can collectively do those things God has caused us to do – with confidence.

Thank you for all of the many ways that you contribute to this work.

April Meeting — April 21, 2009

Vaiden Taylor, Treasurer, reported that March total operating income was over budget estimates by nearly \$7400, but expenses were over budget by \$6725. This resulted in a March surplus of \$674; however, our year-to-date deficit per the budget at the end of March was \$15,108 necessitating short-term borrowing from the building fund. To date we have borrowed \$25,000 from the Building Fund. John Pannell presented the Finance Committee report and provided further information on areas of budget spending, particularly areas over budget. Gas/utilities are approximately \$4300 over budget. Childcare/nursery is over by \$1077 (due to the larger numbers of children, which is a good problem to have). Search committee expenses are over budget by \$561 due to printing more copies of the Parish Profile than expected. In addition, the budget did not anticipate the unused vacation that was paid to our nighttime sexton who recently retired. The refinancing of the parish's debt that was recently accomplished will save approximately \$500 per month. Additional savings will be realized in salaries for some staff who will be off in the summer.

The Finance Committee recommended that we look at ways to adjust our budget in order to avoid a deficit at the end of

the year. If pledge payments continue, we will meet budget amounts but will not be able to absorb where we are currently over budget. Bob Wadley and Fr. Howard are looking at ways to revise the budget and will present this to the Finance Committee in May. The vestry will see this at the next meeting. Bob said that although we have allowed for 3% pledge shrinkage, we may need to allow 4% this year given the uncertain state of economic conditions.

Three areas of underfunding in our 2009 budget were identified and discussed: (1) there were no staff raises this year; (2) we did not fully fund the Diocesan pledge; (3) money from the Endowment Fund currently augments Outreach. It was felt that as we prepare for next year it would be helpful to identify actual amounts for these underfunded areas and present them to the parish. A stewardship consultant who will be advising the parish this year, Corky Carlisle, will be asked how we might best share this information as he works with the Stewardship Committee in designing our next Stewardship Campaign.

Bob Wadley reported that at this point in April revenues are slightly less than expected and expenses are running as expected.

Fr. Howard in his report expressed his desire to strike a balance between being optimistic, realistic, and pessimistic in our monetary outlook. He sees both spiritual and financial issues when we live ten out of twelve months in a deficit and then catch up, as has been the habit at Ascension. He noted that during last year's Home Eucharists parishioners asked that they be informed about what is happening with church finances. The Rector wants to communicate clearly and very intentionally to the church community. Vestry discussion centered on the use of preaching and teaching about stewardship to do this. It was suggested that we begin laying the groundwork in the next couple of months as we work with Fr. Carlisle, who will be at the vestry meeting in May.

Junior Warden Julie Hembree invited everyone to view the beautiful Martha window which was installed last week in the Sacristy. She commented that as the sun streams through, it glows in brilliant colors. The window will be enjoyed by all those who see it.

Fr. Howard praised the many volunteers who contributed to the wonderful Holy Week services. Fr. Rob reported that approximately 1100 worshiped on Easter Day. He also shared that the Ascension DVD was mailed to all newcomers in the area around the church. We receive an update each week of new people in the selected zip codes, and we will continue to send each the DVD about our church.

Julie also noted that three children and one adult were baptized at the Great Easter Vigil. Among those baptized was Fr. Howard's new granddaughter and an adult who served as a Eucharistic Minister for the first time this past Sunday. Julie thanked all those who decorated the church so beautifully for Easter. Special thanks was extended to Jeanie Davis for the beautiful arrangement she created for Fr. Howard's installment reception. Another glorious part of Fr. Howard's installment occurred before the 10:30 service that day. Julie said that if you didn't hear the moving rendition of "Down to the River to Pray," you missed a special treat. The quartet of Peg Hess, Dan Hoskins, Deanna Stanley and Fr. Rob was superb, and it is hoped that they will follow with other musical offerings in the near future.

Bert Ackerman reported that Ascension has arranged bus transportation to Grace Point, leaving the church at 9:30 and returning around 2:30 on May 2 for the chapel dedication. Cost is \$5 for the bus and \$5 for lunch. The service will begin at 11:00 and there will be time to visit the grounds of Grace Point both before and after the service. Fr. Howard stated that a special invitation would be mailed to those Ascension members who donated to the purchase of chairs for the chapel.

As Chairman of the Communications Commission, Bert also reported that notebooks listing 55 currently active Ascension ministries have been prepared. One notebook will be placed in the library, one will be given to Cathy Wadley, and one will be available for use by the Greeters. The new website that is in the planning stages will have a link to this listing as well. Bert reported that a Request for Proposals for the design of the new website will be mailed out to a number of firms next week.

