



THE WAYFARER

December 2010/January 2011 Issue

A monthly journal for Christians who worship at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Berea, Ohio
Phone (440) 234-5241 E-mail: Stec1@sbcglobal.net

Rector's Message

It took me several weeks of being on sabbatical to realize that I was not in a hurry. I was/am so programmed to rush, to think I am running late or to try to squeeze in one more thing, that it was hard to slow down. I had to take deep breaths and repeat to myself to be still. My driving greatly improved as did my digestion. But the main thing that I noticed was that I no longer minded waiting. I would let other people go ahead of me in line and didn't moan and huff if the line was a long one. There was a great freedom in being able and willing to wait.

Of all the things I am trying to hold on to, this ability to wait is at the top of my list. In those waiting moments, I can pray for my loved ones or the people around me. I can contemplate what it must be like to wait in desperation, and be grateful for my blessings. I pay attention to the work that others do to serve me. My waiting turns into a time of awareness and prayer.

In the season of Advent, we are waiting for Christ to come. To come as a baby, and to come again in great glory. We are to use this time of waiting to prepare our lives. We are to use this time of waiting to build up our prayer. We are to use this time of waiting to notice what we are usually too busy to see. God is always waiting to be seen. God is always waiting for us to pay enough attention to notice what God is doing in our lives.

Wait on the Lord, whose day is near. Prepare. Pay attention. Pray. May God bless you in this lovely season!!! Gayle+

Advent at St. Thomas

December 12 - Evensong, "The Gift of Joy"
5:00 pm - Potluck dinner and Program

December 18 - Youth Group Cookie Baking

December 19 - The Greening of the Church

Healing prayer and the lighting of the Advent Wreath will be available at our regular services

Christmas at St. Thomas

Christmas Eve services:
5:00 pm and 10:00 PM

Christmas Day service: 10:00 am

New Year's Day: 5:30 Contemporary
Service

SENIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

Holiday Greetings to you! We've had a lovely welcome into the Advent Season and I look forward to sharing this season with you. There will certainly be many opportunities for you to embrace this season here at St. Thomas. We're bringing the Unbinding the Heart E-vent to a close and I, for one, am very sorry to see it end. But, I recognize that I hold the power to continue this process for myself and fully intend to do so! I hope that you all enjoyed this program as much as I did and I look forward to hearing more about it from you! Gayle and a number of us attended the annual convention and were fortunate to take part in some really great conversations. The Bishop's address was fascinating and, again, I was reminded how fortunate I am to be an Episcopalian....especially at St. Thomas! We're also wrapping up our Stewardship Campaign and I thank each of you, from the bottom of my heart, for your commitment to St. Thomas. Thanks also to those of you that attended the Thanksgiving Dinner. What a treat!

Please take this opportunity to experience the season with your fellow parishioners...and invite some others to join you at St. Thomas. We're doing many things to try to make our parish more physically accommodating to anyone that would like to worship with us. You've probably seen the newly installed "family friendly zone" in the front of the parish, as one example. As the parent of a 6 and 3 year old, I am very appreciative of this effort. Although I certainly appreciate our "Cry Room" and am comforted at the ability to run up there, I really want to experience the service with my children...in the pew. You'll also see us look to make more physical improvements to accommodate others. We appreciate your support in these initiatives. Thank you for all you do and I look forward to experiencing a peaceful and blessed holiday season with you!

Helen Downie, Senior Warden

THE BISHOP IS COMING!!!

On December 5, Bishop Hollingsworth will make his visitation to St. Thomas at the 10:00 am service. At that time, we will be welcoming into the church members who are being confirmed and received. Please pray for the following people:

To be confirmed: Ian Carmichael, Chrissy Hamley, Evan Leonard, Martin McGuire, Emily Nader, Carl Scheu Jr., Jenna Staehr, and Shane Wilson.

To be received: John Coleman, Meg Donovan, Jane Hamley, and Etta Scheu.

What a blessing for our parish!!! Please pray for all of them and for a lovely visit with the Bishop. He will be available to chat with you at coffee hour. There will be no 11:30 am service that Sunday.



