



# **THE WAYFARER**

**February 2011 Issue**

A monthly journal for Christians who worship at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Berea, Ohio  
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## **Rector's Message**

*Peace be with you!*

*I was at a talk yesterday on Race and our Congregations. A group of priests and a facilitator talked about how we create a safe place for all of the people who walk through our door. We realized that we are mostly very nice people who truly want to welcome those who come to worship with us. However, we most often welcome them to be like us. We are not open to who they are, or to adapting who we are. As a rule anyway, we expect a certain level of conformity.*

*The key seems to be to create a place where everyone at least feels safe. And in our dangerous and unpredictable world, feeling safe is at a premium. It just doesn't happen that often. Some of us may not feel safe in our schools, in our workplaces, in our own homes. But church is where people come to find God, and if church isn't safe, the possibility of relationship with God crashes to nothing. We are not a social club, and we are not gatekeepers. We are the Body of Christ and we offer a feast at the Lord's table. It is a huge responsibility that we take on in our worship. One that we must reflect on regularly and take very seriously.*

*Why aren't there more people of color in our church? Why aren't there more people from other countries? Why aren't there more families with children? Why aren't there more people on the fringes of society? I don't know. I think most of us would desire that. Many of us pray for that.*

*As a beginning, let's be careful that we are truly welcoming people as they are. Let's be sure that we don't think we are the norm, or that our experience of life is the only one. Let's be sure that loving is more important than being right. Let's be more willing to listen to each other's stories. Any of these strategies brings us closer to seeing the world in a more realistic way. We are not at the center, God is. And thank goodness for that!*

*Blessings, Gayle+*



## Senior Warden Report



Thanks to those of you that were able to attend the Annual Meeting. And for those of you not able to attend....we missed you! We were provided with very valuable information

regarding St. Thomas. What we choose to do with that information is entirely up to us. God has given us the gift of this parish to assist us in bringing the love of Jesus Christ to the world. With this gift comes responsibility. As I close my term as Senior Warden, I look back on a year full of uncertainty, surprises, joy, sadness and a lot of responsibility. Not just *my* responsibility, but the responsibility so readily accepted by so many people at this parish. As we approach 2011, we know that there is more work to be done. We each have a role in the ability of St. Thomas to continue doing the fabulous work that we do. What will your role be in 2011? Will you join a new committee? Will you volunteer to help in the office? Will you cook for Campus Ministry? Will you increase your financial giving? Will you support the gift card program? Will you pray for the church? There are many roles to be filled and I pray that you each find the role(s) that give you the opportunity to grow in your own relationship with Jesus Christ in 2011.

God Bless! Helen Downie

Kubiak, who has joined us as Parish Administrator. Stop by the office and introduce yourself so she can put a friendly face on the names in the bulletin.

✚ Finally – Think Spring!

~Dody Sandt



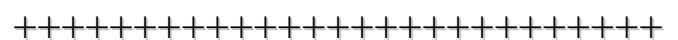
## OUTREACH

At the Outreach Committee Meeting on January 9th, we talked about new ideas and new areas that need attention. Not to replace what we are already doing, but to add to and enhance our outreach ministry. For example, it is possible to have more than one topic each month. In January we have the winter coat in-gathering and the children's books for Katie Cline's classroom (we are hoping for 200)!

In February, there will be a special focus on El Salvador because the Bishop of El Salvador will be visiting St. Thomas in February and we would like to present him with a substantial offering. This may be in the form of funding or it may be something tangible like tooth brushes (which are expensive in El Salvador!) Ruth Ihde is our liaison with El Salvador through Los Amigos Episcopales.

The Committee would like to hear of new outreach ideas that you have. So please let me know what you come up with. Oh, yes - I am still the Outreach Coordinator - I didn't get to retire. And please continue with the in-gathering of food for the Church Street Ministries food pantry and the Columbia Park Pantry. Thank you for all that you do!

Pat Wielinski  
(Still) Outreach Coordinator



## The Heart of the Parish

Prayers for the family of John Linville, who passed away on January 12.