For efficiency and economy, the church's goal is to use e-mail for communication whenever feasible, and we currently have

about 50% of parishioners' e-mails. It was reported that the Communication Commission is planning to create a policy statement governing use of e-mail addresses supplied by parish members so that parishioners will be comfortable allowing the parish to have their e-mail addresses. Once the policy statement is complete, the Commission will aggressively campaign to get all e-mail addresses.

Finally, the vestry approved three youth and one adult as Lay Eucharistic Ministers. The youth are Jessica Robertson, Rob Kaminsky, and McKenzie Roddy. Paul Banick is the adult.

Tom Hale, Senior Warden

May Meeting — May 12, 2009

Father Howard introduced the Rev. Corky Carlisle to the vestry and suggested that Corky's presentation supersede the regular vestry reports in order for Corky to maintain his travel plans following the meeting. The following is a brief summary of Corky's presentation to the vestry.

Episcopalians seem to find it easy to talk about almost everything but money. The vestry should be the model for the rest of the parish as parishioners pay a lot of attention to what vestry members do and say. What do we believe about stewardship?

- *Good stewardship centers upon the conversion of people, not the collection of more dollars,*
- *Good stewardship means recruiting leaders, not taking volunteers,*
- *Good stewardship means developing leaders who are committed and competent,*
- *Good stewardship enables church leaders to talk about money in ways that transform lives,*
- *Good stewardship values the time and talent of leaders,*
- *Good stewardship means accepting that the difference between what we say and what we do is reconciled by Jesus.*

Ascension should consider developing a Statement of Stewardship (an example from another church was shown for illustration) that describes our commitment to stewardship and the reasons for that commitment. The vestry should fully support this Statement of Stewardship by signature. Over time stewardship should become a year-round activity,

not restricted to the fall time period but given special emphasis during that portion of the Church calendar.

An analysis of the number and size of pledges at Ascension reveals a pattern that is not unlike many other churches. Using a graphic of concentric circles, the Rev. Mr. Carlisle explained that parishioners range from those who attend church only a few times a year, represented in the outermost circle, to a core of those who routinely provide leadership for multiple church functions every week of the year, represented in the core circle.

Stewardship is not about asking people for more money but about giving back some of what God has given us. It's about asking people to become more involved and moving them toward positions of leadership in the church so that they realize the value of God's work that is being accomplished by the dollars they give. This fall we won't be asking anyone for more money. What we will be doing is converting people into church leaders. That should become a joyous and fun activity year-round, rather than a burden every fall.

Following Corky's presentation, Leo and Leslie Beale explained more about this year's stewardship campaign at Ascension. We will be taking a new direction. This fall's campaign will not be focused on people giving more or about all the things we would like to do at Ascension but cannot afford. It will be about what we all have been given.

The kickoff for this year's campaign will be a feast on September 25 celebrating Father Howard as our new rector, the increase we have seen in the number of new and active parishioners, and the many other blessings Ascension has enjoyed over the past year. Each table will have a host. It is hoped that over 300 people will attend, requiring the use of a facility larger than the church. The Rev. Corky Carlisle will attend and talk about what stewardship means for all of us. In the recent parish survey, many parishioners said they wanted to be inspired. Father Howard has made a commitment that at least four sermons during this year's campaign will be devoted to inspiring us about stewardship.

The special theme for this year's stewardship campaign will be "Open Heart - Open Hands."

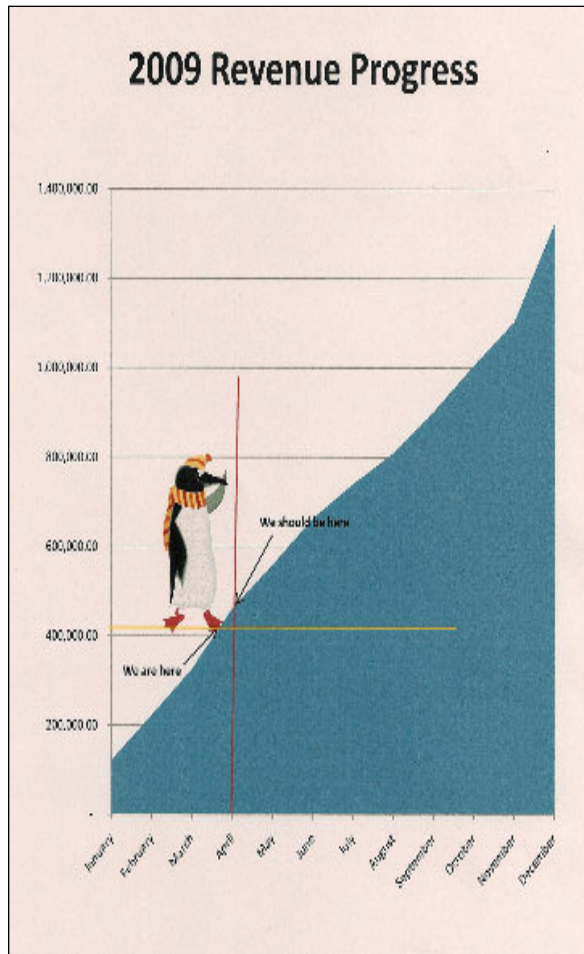
The campaign will be run by teams rather than a committee so as to maximize the number of people directly involved, thereby lessening the effort required by each individual. Pledge cards are going to be redesigned and will not be provided at the beginning of the campaign as in the past, but will instead be held until near the end. All parishioners will have the opportunity to take their pledge cards up to the altar in a manner that is symbolic with giving of themselves to God's work. Methods for submitting pledges online are also being investigated. The campaign will end on November 1 with the traditional pig roast.