LOS AMIGOS EPISCOPALES –

Take a look at the bulletin board in the narthex! Los Amigos Episcopales has received funds from the St. Thomas ECW to pay for two scholarships for needy students at San Andrés Apóstol School. We have also received a scholarship from a parishioner at St. Matthew's, Brecksville, and several more are in the offing. We still need much more help. Can you sponsor a student in El Salvador? The cost is \$268 per year per student. Or, can you contribute to a partial scholarship?

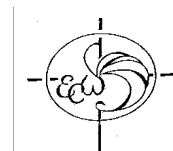
PLEASE HELP!

We have made a commitment of \$6,000 as the entire support for basic assistance (school supplies, teachers' salaries, etc) at the new La Divina Providencia School in El Maizal - and with your help, we will somehow accomplish this. Thank you so much.

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A Change in Handling Finances at St. Thomas

With the departure of Stephanie, our parish administrator, the vestry realized an opportunity to simplify that position by separating out the accounting functions of the parish. We decided to outsource this to the firm of Tim Cooper, CPA, starting on December 1. Tom Halliday remains the Treasurer, as appointed by the vestry. We believe that for a very low cost, this will make our handling of money more efficient and easier for the parish.



As with all changes there will be a period of adjustment. Tim will present to the vestry a flow chart of how his business will work with the church. The main change will be that checks for reimbursement or expenses will have to be requested in advance. There will be only a limited amount of cash available in the church office. Please be patient as we work out the new system to everyone's advantage.

If you have questions, please ask Tom, Tim, or Gayle+.



Our webmaster Danielle Lusinchi is busy working on an update to the website. Check it out and let us know what you think:

www.stthomas-berea.org/new/index.shtml



On the lighter side, *Los Amigos* will be hosting its annual holiday dinner party on Thursday, December 30, at 6:30pm at the home of Ruth Ihde. Meat dish will be provided – everyone is asked to bring either appetizer, salad, vegetable, potato dish, dessert or beverage. Please call Ruth (440-572-9425) to make reservations, and to indicate your dish choice. You are all invited! Come and meet our members from other churches.



UPCOMING ECW EVENTS FOR DECEMBER 2010

Friday, December 10, 3:00 until 7:00 p.m. and Saturday, December 11, 10:00 am until 2:00 pm:

MRS. KRINGLE'S COOKIE CUPBOARD COOKIE WALK

December 19th at noon

ECW General Meeting – open to all, please come!

Please bring any program or fund raising ideas with you for discussion. We will be addressing the calendar of events for January – June 2011. Your help and input is very much appreciated.

Any questions please contact Melanie Doyle - President, 440-884-5108, or Sue Griffith – Vice President, 216-521-2017. The meetings are open to all women of St. Thomas.

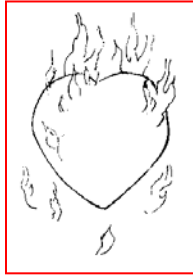
WHAT IS A "MRS. KRINGLE'S COOKIE CUPBOARD" COOKIE WALK?

It is a fun, delicious experience! You will be given a plastic glove and box for going around and choosing your favorite cookies. There will be a scale for checking the weight of your cookies as you shop. Once you have finished you will be charged \$7.00 per pound of cookies. There will be special breads available that will be individually priced. This is a wonderful way to enjoy a large variety of cookies without the constant baking.

Mrs. Kringle's Cupboard will also have tables of crafts and holiday gifts available. Come enjoy a cookie while shopping for that unusual gift for a friend or loved one. Tell your friends - what a wonderful opportunity to share "cookie and craft" shopping and your church at the same time!

FROM THE HEART OF THE PARISH

✠ Prayers for Bea Gobert. She has had surgery for cancer of her left eye. She is in good spirits and is grateful her surgery went so well.



✠ Prayers for the family of our sexton, Carl Douglas. Carl's father passed away in November.

