

**The Chimes**  
**The Newsletter of Christ Church**  
**Swansea, Massachusetts**  
**October 2006**



**From the Rector**

Dear People of God:

There is a story you have probably heard that often makes the rounds of parish newsletters around this time of year. It is the story of a pastor and his congregation as they look to the future. A pastor stood up in the midst of the congregation

one Sunday, and said: “We in this congregation have so many ideas about the ways in which our church can grow and move. We are talking about new missions, and furthering our outreach. We are committed to bringing in more children and young people and serving them. We’d like to add another service. We want to provide a place that is welcoming and comfortable. Well, my friends, I have good news and bad news for you. The good news is that we have more than enough money to fulfill all our dreams for this place and then some!” At this point a loud roar of approval broke out and cheering filled the church. “And the bad news,” the pastor continued, “the bad news is that the money is still in our pockets!”

Well, when I first heard this story, I laughed. And then, of course, I thought, there is some truth here. But when I heard it again recently, something else struck me. We keep more than money in our pockets

So often, we think that money is the only thing we need to do the ministry of the Church. But it is not. Oh, it is important, all right – but not the only thing. What we need is God. That’s it. And that is the one thing we can be sure we have.

And you know, when we know beyond a shadow of a doubt that God is with us, and that God will provide for us, we begin to perceive all the gifts we have – *everything* that we are carrying in our pockets, in other words!

What do you have in your pocket – the pocket of your heart and your mind and your soul? How is God acting in you? What are the gifts and talents and passion for ministry with

which God has gifted you? The generosity of Christ Church when it comes to offering our treasure is obvious! Just look at what we did last year, with pledges going up 13%! But we have more to offer. And we find it in the enormous store of generosity, talent, kindness, and willingness to engage in ministry that you all show. You each have it. And God is asking you to offer it.

So this year, when you prayerfully consider your financial pledge to the church, I hope your generosity will draw you to put your hand in your pocket a second time. And this time draw from it the gifts of love and talent and time with which God have blessed you.

Dear friends, we here at Christ Church have so many ideas about the way our church can grow and engage in new missions and ministry...and I have good news...and I only have good news! The good news is that we have more than enough of the money, talent, and time to fulfill all our dreams! The good news is all of you in Jesus Christ our Lord, making it happen!

Faithfully,  
Beth+

**P.S. From the Rector**

And speaking of gifts – how I appreciated each of you on Harvest Festival Day! And all the days leading up to it, as well. It moved my heart to see our two wonderful co-chairs, **Diane Stains and Sherry Shea**, moving through the crowds talking with folks, helping people and checking in to see if

people needed breaks. As the song says, “truly the spirit of the Lord is in this place.” What a **magnificent** effort.

B.

## **Christian Formation**

### **Pre-Convention Deanery Meeting**

**Our deanery (Mt. Hope/Buzzard’s Bay) will join with the Cape and the Islands Deanery on Tuesday, October 17, for a Pre-Convention meeting and discussion. The meeting will begin at 7:00 pm at Christ Church in Plymouth, and those who wish have been invited to bring a brown bag supper and join our brothers and sisters from the Cape and Islands at 6:00 for supper and fellowship.** This will be an opportunity for hearing about the proposed diocesan budget and some of the resolutions that will be before Convention this year. All interested persons are welcome – this is a great opportunity for those of you who wonder where your Assessment money goes, or wonder just what it is we do at Convention! Also, we have **openings for four more people to become Christ Church delegates to the deanery** – I am delighted that **Jacki Laxon** has offered to join me as a delegate. Please consider whether this might be an opportunity for you to serve God’s Church on a wider scale.

And for more on Convention, read on...

### **Diocesan Convention**

The Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts will take place at Trinity Church, Copley Square, on Friday and Saturday, October 27/28. The theme this year will be on ways in which parishes can develop ways of “Sending and

Serving,” as our diocesan mission statement says. In other words, how do we help people in our parishes develop their particular gifts for ministry, and help them find ways of engaging in these ministries? **I know many of you at Christ Church are interested in this; and our bishops are inviting members of the parishes to attend Convention along with their clergy and delegates to hear more about this.** I would very much like to take a team from Christ Church with me. It is understood that if you work, you may only be able to attend Convention on Saturday, and that is perfectly OK. Please speak to me if you would like to know more; and you can also find information on our diocesan web site, [www.diomass.org](http://www.diomass.org). I am happy to register anyone who would like to attend.