Leslie Beale explained the special theme for this year's stewardship campaign: "Open Heart - Open Hands." If we hold on to all the gifts we have been given by closing our hands around them, then our hands cannot be open to receive further gifts that God would bestow upon us. But if we open our hands and share what we have been given, our hands are always open to receive more. To open our hands we

need to open our heart and to open our heart we need to open our hands. Each must precede the other so there is neither a beginning nor an end. Leslie would like to work with someone who can create an artistic representation of this theme.

Vaiden Taylor presented the April financial figures. The April Summary Report shows that total revenue was \$10,452 below what was budgeted. [The cartoon on the next page illustrates where we are to date on revenues and where we should be at this point in the year.]

For the year to date, revenue collected is better than last year but below this year's budget by about \$25,000. The Staff at Ascension has been controlling expenses very well. Total operating expenses were \$80 below budget for April. The total year-to-date deficit is \$44,489. However, a significant portion of this is due to having to make some payments earlier than expected, including some expenses for the mission trip to Bolivia. It was noted that revenue collected in May is historically lower than budgeted.



The traditional pattern of collecting revenue and the methods used to adjust the projected monthly budget to match that pattern were discussed in some detail. The vestry is concerned that this pattern of deficit spending in the summer and a big recovery in December is not reliable and needs to be changed. Several vestry members asked if parishioners really pay much attention to the church finances. Father Howard responded that they do, but often it is their ability to meet their pledge each month that concerns them most. People do respond and give more in response to messages from the pulpit.

John Pannell presented the revised 2009 budget for discussion and approval. It reduces overall income and expenses by \$3,950 for the year. Shrinkage (assumption of pledges that won't be collected) was increased from 3% to 4%. John reviewed the revised budget line item by line item identifying numerous adjustments that have been made. Bert Ackermann asked if funds for the new Martha window were identified in the 2009 budget. Father Howard responded that the Martha window was funded independently of the budget and has been completely paid for. The total cost of the Martha window, including installation, was \$23,500.

Ben Davidson presented a written report on the activities of the Great Commission Commission (GCC). Members of the GCC are Scott Poland and Ben Davidson (Vestry), Father Rob Travis (Clergy), and Steve Catron, Lida K. Barrett, Sue Peiers, Cathy Wadley and Bert Ackermann (Committee Members).

The GCC met at Ascension on January 29 and February 25 of this year. Father Rob, Lida Barrett and Ben Davidson also attended a conference at St. George's Episcopal Church in Nashville on April 25. Ben Davidson attended the Evangelism 101 course. Another presentation at the conference entitled "Keys for Church Growth: How to Open the Front Door and Close the Back" was particularly interesting. As illustrated by one of the diagrams used by the Rev. Corky Carlisle earlier in the meeting, it was noted that people in the outer two circles are the most vulnerable to falling by the wayside. It is critical to draw these people into the ministry circle. If connections are not made and assimilation not accomplished, most of these folks will be in the front door and out the back within a matter of six weeks. Also included in the GCC Report was a chart showing how easily Americans seem to move from one religion to another. The vestry discussed at length the need for evangelism at Ascension.

There being no further business, Randy Nichols made a motion that the meeting be adjourned.

*excerpted from minutes submitted by Larry Jones,
Clerk of the Vestry*

from our Associate Rector

The Great Commission

Part 4

Dear Fellow Ministers of Jesus Christ,

Recently I attended an Evangelism conference in Nashville with two members of our Great Commission Commission. It was called "How to Open the Front Door and Close the Back." Seems like a practical title, eh? It was a very practical workshop. We don't often think about how we tend the back door in the church, and we necessarily put a lot of attention on the front door. We are blessed with gifted greeters, and an even more gifted Greeters Chair (Sue Peiers). We have been blessed with Cathy Wadley carefully helping people find their place as new members. But how do we keep people from coming in, trying us out for a while, and then leaving a few weeks later? The key is helping people get involved in ministries that interest them and make a difference.