✠ Thanks and a big round of applause for the wonderful turkey dinner provided by our vestry. This was done as a thank-you for all our blessings and a special thanks to the memory of our benefactress, Harriet Harkess.

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✠ Jackie Mantle became a hero on election day. She was working at a polling station in North Eaton when a gentleman collapsed, and there was no response. Jackie, who had recently taken the CPR course at St. Thomas, sprang into action. She gave him CPR and used the ADT to shock his heart. She didn't stop until the paramedics arrived. They told her she saved the man's life!

✠ The Frannie Millward Community Garden has produced a total of 193 lbs. of food. This has all been distributed to needy families through Church Street Ministries. If you've noticed a plastic cover on one of remaining raised bed, Marcie Molmen tells me that the Swiss Chard has survived the first frost and is still growing!

✠ Congratulations to Martin and Philip McGuire on their successful cross-country seasons for Strongsville High School. They each received their varsity letters and Martin was selected as Outstanding New Athlete!

✠ Congratulations to Ascia Hancock-Phillips on a great soccer season at Berea High. She, along with four of her teammates earned the Girls Division 1 -2010 Honorable Mention-G.C.S.S.C.A All Cleveland Honorable Mention!



THANK YOU FROM REV. GAYLE

Thank you again for the warm welcome that my family and I have received upon my return from sabbatical. The party was lovely!!! It is great to be back. I missed you all. Looking forward to doing great things for Jesus with all of you!!!

OUTREACH

Pat Wielinski is retiring as Outreach Coordinator and a replacement will be needed to take over beginning in January. Anyone is welcome to join the Outreach Committee and new members with new ideas are always welcome. An organizational meeting will be held January 9 at 5:30 pm so that the new committee and Coordinator can be presented at the Annual Meeting. Please let Pat Wielinski or Gayle know if you are interested in the Outreach Committee or the position of Coordinator.

DUFFLE BAGS

The focus of our outreach ministry in December is the duffle bag in-gathering. Each year duffle bags are filled with toiletries, socks, scarves, gloves or mittens, hats and blankets. These bags are then taken to St. Luke's Church (Episcopal West Side Ministries) for distribution to the homeless and those in need. The duffle bag stuffing will be held sometime before December 10th, at which time volunteers gather in the Chapel and fill the duffle bags with suitable items for men, for women or for children. Please continue to bring items (see above) throughout the coming weeks so that there is a lot to choose from. We also need the duffle bags themselves. Many thanks for doing this!!



IAF (Industrial Areas Foundation) MEETING –

Our congregation is exploring participating in a new interfaith community organizing project that will bring together religious congregations from across Cuyahoga County to work on issues of social justice and common concern. This initiative is spearheaded by the Industrial Areas Foundation, the nation's oldest network of community organizing groups (www.industrialareasfoundation.org). We will be hosting a meeting in Ogilvy Chapel on **Wednesday, December 8 from 7 pm until 8 pm** for us to learn more about this project and to discuss whether being involved in an organization like this fits in with the mission of our congregation.



The Christmas Project

St. Thomas is again participating in a special Christmas project sponsored by the Episcopal West Side Shared Ministry.

As a gift to the homeless and impoverished, we have been asked to donate 80 (40 men's and 40 women's) filled duffle bags/backpacks. Please label the gift as man's or ladies. Individual items will be accepted.

These gifts will be presented as part of a Christmas dinner gathering and later distributed to other people throughout the area. Contributions should be turned in as soon as possible, but no later than December 5.

This is a wonderful opportunity for us to give some much-appreciated, practical help to those in need! If you have any questions, or can help with this project, please call Barb Emigh at 440-465-7720.

