

The Chimes

The Newsletter of Christ Church
in Swansea, MA
May, 2008

From the Rector

Dear Ones:

We are still in the season of Easter, and it is one season that just never gets old for me! "Alleluia! The Lord is risen indeed!" - these are the words that remind me every week and every day that new life IS possible and IS happening all around us, and in us, when we are able to invite it and see it. I am sure that I don't have to tell you all that I have experienced first hand what resurrection can mean. I have seen it, experienced it, and, by God's grace and love, I am now living in it! I cannot say enough about how God has moved in my life through my recovery, but I reiterate again my absolute dependence on Jesus Christ and my deep sense of the presence of Christ in my life.

I want to take this opportunity to say my grateful thanks to all of you. Believe me when I tell you that your calls, notes, cards,

emails, and prayers have made a significant difference to me, in my recovery, and in my sense of God's presence. You all came through this time with me with grace and dignity, and a spiritual maturity that is profound. You have truly embodied what St. Paul meant when he taught Christians that we should build one another up in love. Loving one another - building one another up, encouraging one another, praying for one another - this is truly what we are called to do in Christian community. This is what nurtures us for the ministry of Jesus Christ, and helps us to grow into "the full stature of Christ," as our Baptismal Covenant says. And this is what you have done! I am proud of you, your bishops are proud of you, and I hope and pray that YOU are proud of you!

I also want to acknowledge the members of your vestry. What a committed, extraordinary, and loving group of people they are, every one of them. Their love for all of you, for Christ Church, and for me was evident, and we are so blessed to have leaders like them! I am especially grateful to Diane Stains, Senior Warden, and want to acknowledge her for her constancy, faithfulness, enthusiasm, and support in so many

ways, and the ways in which she worked so faithfully with Leslie Ann Ashing, our faithful Administrative Assistant to keep everything running smoothly.

Every one of you has contributed enormously to our common life in Christ, and never more so than in the month I was on leave. I feel we are stronger and more equipped for ministry than ever. You are a blessing!

Yours always in Christ,
Beth+

Christian Formation and Education

Gospel of Mark

The final class on the *Gospel of Mark* has been postponed, and will be held on Saturday, May 31 from 9:00 - 10:30 am in the Parish Hall. Come and learn about Mark's understanding of the resurrection of Jesus and see what it means for our lives today.

Children's Sacrament Class

There will be a two-part **Sacrament Class** for children on two consecutive **Saturdays in May, the 17th and the 24th**. We will meet at **9:30 am** in the church to learn more about the two great sacraments of Baptism and Holy

Eucharist. This class is ideal for children ages 6 and up especially, and is suitable both for those children who already receive communion, and for those who do not but would like to start. Remember, in the Episcopal Church, there is no "First Communion" - every baptized person is entitled to receive the sacrament. However, we will set aside **Sunday, May 25**, to recognize children who have taken the class, in church during the 10:00 service. Please call the Parish Office to let Beth know that you are interested.

It's Harvest Festival Time!

Yes, it's that time of year again! Our first meeting for the preparations for our **Harvest Festival** will be on **Monday, May 12, at 7:00 pm in the Parish House!** We hope that many of you will want to pitch in and be a part of this, our biggest fundraiser, and an all-around good time! This year, as well as people to help head up various areas, we are hoping to have a small team of adjunct leaders who will work closely with the chairperson to help with all the little details. Please plan to come to the meeting; or if you are unable to attend, but want to be

involved, please contact Alan Scott.

And set aside the date **NOW** - the Harvest Festival will be on **Saturday, September 13, 2008!**

Outreach

May 4 Raffle and Bake Sale

Please plan to be at church on **May 4**, to enjoy a Bake Sale and Raffle sponsored by our dedicated **Outreach Committee**. This will take place following both services, and the money raised will go towards the many outreach activities in which we are involved.

Afghan Raffle

Don't forget that we will draw the winning ticket for the **Knitting Group's** beautiful afghan on **Sunday, May 4!** The money raised from the raffle will benefit the Faxon Animal Rescue League, and is in memory of our dear friend Gladys Shaw.

African Dinner

Please join Chris Munro and all your friends at Christ Church for a very special **African Dinner** on **Saturday, May 31, at 6:00** in the Parish House! As most of you know, Chris recently returned home from a mission trip to Tanzania which was sponsored by

the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, and she has been appointed to the board of the Jubilee Ministry of the Diocese, which promotes partnerships with our brothers and sisters in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. Chris brought back some African food, music, and a host of inspirational stories. Please plan to attend this great event, to enjoy great food, friendship, and to learn more about how Christ Church can become an active partner with the **Jubilee Ministries** of the Diocese of Massachusetts!

Mt. Hope/Buzzards' Bay Deanery

Deanery Confirmation/Reception May 10

Bishop Tom Shaw, SSJE, will be at the Church of the Holy Spirit on Rock Street in Fall River on Saturday, May 10, for a deanery-wide service of Confirmation and Reception at 10:00 am. Five members of our parish family will be received into the Episcopal Church that day: Andrew Correia, Cathy Hague, George Hague, Chris Munro, and Shelagh Gouveia. As Dean, Beth will take part on the service. Please plan to attend!