Evangelism is a difficult subject for most people, because so many of us are uncomfortable with the image of the street corner preacher yelling his "Gospel" to anyone who will listen and handing out tracts to make people feel guilty enough to turn their hearts to God. That is not an Anglican model of evangelism, for good reason. We know that it will not work, and we are embarrassed by how it presents us as Christians. Much more effective, and something I think we can all be good at, is making friends with people, caring for them in ways that no one else will, and gradually sharing our faith stories with them, praying that they will come to know the Lord, The Lover of Souls, as we do. The easiest place to do this Gospel work is within our own ministries in the church. The fact is, we have people who come to us for a variety of reasons, and the Holy Spirit is active in ways we cannot understand, bringing new people to the Church of the Ascension. How do we receive them when they come?

This is not simply a question about greeting and welcoming in church. It is a question about how we receive new members into our various ministries.

At the conference in Nashville we learned that only a small percentage of active ministries in a church need to be actively welcoming new members in order for a church to realize real growth. When people come to a church, they are not just looking for a place to sit on Sunday mornings. They are looking for a place where faith can be put into action, where they can experience the transforming love of Christ through doing good works. Many of you have experienced the depth of joy that comes from doing effective ministries in the church. How open are you to sharing that joy with new members? I encourage each of you, as you work in your various ministries, to look for the opportunity to welcome newcomers to work with you. This is not just so that your ministry will have more people to share the load, but so that these new people can experience the joy of serving the Lord in this place. This involvement, more than almost anything else, will assure that people don't just come and go, but come and become a part of our loving community. Someone welcomed you in to your ministry at Ascension. Now it's your turn!

Fr. Rob

*Summer is coming;
vacations are planned.*

Worship at a church where you are vacationing and be the visitor, the guest. Let them minister to you in greeting. If you feel particularly well welcomed, let us know. We are always looking for new ideas and ways to make our visitors know we are glad they are here.

from our Director of Christian Education

When my younger daughter, Grace, was about two and a half, I asked her what she wanted to be when she grew up. She joyfully replied, "an elephant!" My middle schooler revived our memory of this incident recently when she came home from school and told us that her teacher had asked the class: "If you could be any animal, which one would you be?" Her friends had come up with various answers: many said they'd be cats. One wanted to be an albino ostrich (hmmm.... the creative type...) My daughter answered, "a fox." (You might recall that she hopes to be a lawyer some day.)



When we talk to our children about being Christians, we often use the imagery of sheep and the Good Shepherd, taken from John 10, to shape their understanding of their relationship with Jesus. Our Catechesis program is, in fact, called "Catechesis of the Good Shepherd." We use the image of sheep to convey to the children that they are cared for and protected. Outside of Sunday School, I can't think of a single situation in which we encourage our children to think of themselves as sheep. Instead, we hope for children who will become leaders, stand out from the crowd, win prizes and awards, make the honor roll. To be honest, the image of sheep doesn't seem to fit most of the Episcopal adults I know, either. We are not conformists. We Episcopalians make a point of challenging anything and everything; we're proud of the fact that we encompass a wide range of opinions and that we emphasize the need for individuals to struggle with difficult questions for themselves. Episcopalians are truly some of the most un-sheep-like Christians I've ever met.

The individualism of modern American culture, too, makes it hard to hear what agrarian Israelites would have heard instinctively in the parable Jesus told. Jesus' listeners would have understood the flock of sheep as an extended family or clan belonging both to one another and to a single leader.

They would have heard images resonant with Isaiah's prophecies and understood that Jesus was talking not about a group of helpless farm animals, but about Israel itself, the covenant people of God. The sheep and the shepherd carried the strong message of protection because they also conveyed a message of belonging and community.

In our modern lives we seem to spend a great deal of time worrying about ourselves as individuals—our 401k, our personal safety, our status and title, our appearance, our reputation. We go "church-shopping" for the right fit; we shoe-horn Sunday School into our calendars when we can. Our fast-paced lives are customized in every detail, from the picture on our credit cards to the color of our ipods. We want it "our way." Can our life as a Christian community survive the centrifugal forces of modern life?

Scripture and *The Book of Common Prayer* give us specific vocabulary to help us understand who we are called to be as a Christian community. We refer to each other as "brothers and sisters in Christ." We greet the newly baptized as family: "We receive you into the household of God..." But these phrases may no longer resonate within a society where the concepts of family and marriage are vigorously debated and dependent on context. When being a "flock," a family unit - kept, fed, and guided together, day in and day out-- no longer corresponds to the reality of our 'car for every driver, everyone eats at different times, separate TV in every bedroom, individualized music library' lifestyle, how do we make sense of what it means to be "the people of God"?

N. T. Wright, a great Anglican theologian, grapples with this question in his book *The New Testament and the People of God*. He asserts that although the Christian community has always been diverse, even from its earliest history, its continuity across time and space boils down to two things: to our shared story, based in Hebrew scripture and reaching its climax in Jesus; and to the Spirit-filled task which that shared story sets before us. Let me repeat that. We have a story; we have a Spirit-guided purpose. I think that's another way of saying we're a flock (with a family history) with a shepherd (who speaks to us and tells us where to go and what to do), but the words "story" and "purpose" make more sense to my modern ears.