SUGGESTED DUFFLE BAG ITEMS

- † Soap
- † Shampoo
- † Conditioner

- † Deodorant
- † Toothbrush & paste
- † Disposable Razor
- † Hand Lotion
- † Candy
- † Gloves
- † Hats
- † Socks
- † Comb
- † Cough Drops
- † Brush
- † RTA Bus Pass
- † Books
- † Blankets
- † Toilet Paper
- † Chapstick

OPTIONAL ITEMS FOR MEN

After Shave † Shaving Cream † Underwear

OPTIONAL ITEMS FOR WOMEN

Tampons † Maxi Pads †

Panty Liners †

Small Notebook and Pen

Christmas With The
Legacy Family Singers



An Invitation to the people of St. Thomas:

Christmas with the Legacy Family Singers is a free family-friendly concert that will be performed at St. Thomas Episcopal Church on Friday, December 10, at 7:30pm. Legacy Family Singers is an outreach of Legacy In Education, a non-profit organization working to preserve and restore music education for children in Northeast Ohio. Please join us and our guests **Harmonium Barbershop Quartet** and **Cead Mile Failte with the Cannon Irish Dancers** for an evening celebrating Christmas in song! The evening includes a complimentary gathering following the concert featuring treats from Polaris and Busy Bakers!

We warmly welcome the people of St. Thomas to join us with your family and friends..... and, if you come,

you may even get a chance to sing along! For more information about the concert, Legacy Family Singers, or Legacy in Education, please call 440-846-0973.

All Are Welcome!

Admission is free – donations are welcome

**Complimentary Treats after the Concert
Provided by:**



USED CAR NEEDED!!

Philip McGuire is looking for a cheap used car in good condition. Please call Philip at 440-572-2406

GOING FOR THE GREEN

Still seeking a volunteer to take over the recycling of glass, aluminum cans, and plastic. The recycling bins are located in Harkess Hall. Takes just a few minutes each week. If you are interested, please contact Laura D'Amato at stecwayfarer@sbcglobal.net

With the holiday season and new year creeping up on us, now is a great time to make some changes to be more environmentally friendly! Here are a few suggestions:

- Pledge to buy less “stuff” this season and during the upcoming year!
- If you must purchase new, look for items that contain some recycled content and be sure to seek out Fair Trade items.
- Thinking about buying a gift for a teacher? A gift card to a bookstore or education store would be most appreciated! (Check the St.Thomas gift card program to see what is available). Home-baked goods are also a

treat.

- Consider using newspaper for wrapping gifts. Or use a brown paper bag from the grocery store. These bags are fun to decorate with stickers, paints, and drawings. Remember to recycle your newspaper at St. Thomas using the Paper Retriever bin (green & yellow) in the parking lot. (Regular wrapping paper and tissue is NOT recyclable in the Paper Retriever bin).

Enjoy time with your family and friends and have a blessed Christmas and Happy New Year!



First Church Child Care Updates

Our students are practicing for the Preschool Christmas Program scheduled for December 14th at 6:30pm in St. Thomas's sanctuary. They are excited about learning some fun Christmas songs and poems. We would like to invite the congregation to attend our program and if you would like to stay for pizza and cookies in Harkess Hall afterward, please RSVP at (440) 234-6447 by December 13th so we know how much pizza to order.

We would like to thank everyone who donates books to the “Take a Book, Leave a Book” library cart. Many of our staff have borrowed books and enjoyed them very much. We even have one staff member who hasn't read a book in years who is now borrowing a new book every week!!! Thanks for sharing the joy of reading with us!

We finished harvesting our raised beds in the Frannie Millward Community Garden and we ended up with almost 40 pounds of vegetables for Church Street Ministries! Wow!

As another year comes to a close, we are reminded of all we have to be grateful for. On an average day, 35-40 students pass through our Center. Each one is unique and special in their own way and we are so blessed to know them and have them in our lives! Some have families who are truly struggling and we are grateful that we may serve those in need with tuition assistance and scholarships.

Hope you have a very
Merry Christmas and
a Happy New Year.
God bless us, everyone!

First Church Child Care Staff and Board



HEALTH MINISTRY

John 10:11 *"I am the good Shepherd. The good Shepherd lies down his life for the sheep."*

Pets comfort us and they give us companionship. However, some animals can also pass diseases to people. These diseases are called zoonoses. Although animals can carry germs, it is important to know that you are more likely to get some of these germs from contaminated food or water than from your pet or another animal you encounter.