- ✚ We have lost three friends in January; Ted Miciak and Jeanne Kurtz also passed away this month.
- ✚ Congratulations to Jacob Miller (grandson of Sonia and David) who has earned his junior black belt in Karate!
- ✚ Thanks to Marion and Doug Sewell, we now have a new altar cloth. A big thanks to Bob Englund and Jan Smith for repairing the altar rails.
- ✚ And last, but certainly not least, thanks to David Miller for getting our office computer up and running again.
- ✚ A warm St. Thomas welcome to Ginny

## CAMPUS MINISTRY

*Come join us on Sunday nights for Campus Ministry! We need help cooking for 20-30 people. You can do all or part of a meal.*

*Thank you to everyone who has done something yummy for our students who attend and receive this wonderful hospitality.*



## ST. THOMAS ANNUAL MEETING PARISH FEEDBACK

Thank you to everyone who attended our annual meeting on January 22. There was an excellent spirit of cooperation and optimism as we look ahead to the future. At our table discussions, we talked about our hopes for this year, and our thoughts about how to keep St. Thomas vital into an uncertain future. I thought you might appreciate hearing a summary of what I collected. And some thoughts based on questions that were also on the sheets. If you would like to give your opinion and were not there, ask me for a sheet and we will enter your data into the collective response. Again, the vestry will use this data in their strategic planning over the next year.

As to this year, the priorities appeared to be worship and evangelism. Close behind were Christian Education and stewardship. People did not seem as concerned about outreach, probably because we do so well in this area. I will task the Evangelism Committee with your mandate. As I said in my speech to the meeting, I will personally be heading task forces to look at worship and education. Please let me know if you are interested in these areas. We will begin to look at stewardship in the late spring. For those of you who listed that as a priority, please give me more feedback. Do we need a new approach?

The question on what you appreciate the most about the parish was heartwarming. Most of you commented on the people, the opportunities and the worship. As in the table discussions, there was a great deal of passion for all of the good that happens here, and a strong commitment to continuing the mission of this church.

When I looked at where people wanted to start in dealing with our financial situation, there were two strong responses. The most enthusiasm was around trying to

merge with other parishes. I will ask the vestry to begin dialogue with some of the churches in our area immediately. I offer no guarantees, but I believe the building up of our community is always a good thing. It is a good place to start and we have a lot to offer.

The second most popular option was a capital campaign. Since it would be prohibitive to hire a consulting firm, I will ask the Bishop to see what resources are available to us in the diocese. It is important to remember that not all of the money in a capital campaign has to come from members, and there will be many opportunities to participate in making this a success even if you cannot be a large donor. We will begin some visioning around this in the fall. If this is an area of interest to you, please let me know.

Finally, someone asked that we talk to the diocese and find out which parishes are growing and why. You might be surprised to find that St. Thomas is on that list. We have been participating in programs that help us grow. Natural Church Development lists 8 factors that a church needs to be healthy and growing: Empowering Leadership, Gift-Oriented Ministry, Passionate Spirituality, Functional Structures, Inspiring Worship, Holistic Small Groups (what we will be working on this round), Need-oriented Evangelism, and Loving Relationships. This data is based on studying over 10,000 churches around the world, and the idea is that you work on what your congregation thinks is the lowest factor and the process will improve all of your factors.

Martha Grace Reese, in *Unbinding the Gospel*, reports on her years of research with hundreds of congregations. She would say that a church steeped in prayer and sharing their faith results in congregants who are comfortable inviting people to church, which is the quickest way to grow.

Having been one of the movers of these programs in this diocese, and having studied this feverishly since I have been here, I would add that parishes grow that are happy places, where people get along and have a common sense of purpose. Parishes grow that have lively worship, strong and consistent education and outreach. Parishes grow who invite a variety of people into their building for worship and other activities. But mostly, parishes grow when they listen to God in prayer corporately, in small groups and individually. I will invite the diocesan congregational development person to talk to us more about this soon.

Pray!!!! Be involved!!!! Give generously!!!! That has worked for us so far. I believe that it is God's will that this parish thrive. That is why I am here, and

enthusiastically working with you to grow this church. Thank you for all you do to make it happen! Gayle+



**LOS AMIGOS EPISCOPALES –**

**A SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PEOPLE OF ST. THOMAS**



*Los Amigos Episcopales* will be hosting the Rt. Rev. Martín Barahona, Bishop of El Salvador from February 25 to March 6 during his rather brief visit to northern Ohio. We are fortunate of have him preach here at St. Thomas at the 10:00 service on February 27; and to have him discuss his schools and their needs, at the forum following this service.