Perhaps, in the end, we can think of all the different denominations, including our own, as different flocks and herds, self-selected elephants and foxes and sheep who have banded together because they hear the voice of the shepherd in a specific range, calling them to a particular task. I don't dare suggest what animal Episcopalians might be, but I take comfort in an image of the Kingdom of God drawn from Isaiah, when all who hear His voice will truly be one people, at peace and in community: "The wolf shall also dwell with the lamb; and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together ... And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall ... recover the remnant of his people." (Isaiah 11:6, 11)

Jacqueline Soltys

Getting to know our Ascension Staff

This is a monthly feature in the Parish Paper through which you, the parish, will be introduced to each of our staff members. Even if you've known some of them for many years, you may learn things about them that you didn't know! This month we feature Charis Hoskins.

Who is that tall staff person gracefully gliding, nearly dancing, as she goes about her daily responsibilities? Why it's our very own Charis, Financial Assistant to the Parish Administrator and Coordinator of Office Services. Actually, her full name is Charis (meaning "Grace" in Greek) Elizabeth Kirkpatrick Hoskins. Charis's father, who died when she was 21 months old, was the Rector of the Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration in Bat Cave, North Carolina, which is also where she was born. Her mother, Virginia, remarried a couple of years later to Kermit Duckett and they moved to Knoxville. Charis first became a member of the Church of the Ascension in 1966 and rejoined in 1995 when she



returned to Knoxville after having lived in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Nashville, Tennessee. Charis is married to Dan Hoskins and has two children, Lauralei Elizabeth Kraski and David Lawrence Kraski.

Charis graduated from Doyle (now South Doyle) High School in Knoxville and the University of Tennessee in 1985 with a bachelor's degree in "Dance in Education." She then moved to Pittsburgh where she danced professionally, as well as choreographed, directed, and performed in stage plays, such as "Little Shop of Horrors", "Company," and "South Pacific." Charis has worked in various capacities at Ascension, off and on, since 1999. She has taught Sunday School, helped organize, manage, and sing in the Contemporary Worship Band and is active in, and soon to be Directress of, the Altar Guild.

Away from church, Charis loves to cook, listen to music and, most of all, spend time at the beach, any beach! And, although she is an excellent traveler, don't take her on any curvy, right-on-the-edge mountain roads in Colorado without a blindfold.

Are you looking for a daytime EfM class?

Education for Ministry, or EfM, is a four-year study sponsored by the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee. It is an intensive, (but fun!) study of the Old and New Testaments, Church History, and Theological Writings of the Church Fathers. There are several groups available in Knoxville. If you would be interested in an EfM group that meets during the day, as opposed to an evening group, there is one which meets on Thursdays from 9 to 11:30 AM at St. James Episcopal Church on N. Broadway. It has concluded for this year but will begin again in September. They are looking for new members and would be happy to tell you more about EfM and what it has meant to them. For more information, call Marilyn Roddy, 637-0333, Emily Coco, 705-2893, or Diane Gross, 712-4956.

from our Assistant to the Rector

By the time most of you get this, Ascension's mission team will already be in Bolivia. So, I thought it would be good to give you all a kind of step-by-step itinerary of our trip so that you all could in some way take part in this journey. I would also like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all of you for your generous support of this mission trip. It is a huge testament to where Ascension is as a Christian community that even in these very challenging economic times a community can rally such amazing and generous support around a new outreach and mission project. This is truly your team and it would not have been possible without you all.



After departing from Ascension on the afternoon of May 24, the group will arrive on the morning of May 25 in Santa Cruz, Bolivia. There the group will spend two full days and one half day interacting with and learning about a small struggling Anglican church and their community called "La Iglesia de Cristo, Pan de Vida," (The Church of Christ – Bread of Life.) The group's goal while visiting this commu-



La Iglesia de Cristo, Pan de Vida

nity is to learn about the church's immediate needs and dreams for the future while engaging in some small service projects and worship services to beautify and lift up the community while growing together in the Body of Christ. On the group's first day in Santa Cruz, the group will meet the

church community for the first time over a typical Santa Cruz lunch.

Then they will be given a tour of the immediate neighborhood where the church is located and the people to whom the church primarily ministers. While on this tour the group will be invited into some of the local parishioners' homes to get a better sense of their lives and needs. This activity not only will serve as a great learning experience for Ascension's mission team, but will also serve the Anglican church as a sort of evangelical move. Twenty-one Americans being herded through the streets of a humble Santa Cruz neighborhood is bound to draw attention to the church! The group will end up at the Anglican church for a time of service projects including activities such as painting and decorating the Sunday school rooms, staining and cleaning up furniture used in worship services, and some other small carpentry type projects for the church. That evening the group will share dinner in the church and will hear a presentation on the church's life and ministry.