Because wild animals can carry diseases that are dangerous to people, CDC discourages direct contact with wildlife. You should never adopt wild animals as pets or bring them home. Teach children never to handle unfamiliar animals, wild or domestic, even if the animals appears to be friendly.

Some people are more likely than others to get diseases from animals: pregnant women, infants and young children, people with organ transplants, and people with immunocompromised systems (for example, people with AIDS). However, even these people generally do not need to give up common household pets. Certain precautions are recommended to decrease the risk of disease transmission.

We will look at just two of these groups at increased risk of infection; please visit the CDC

site at www.cdc.gov for information for other groups.

Pregnant women need to be aware that toxoplasmosis can cause problems with pregnancy, including miscarriage. It is an infection caused by a parasite which is carried in cats and is passed in their stool. However, people are more likely to get toxoplasmosis from undercooked meat or gardening than from contact with pet cats. By following recommendations, women can reduce the risk of getting toxoplasmosis from cats:

If you own a cat, have a non-pregnant person change the litter box every day. If there is no one else to change the litter box, wear gloves and wash hands with soap and running water after changing the litter.

- Risk may be reduced if the litter box is changed every day.
- Keep cats indoors.
- Avoid adopting or handling stray cats.
- Feed cats only canned or dried commercial cat food, never undercooked or raw meat.
- Do not bring a new cat into your house that might have been an outdoor cat or might have been fed raw meat.



Infants and children less than 5 years old are more likely than most people to get diseases from animals. This is because young children often touch surfaces that may be contaminated with animal feces (stool), and young children like to put their hands in their mouths. Young children are less likely than others to wash their hands well. Objects such as pacifiers may fall to dirty surfaces and then be placed in an infant's mouth. For some animal diseases, young children are more likely than others to get very sick. Tips to protect infants and young children from getting sick while handling animals are:

- Children younger than 5 years old should be supervised while interacting with animals.
- Children should not be allowed to kiss pets or to put their hands or other objects into their mouths after handling animals.
- Children should thoroughly wash hands with running water and soap after contact with animals.



Handwashing prior to breast feeding or preparation of formula is necessary.

CDC recommends that infants and children under 5 years old avoid contact with the following animals:

- Reptiles (lizards, snakes, and turtles)

- Amphibians (frogs, toads, newts, and salamanders)
- Baby chicks, Ducklings
- Petting zoos

Additionally, children less than 5 years old should be extra cautious when visiting farms and having direct contact with farm animals, including animals at petting zoos and fairs.

Submitted by Barb Emigh, RN

Ref: cdc.gov

DECEMBER

DECEMBER 10

4:00 – 7:00 ECW COOKIE WALK
7:30 LEGACY FAMILY SINGERS

DECEMBER 11

10:00 -2:00 ECW COOKIE WALK
12:45 TORCH
7:00 WII BOWLING (MOVED FROM FRIDAY)

DECEMBER 12

5:00 THE GIFT OF JOY
EVENSONG SERVICE AND POTLUCK

DECEMBER 16

ADVENT DAY OF PRAYER

DECEMBER 18

YOUTH GROUP COOKIE BAKING

DECEMBER 19

THE GREENING OF THE CHURCH

DECEMBER 24 – CHRISTMAS EVE

5:00 PM FAMILY SERVICE
10:00 CHORAL SERVICE

DECEMBER 25 – CHRISTMAS DAY

10:00 AM SERVICE
NO 5:30 SERVICE

ST. THOMAS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

50 EAST BAGLEY RD.

BEREA, OHIO 44017

JANUARY

JANUARY 1 – HAPPY NEW YEAR!

5:30 CONTEMPORARY SERVICE

JANUARY 5

12:15 STAR CONCERT AND LUNCHEON

JANUARY 9

5:30 OUTREACH MEETING

JANUARY 14 – 15

WOMEN'S RETREAT AT RIVERS EDGE

JANUARY 23

9:30 RITE II SERVICE
ANNUAL MEETING