Deanery Assembly on May 13
Bishop Gayle Harris will be with the Mt. Hope/Buzzard's Bay Deanery on Tuesday, May 13, at 7:00 pm at Grace Church in New Bedford. This is a great opportunity to hear from the bishop some of her thoughts on the national church, the work of the diocese and especially the work of ministry in which we are engaged down here on the "southcoast." All are welcome to attend, and Beth will be happy to carpool with anyone.

Diocesan News and Information

Barbara C. Harris Camp

Summer registration is now open at the Barbara C. Harris Camp and Conference Center in Greenfield, New Hampshire. With a reputation for outstanding staff, excellent facilities and a fun, challenging program, the camp offers opportunity for young people of the diocese to experience summer camp at its best. This summer, the camp is adding a new horseback riding program to its other offerings. Sessions fill quickly, so campers should register soon by going to www.bchcenter.org or calling the camp for registration

materials at 603-547-3400. The email is camp@bchcenter.org.

There are also some special offerings this year - Family Camp and Choir Camp! Check them both out online!

Vestry Notes

The vestry has been engaged in the following areas lately:

Hearing from the Mission/Vision Committee on the results from last fall's discussions, and setting goals;

Preparing to update Parish By-Laws;

Looking to address repairs in the tower of the church and painting that needs to be done in the church;

Full minutes can be found at the back of the church and by asking through the office! And remember, you are always welcome to attend a meeting!

Have You Shared Christ Lately?

A couple of weeks ago something very power happened to me. It happened when I was having a conversation with a co-worker of mine. This co-worker has been battling cancer for the last several years and we have talked many times about her trials, success and failures that are associated with her treatment.

We share a common faith and understanding with regard to her illness and I like to think that our conversations, and my prayers for her have helped lessen her burden.

Despite the efforts of all who are involved in her treatment she continues to not be able to get well. She is an inspiration to me as she always is more concerned for my feelings than her own.

One morning she came into my office and related an experience she had just had at a Dunkin Donuts. Seems that while she was in line she ran into a friend of her husband who she had not seen for quite some time. The friend indicated that her husband had told him about her recent reoccurrence of cancer and that he understood that treatments

were not going so well. While I listened to her account of this story I could hardly keep my own feelings of fear and sadness from coming out. The story continues that she finished up her business and got her cup of coffee and left the store. Now apparently there was a man in front of her in the line who had overheard her story, and when she exited the store he called her over to his car. The man said that he had not meant to ease drop but wanted to know my friends name so that he could pray for her. When she told this part of the story I could no longer contain myself I burst into tears and proclaimed that the Holy Spirit was at work. The man could have just prayed for her anonymously, but that's not what he did.

Christ is with us always, we could sense his presence more if we are willing to share our faith and beliefs with others. My hope and desire for you and for myself is that we could be more like this stranger in the Dunkin Donuts that we would not be embarrassed or shy to share with others our own beliefs in Christ. We do not have to be overbearing or righteous just share our beliefs, with no fear of criticism or disbelief.

When we share Christ with others we keep him in the world, and from where I'm standing, we let him touch us, and those we share with in a way that they may never have known.

So the next chance you get to let someone know what Christ has done for you take it!

A.....

ANOTHER GOD MOMENT

Sue Carvalho

There I was running errands and getting some food at the Price-Rite when as I was putting the groceries in the car a man approached and gave me a quarter for the carriage.(You pay a quarter to ensure you return the carriage) It was very cold and I was contemplating not returning the carriage when the man appeared. I offered to let the man keep the quarter and he said oh no that's ok I just wanted to save you the trouble. What's the point you ask? For me it was another God moment. That's how I view my life looking for another God moment. I have learned that I need to listen, really listen to what God is telling me and trust that he does know what is best for me even when I think I know better.

The more I believe in the power of God the more I see him at work in my life. I know by believing in his power it frees me to just give it to God and wait, and listen. The more I give the more I seem to receive. When I think of God in my life I often think of trying to weave, of paying attention to the over and under and the in and out in order to see the pattern of beauty unfold. God moments are not always moments when I feel comfortable and happy. Sometimes I find things happening in my life and I'm praying and sobbing and just pleading with God to let me know I am suppose to be where I am and you know he does let me know. In his time-not my time and that is where paying attention is so important.

A couple years ago I found myself working for someone who I felt was very difficult to be around. I prayed about it as well as looked for employment elsewhere. He eventually left the company and I stayed. I prayed some more and looked again for employment elsewhere. Nothing happened, and then we merged with another company and I found myself working with someone alongside me. She went through breast cancer treatment and although we

weren't close I extended a kindness and caring.

Time goes on, we are still working at this crazy place wondering where we are suppose to be and now have become great friends. The serenity prayer which sits on my desk has also been on her desk as well (I share it with those who need it most). She was diagnosed and retreated for a second occurrence of breast cancer. I know without a doubt God wanted me right here to be a support and a friend. This is just a job and nothing more. What an opportunity God gave me to meet someone so kind, caring, strong and loves SHOES as much as me! We get each other and come from similar backgrounds. If I had not listened to God I would have missed this blessing in my life.