The people of St. Thomas have generously supported our Salvadoran mission in previous years, and now, at this time of global unrest, and with continued poverty and urgent need in El Salvador, we are again giving you this opportunity to learn first-hand about the mission, and to make a new commitment to this wonderful work.

**Please help!** Be a part of Los Amigos' pledge to provide 10 scholarships (\$268 each), \$6000 as total support for the new La Divina Providencia School and other general assistance for the six schools in El Salvador.

Also, you are all welcome to join us at 7:00 pm in the chapel at our February 4 meeting to complete plans for the bishop's visit; and we will be happy to schedule meetings with parishioners who would like to converse with the bishop in a small group setting.

**COME, COME, COME!**

Ruth F. Ihde



*Lotts Creek Community School in Cordia, Kentucky is the last of over one hundred "settlement schools" built in the mountains in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Every summer the St.*

*Thomas Youth Group goes down to Lotts Creek to help get the school ready and*

*clean for the students. St. Thomas youth wants to help Lotts Creek Community School at Cordia by raising money from donations. Let's come together; please help us to help them. There are donation envelopes available on the table in the hall of the church. Please pick one up and help our Lotts Creek students. ~Bart Hancock*



Unsung Hero

Let me say it was a rough choice this month. So many people do so many things. However, I am so grateful for the many people who have organized 4 funerals in the last 2 months. Thank you to the Altar Guild for setting up the church so beautifully. Thank you to the Flower Guild when you have been called upon for such lovely arrangements. Thank you to the ECW for organizing such lovely lunches (and moving furniture and washing dishes, etc, etc). Thank you to the Daycare for being so flexible. Thank you to Clifford and the choir. Thank you to all the people who parked on the street so there would be room in the parking lot for the family. Thank you to the ushers and greeters who so warmly welcome our grieving guests. Thank you to readers and chalice bearers who are such graceful leaders in worship. Thank you to everyone who baked desserts. Thank you to my son Tim who intervened so that the police wouldn't ticket our guests. There are so many people who share in this ministry. I have seen how you touch people's lives in their time of sadness, and it makes a difference. Thank you!!





## Winter 2011 TDI (Therapy Dog International) Preparation Classes and Testing

Have you wondered if your loving, well-behaved dog would make a good therapy dog? Come to the orientation on March 6<sup>th</sup> to discover what it takes to certify a dog through TDI. Once the dog is certified to do therapy the rewards are endless. You will have the opportunity to visit residents in long-term (continued on next page)

care facilities, hospitals, go to schools and work directly with children in their classrooms or specialized programs, help children become better readers as they share the adventures of books with your dog at libraries. Once certified the dog and handler are insured for one million dollars each under the Therapy Dog International organization. Preparatory testing classes are \$8.00 per class, with the test costing \$20.00. Below is the schedule for this next class. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Sue Griffith (216-521-2017) or Dolly Doyle (216-521-5663).

### TDI CLASS SCHEDULE

<b>Orientation (no dogs)</b>	<b>Sunday, March 6<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>7:00 p.m.</b>
Class 1 – with dogs	Sunday, March 13 <sup>th</sup>	7:00 p.m.
Class 2 – with dogs	Sunday, March 20 <sup>th</sup>	7:00 p.m.
Class 3 – with dogs	Sunday, March 27 <sup>th</sup>	7:00 p.m.
Class 4 – with dogs	Sunday, April 3 <sup>rd</sup>	7:00 p.m.
<b>Testing:</b>	<b>Saturday, April 9<sup>th</sup> (time to be determined)</b>	



### **THANKS FOR YOUR GIFTS!**

A heart-felt **thank you** from the West Side Ministries' guests to each of you. Despite the economy, you put in that extra effort with your

generous (and often anonymous) Christmas gifts. St. Thomas donated 143 duffle bags filled with blankets, hats, gloves, and toiletries given to the homeless and impoverished from St. Luke's Episcopal Church on W. 78<sup>th</sup>. Special thanks go to volunteers Joan Foster, Bev Smith, Ruth Ihde, Barb Pertz, Teresa Walsh, Sean Andrews, Hugh Thurnauer, Jim Emigh, and Dot Hepp. We cannot overstate how many people you have touched with your hours of hard work!