Day two will consist of a brief tour of the city of Santa Cruz and a visit to a local butterfly sanctuary for lunch. Then the group will venture to a local school where many of the children from the church attend. There the group will deliver school supplies and participate in some short fun activities with the children. This will again have a dual function in that it will provide a learning experience where the group can understand better the daily life of some of the church members, and it will also help the church get exposure and draw attention from the school children and faculty. In the evening, the group will return to the church to participate in a special sending off service and worship with the Anglican community. The half day will be basically spent preparing for travel to Cochabamba and getting to the airport.



Interior of La Iglesia de Cristo,

After two and a half days in Santa Cruz located on the eastern side of Bolivia, the group will board a plane headed to Cochabamba, Bolivia, in the heart of the country. We will arrive in Cochabamba on the afternoon of Wednesday, May 27. This leg of the trip will be the most structured in that we are arriving at the headquarters of the Anglican Diocese in



Design of the church to be built in Cochabamba

Bolivia where they have a "Missions House" that will function as our home for the next few days. This is a place that is used to hosting medical missions and is accustomed to dealing with and organizing missionary teams.

It will also be the most structured and straightforward part of our experience in that we will basically be working and doing manual labor for the entire four days that we are in Cochabamba (three full days and two half days). Our goal is to aid the Anglican Church in Cochabamba to begin constructing a new temporary sanctuary or place of worship on land that the church has already purchased. For the past year or so, this congregation, "La Trinidad" (The Trinity), has been bringing whatever materials that they could afford to contribute to this building on a weekly basis. Families and individual parishioners of "La Trinidad" have been bringing materials brick by brick and nail by nail every Sunday. This small construction will be their church building for approximately the next ten years while they attempt to raise funds for a more complete and traditional church building.

When we arrive in the afternoon to Cochabamba, we will be given a short cultural orientation by the Diocesan staff, then an orientation of the church and project in which we will be participating. The first and second full days in Cochabamba will be completely dedicated to working on the church property, with the exception of lunch, a siesta, and dinner. This will be an opportunity for our Ascension team to expe-

rience pure and raw service to other Christians in the name of our Lord, and will be a place where meaningful fellowship can be had both within our own group and in our interactions with the Anglican community of Cochabamba. Our efforts there will not only help the community of "La Trinidad" progress in their material needs, but will provide moral and spiritual support demonstrating that there are fellow Christians in another part of the world who do care about them and want to help them succeed in any way possible. The third full day will only be a half day of work and the group will experience a city tour of Cochabamba and will have the opportunity to do some good old tourist shopping. For the final half day, the group will participate in Sunday services with the Anglican church, and then will prepare to fly out to the Andes mountains, high altitude, and the capital city of La Paz on the western side of Bolivia.

After four days in Cochabamba the group will board a plane headed to La Paz, Bolivia, located on the western side of the country in the Andes mountains. We will arrive in El Alto at the world's highest airport and then drive down to La Paz on the afternoon of Sunday May 31. This leg of the trip will once again be jampacked with details and destinations and every day the group spends there will be full. This part of the group's journey will be a mix of several service type projects and experiences with Anglican and Lutheran churches, along with other cultural/tourist excursions.

The group's first half day in La Paz will be purely devoted to rest and relaxation. The lowest point of La Paz is 10,000 ft. above sea level and the highest is over 13,000 ft., so the group will have to take a half day to relax and adjust to the altitude changes.



Shoe shine boys

On the group's first full day in La Paz, they will be participating in several local ministries. First, the group will go to "Cristo Redentor" (Christ the Redeemer) Anglican church to learn about and participate in a ministry they have developed where they serve many of the working children of La Paz.

Some of these children go to school and work, while others only work in order to help support their families. The boys mainly work as shoe shiners on the streets for donations and the girls help in the markets or in homes. The group will spend the morning serving breakfast to and playing games with the children as well as with members of the Anglican church.

Next, if time permits, the group is planning to visit one of the hospitals in La Paz. There they will visit a section of the hospital that is filled with families and patients who cannot afford to buy the materials and medications necessary for their procedures. This will afford the group with an opportunity to learn about some of the needs of the general population of Bolivia and will hopefully develop into an opportunity for the group to assist one or more individuals in dire need. The group will then move on to "El Redentor" The Redeemer Lutheran Church (the church where my wife Carla grew up and where I did my first mission work). There we will visit and learn about the programs and ministries of the church as well as do some painting, repair, and cleaning work for the community.

On the second full day in La Paz, the group will make a journey through the Altiplano to Lake Titicaca (the world's highest navigable lake) on the way to the religious site and pilgrimage destination of Copacabana where they will stay overnight. They will return to La Paz the next day and visit the Ayamaran ruins of Tiwanaku on the way, which continues to be a religious site for many of Bolivia's indigenous people to this day. The group will use this journey as a chance to experience and learn about the distinctly different and extremely poor Andean culture of Bolivia's Altiplano region as well as a kind of mini retreat to reflect on and discuss the events and experiences of the group's trip. The



Mt. Illimani as viewed from La Paz

group's final day will be spent on an open deck bus tour of the city of La Paz and will mainly be spent preparing for our 4:00 AM date with the airport and our long journey back home.