Joining **St Thomas** with their donations were: **area churches** donating over 100 blankets collected by Fran Millward; **Olmsted Falls High School** (teachers Chris Warren – math; Blake Johnson – science) collected by Jim Emigh; Strongsville's **Brownie troops** 124 and 170 and **Cub Scout troop** 223 for 4 months of work with an extra 42 children's backpacks assembled under the direction of Dot Hepp; **Amin Soussou** of United Distributors with boxes of toiletries and underwear; **Bonne Bell Inc** donated chapsticks with Hugh Thurnauer's involvement; the **staff** at **Dr. Kronholtz's** office. **MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL!**

Submitted by Barb Emigh



### IAF at St. Thomas

Tired of seeing all of the problems in our county and feeling like you cannot make a difference? A group of churches, synagogues and mosques in Cuyahoga County have joined together under the leadership of the Industrial Areas Foundation to begin ecumenical, nonpartisan community organizing. The group is in its formation stages, it doesn't even have a name yet. But there are hundreds of people participating from all over the region. At St. Thomas, we have 5 people who have volunteered to represent us in this effort.

Over the next several weeks they will be organizing "house meetings" to hear from you what the most important needs are in this area. Maybe you are passionate about education or hunger or racism or health issues or housing or...the list is seemingly endless.

Once they hear what excites and frustrates you, they will attend an Issues Convention, where all of the participant congregations will share the information they compiled, and a strategy for beginning will be decided upon.

All of the members will help with this issue, and as the organization grows, other issues will be added. I look forward to expanding social justice ministry at St. Thomas. We are very good at collecting food, but not so good about systemic change. Our support, along with our brothers and sisters in faith from the entire county, will be a loud enough voice to make a difference. Let me know if you are interested in being a part of this exciting effort! I am so inspired by God's hand in this social action movement! Gayle+

in the morning before your muscles are warmed up.

## 2: Doing the dishes

**The Mistake:** A deep sink might help you wash more dishes at once, but you can pay for that convenience with back pain. To reach the bottom, people often stand as close as they can to the sink and sustain that bent posture as they vigorously scrub the dishes. This aggravates the discs in the spinal column and the soft tissues of the back.

**The Fix:** One trick is to open the cabinet doors underneath the sink and place one foot inside. This allows you to squat down and better reach the sink while keeping your back upright. The bottom line is to bring the work closer to you and minimize that sustained bending of the waist.

## 3: Doing laundry, picking up

**The Mistake:** When rescuing that lost sock from the bottom of the washer or the bedroom floor, leaning over can be bad news for your back. Similar to washing the dishes and sweeping, bending over again and again will strain your back muscles.

**The Fix:** Use a strategy called the 'golfer's reach'. When you reach for items with your right hand, balance that action by lifting your left leg up in the air. (Place your left hand on a nearby surface for extra support.) As you reach deeper, you lift the opposite leg higher.

### Still feel a twinge?

You may be so busy checking chores off your mental "to do" list that you forget about the right way to move your body. Use pain as a reminder to pause and say, "Can I reposition myself?" Changing the way you do your chores can help prevent — and also alleviate — acute back pain. But symptoms that drag on for more than a month could be a warning sign that deeper problems exist. If pain worsens or



### HEALTH MINISTRY

Mt 4:23 *"And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people."*

## Back Pain and Chores

Submitted by Barb Emigh, RN

Source URL: <http://cchealth.clevelandclinic.org/be-well-enevs/back-pain-and-chores>

Suggestions by Michael Milicia, OT/L

Because 80-90% of us suffer from back pain at some point in our lives, daily chores can be a pain.

Changing the way we do our work can help:

### 1: Vacuuming, mopping, raking, shoveling

**The Mistake:** With doing these tasks, many people experience back pain. As they're reaching with their arm, they're also bending at the waist. They do this over and over again, straining the muscles of the back. Meanwhile, they turn to the side with their feet planted, rotating the trunk of their body.

**The Fix:** The key is to keep your hips and shoulders moving in the direction of the work instead of twisting your back. It's also important to avoid bending over, so the recommendation is stepping forward with one foot and bending slightly at the knee, allowing the upper body to stay upright in a partial lunge. Also, try not to shovel snow first thing

spreads, if you develop a fever or if you can't sleep at night, call your doctor.