I want to take this opportunity again to thank all of you at Church of the Ascension for generously supporting this mission opportunity both with your financial and spiritual support. We look forward to sharing all of these experiences with you upon our return, and my hope is that as a result of this first trip, a Bolivia mission team from Ascension will be formed on a yearly basis and will afford many more of you with the chance to participate in this kind of wonderful experience in the future.

In Christ,
Fr. Brett

Looking back at our first year of Stephen Ministry

The Stephen Ministry team at Church of the Ascension has reached an important milestone. The first class of Stephen Ministers have completed their first year of service, after being commissioned last year on Pentecost Sunday. We are honored and awed by their commitment and service. Each of the ministers completed 50 hours of training, and over the year, they have attended more than 55 hours of continuing education and supervision. Collectively, the 20 ministers have cared for 28 people during the year – people both within and outside the congregation. Collectively, they have given more than 900 hours of their time in listening and caring for people in need. You should be very proud of these amazing folks, who have given so much to others: Lynn Aberdeen, Kathy Ambrose, Colleen Andrews, Pat Barrow, John Barrow, Faye Beach, Marilyn Carico, Darlene Clark, Bonnie Cockburn, Joy Dixon, Jane Fowler, Charles Gehres, Peggy Giles, Ora Henson, Rudie Mears, Ellen Morgan, Ann Nelson, John Rayson, Culver Schmid, Cathy Wadley, and

Martha Williamson. If you or someone you know is going through a life change or crisis, these Stephen Ministers are ready to care for you. To find out more about Stephen Ministry, or to see if a Stephen Minister's care would be appropriate for you, please speak to a member of our clergy.

Recruiting will begin for a new class of Stephen Ministers in the fall, with training to begin again in January of 2010. Now is the time to begin considering if Stephen Ministry might be a place where you can extend a helping hand to those in need. More information will appear in future issues of the *Parish Paper*.

As I look back on my time in Stephen Ministry, and ahead to its bright future, I find myself in a bittersweet place. I have stepped down as the Stephen Ministries coordinator at Ascension as of the end of May. I am not leaving Ascension, but will focus my attention on other areas of ministry. Peg Hess and Laura Barnes will become Stephen Ministry co-leaders, and will do a fantastic job.

Father Howard Hess, Jane Phillips, and Bob Barnes will be continuing as Leaders, and in June, Father Rob Travis will be attending Stephen Ministries Leader training. Collectively, these very wise people will continue to guide Stephen Ministry at Church of the Ascension. I will miss working with all the Ministers, and the Leaders. It was an honor to serve with you all over the past two years, as Stephen Ministry at Church of the Ascension went from being a dream, to a plan, to a reality. During that time, every one of the Stephen Ministers and Leaders demonstrated their amazing commitment to their ministry, deep depth of skill, and tremendous compassion. I know they will all continue to be the hands of Christ in a world in need of healing.



The Rev. Amy Morehous

MUSINGS from The CHURCH MOUSE

*"Here among long-discarded cassocks,
Damp stools, and half-split open hassocks,
Here where the Vicar never looks
I nibble through old service books.
Lean and alone I spend my days
Behind this Church of England baize.
I share my dark forgotten room
With two oil-lamps and half a broom.
The cleaner never bothers me,
So here I eat my frugal tea.
My bread is sawdust mixed with straw;
My jam is polish for the floor.
Christmas and Easter may be feasts
For congregations and for priests,
And so may Whitsun. All the same,
They do not fill my meagre frame.
For me the only feast at all
Is Autumn's Harvest Festival,
When I can satisfy my want
With ears of corn around the font.
I climb the eagle's brazen head
To burrow through a loaf of bread.
I scramble up the pulpit stair
And gnaw the marrows hanging there.
It is enjoyable to taste
These items ere they go to waste,"*



Thus begins the poem, "Diary of a Church Mouse." Ascension, too, has a church mouse, and I have a unique view of many happenings here. Each month, I will share my observations with you and, I hope, bring you a few smiles, as well as some things to ponder. For example, have you seen the new stained glass window in the Sacristy? I've heard it is called the "Martha Window" in honor of all the many "Marthas" who have served Ascension in the Altar Guild, Wedding Guild, Flower Guild and other ministries. There was even a special service to dedicate it. I wondered why it was named "Martha," but then read in John 12:2, "Martha served" and I understood. So many Marthas have served at Ascension! What a fitting tribute to their years of unselfish devotion. So much keeps happening, it is all I can do to stay out of the way. Oh well, that's enough for now. I'm going to snuggle down in my little nook and I'll be back again next month.

Passages

Baptism:

Logan Oliver Beale on April 26, 2009

Transferred to Ascension:

Joe Alex Bradley III from St. Elizabeth, Knoxville, TN

Death:

Inez Emily Cline, grandmother of **Cindy Strange**, on April 26, 2009

Janet Kraski, grandmother of **Lauralei and David Kraski**, on April 30, 2009

James Patrick Roddy III, father of **Patrick Roddy**, grandfather of **Katherine, McKenzie, and Margaret Roddy**

Mildred Skipworth, aunt of **Laura Barnes**, on May 14, 2009

Helping Hands Ministry to meet Over 21 Lunch Club

The Helping Hands Ministry (and anyone desiring more information) will meet to celebrate and reflect on the year on Sunday, June 14, after the 10:30 service (about noon) downstairs in the old transept of the parish hall. Contact Julie Hembree, 690-6115, if you have any questions.

The Over 21 Lunch Club will meet at 11:30 on Tuesday, June 16, for their annual picnic at the Felder Weeks sister house. If you are riding the van, please meet at the church at 10:45 AM. The van will leave at 11. Bring picnic foods (meat will be provided).

Financial report through April 2009

	Apr Budget	Apr Actual	YTD Budget	YTD Actual
<i>Pledge, plate, & unpledged contributions:</i>	\$108,130	99,005	336,759	347,622
<i>All other income:</i>	29,142	28,853	93,975	108,166
<i>Total income:</i>	137,272	127,858	460,734	455,788
<i>Total expenditures:</i>	123,912	148,455	457,492	497,035
<i>Net Surplus (loss):</i>	13,360	(20,597)	3,242	(41,247)

Congratulations to our Graduates

High School

Caroline Bibb
Rob Kaminsky
Sarah LeMense
Lizzie Smith
Alex Stratton



College

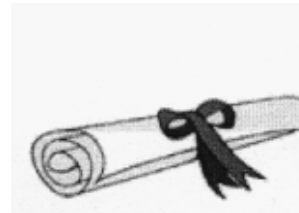
Chris Baumgardner - University of Memphis - Bachelor's in Business/Finance
Gold Darr - Auburn University - B. S. in Polymer and Fiber Engineering
Stuart Deaderick - University of Tennessee - *Magna cum Laude* - Biomedical Engineering
Megan Mase - University of Tennessee - Bachelor of Science
Alice Irene Maples Meagher, niece of Janet Kannady - University of Georgia, *Magna cum Laude* - B. S. in Biology
Ben Stratton - Vanderbilt University - Bachelor of Engineering

Graduate School

Colin Moore Ambrose - Master of Divinity - Nashotah House - ordained to the Priesthood on May 16, 2009
Rebecca Brabson - University of Tennessee - M. S. in Foreign Language/ESL
LeeAnne Gerrity - Lincoln Memorial University - Associate Degree in Nursing
Kristen Louise Hess - Georgia State University - PhD in Education
Mallary McManus - University of South Carolina - Specialist Degree in School Counseling
Laura Ambrose Miller - Wake Forest University, MBA
Mandy Nalls - University of Tennessee - Masters in School Counseling

Education for Ministry

Virginia Duckett
Elaine Powell
Cynthia Vaughn
Bill Watts



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 Jeff Conley - Night Sexton
 Bettie Corey — Registrar/Publications Editor
 James Garvey — Director of Music Ministries
 Charis Hoskins — Financial Assistant/Coordinator of Office Services
 Sabra Martin — Program Secretary
 Byron Proaps — Facilities Plant Manager
 Jacqueline Soltys — Director of Christian Education
 Bob Wadley — Parish Administrator
 Cathy Wadley — Executive Assistant to the Rector and Director of
 New Member Ministries
 Lynn Wise — Nursery Coordinator
 Jim Wright — Director of Hunger Ministries

Office hours: Mon - Thurs, 9:00 AM — 4:30 PM; Friday, 9:00 AM — 4:00 PM

Building hours: Sunday: 7:00 AM — 3:00 PM

Monday - Friday: 8:00 AM — 5:00 PM

Saturday: 8:00 AM — 4:00 PM

Vestry

Tom Hale - Senior Warden
 Julie Hembree - Junior Warden and Pastoral Care
 Bert Ackermann - Communication, Inreach
 Paul Banick - Youth
 Louise Conrad - Christian Formation
 Ben Davidson - Great Commission
 Robin Kell - Worship and Music
 Randy Nichols - Youth
 Ann O'Connor - Outreach
 John Pannell - Finance, Chair
 Jim Phillips - Building and Grounds
 Scott Poland - Great Commission
 Vaiden Taylor - Finance, Treasurer
 Rick Turner - Building and Grounds
 Courtney Zirkle - Outreach
 Larry Jones — Clerk