### Thank you Altar Guild!

With the help of Marcie Hist, the Altar Guild has donated our old green and red altar sets to the church in Liberia. Mary and Kate Bryant shipped the set to Bishop Jonathon Hart. We pray that they will bring the blessings to their current users that they brought to us for so many years.

### Education For Ministry

Are you interested in an in-depth study of our Christian faith? The Education for Ministry (EFM) program is especially designed for church folks who want to ground their ministry in study, reflection and prayer. An EFM group consists of at least six members and a trained mentor. Every week throughout the nine-month academic year, the group meets for several hours to discuss and reflect on our Christian tradition through our personal experiences, study and worship.

It is expected that this commitment includes homework and personal prayer. Insights and learnings are shared in group meetings. The most important component of the program is theological reflection, examining our own beliefs and the experiences of our culture in light of our faith tradition. St. Thomas is exploring the foundation of an EFM group. Information on cost, materials and level of commitment is being gathered. Please contact Gayle if you are interested in learning more. It will be a life- changing opportunity!

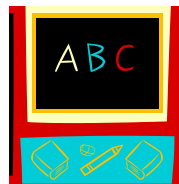


### Community Garden Plantings

Welcome to our new BW Sustainability Intern, Martina Jozanovic!!! She will be working with us this semester to help us plan the garden to be sustainable and nutritious, and she will be

getting the word out in the community. Watch for her to let you know what she is up to! We received a grant from the National Church for \$750. With that we hope to add more beds and a compost pile. We have also applied for a grant from The Ohio State University Suburban Garden program, which we have also joined as members, and hope to use that to put in rain barrels to collect water. Some BW students have volunteered to help us do some of that building. So great things are happening. This garden won't cost the parish anything but labor. Please think thoughts of Spring and how you might plant a bed or pull a weed!!! Thank you! If you would like to know more, talk to Marcy Molmen or Gayle.

### First Church Child Care Updates



Our Preschool Christmas Program was a huge success thanks to the hard work of our staff and the wonderful job our students did learning and singing all those Christmas songs. Thank you to St.

Thomas for use of the sanctuary for the program and Harkess Hall for the party afterward! We had over 100 friends and family share the celebration with our students.

Now that Rev. Gayle is back from sabbatical, we are happy to have her back in our Center for Tuesday morning stories and songs. The students look forward to her visits very much. Welcome back Rev. Gayle!

Sharing our space every month with the S.T.A.R. luncheon has its challenges and rewards (great lunches!!!). We would like to thank all the volunteers who organize this wonderful event for accommodating our state of Ohio license rules by keeping the dividers closed during the event. We are an outreach ministry of First Congregational United Church of Christ (UCC) and our visioning team has been working on ways for our church members to participate and volunteer more in our ministry. They are starting a volunteer reading program where church members come in and read to our students. The children love visitors! We would love for the members of St. Thomas to be included in this volunteer program as well. Please contact George Haag at 440-891-8252 or e-mail him at [GeorgeHaag@hotmail.com](mailto:GeorgeHaag@hotmail.com) for information

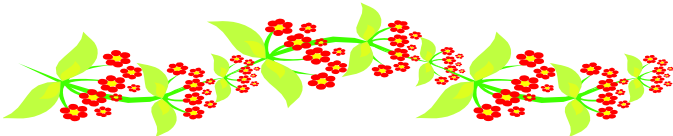
on how you can participate.

*First Church Child Care Staff and Board*



**WELCOME TO OUR NEW  
VESTRY MEMBERS**

Spencer Griffith  
Sue Griffith  
Linda Short



# February

February 2  
12:15 Star concert and luncheon

February 4 – 5  
Vestry Retreat

February 6  
9:00 Parish Breakfast  
12:30 Acolyte Party

February 11 – 12  
Diocesan Winter Convocation

February 12  
12:45 TORCH at St. Paul's

February 18  
7:00 Wii Bowling Begins

February 20  
DOK Meeting after 10:00 Service

February 26  
11:00 & 3:00 Victorian Tea

ST. THOMAS EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
50 EAST BAGLEY RD.  
BEREA, OHIO 44017