Beth Grundy+

### **Confirmation Classes**

Confirmation will take place this May at the Church of the Ascension in Fall River. Anyone from the age of 13 and up who has been baptized is eligible for Confirmation, although it is strongly recommended that people be at least 14 or 15. Our Rector, Beth, will begin Confirmation Classes in early December. Depending on the number of interested people, we will either have classes alone or will join with another group from another parish. Responsibilities of confirmands will include attending classes and being present in church at least twice a month, as well as taking part in a deanery-wide retreat. **If you are interested in being confirmed please contact Beth Grundy in the parish office at 508-678-0923, or have one of your parents do so, by October 31 at the latest.**

### **Inquirer’s Classes**

Any adult who has been **confirmed in another Christian tradition**, but who would like to be **received into the Episcopal Church** in May is also invited to **please contact Beth by October 31**. There will be a series of classes/workshops specifically designed for your needs.

### **Anglican Prayer Beads Workshop**

Due to the popularity of our first workshop, we will have another Anglican Bead Workshop on Wednesday, November 8, at 7:00 pm in the Parish House. Marsha Gauthier will lead it once again. The cost is \$5.00 for supplies and you can sign up in the Church or by calling the office.

### **Discussions in Faith**

The dates for our **Sunday morning** “Discussions in Faith” for October and November are: **October 15, October 29, November 5, and November 19**. We meet in the Parish House with the Rector between 9:15 and 9:45 am over coffee. Please note that we will meet twice in a row at the end of October, due to a Stewardship Breakfast on one of our regular days.

Please join us!

## The Wonderment of Prayer

*These wonderful reflections on prayer have been offered to us by a member of our congregation. In the hope that we would all be able to focus more on the meaning of prayer in our own life, rather than on the writer, the author has asked to remain known only by their first initial. I hope this sharing of how prayer has enriched one person's life may enhance all of our lives of prayer with God.*

I was driving home after a very long day. It was about 9:30 pm and I was listening to Jazz on WGBH while I contemplated writing an article for the *Chimes* that I had been considering for the last several months.

The original article I had envisioned dealt with the power of the spoken word in Prayer, but as I was thinking about the main parts of this potential article, my mind strayed to how many different forms of prayer that are in, and affect our lives. The thoughts came to me as fast as the white lines passing under my car, and it was hard for me to focus and stay with anyone thought, I took this as a sign that perhaps I should be writing about how all these different forms of prayer exist in my life.

To stay with my original thought, I would like to address how the quality and significance of my personal prayer had become more meaningful by simply saying my prayers out loud. When I pray in the privacy of my room I have recently prayed aloud, the prayer although in thought and desire has not changed, the quality of the experience for me has. When in Church we pray the Prayers of the People. These prayers

are formulated and specific, although it seems more and more commonplace that the congregation offers their own petitions aloud. Again, although the original intent and desire are the same, the quality seems different. There are prayers within the liturgy that are common to all and perhaps we may become insensitive to their beauty and significance from time to time, but their message for us, in our attempt to reach God, has been reinforced for many of us from our young childhood and the reciting of these prayers hold many personal meanings and memories.

There are the personal prayers we pray when we enter church on Sunday mornings before the service starts. For me this is a time to take a deep breath from the past hectic week and thank the Lord for all my blessings, and even though I have problems that are most likely common to all of you, I find that focusing on my blessings is easier in that setting and the restoring nature of this short prayer helps put me in right spiritual frame of mind for the service to come.

There are the prayers that our Priest prays for us in different settings, perhaps at the start or end of a committee meeting or a social gathering; we are most likely the beneficiaries of these prayers in the form of prayer requests to help us through some type of life issue or to confirm a blessing we have already received.

There are the prayers of thanksgiving, of forgiveness, of need, of desire, prayer can take on almost any form and can be significant in many ways. Prayer is powerful, prayer works! I know because I am the lucky recipient of many prayers that

in my past have helped me not only survive cancer, but also bolster my faith in God.

The very next chance you get, I invite you to contemplate all the forms of prayer in your life, and take every chance you can to expand these thoughts perhaps in the form of more prayer in your life. God knows we could all do with a little more communication with someone who loves us.

Well I am almost home - it's about quarter till ten and it's my bedtime.

I will say a prayer for you. Please say one for me.

A....

## **Outreach News**

By Marsha Gauthier

Blood Drive- Tuesday, October 3rd, The Outreach Group sponsored a Red Cross Blood Drive in the Parish House. 34 pints of blood were collected. Many thanks to all who participated and helped in any way. Currently there is a critical shortage of blood and it is so important for those who can give to give the gift of life.

Service Personnel Mission--2 boxes were sent to Brooks Hospital for our recovering service personnel. Items included: DVDs; calling cards; playing cards; greeting cards, popcorn & car/boat model kits. Also a box has been sent to a local service person serving in Iraq with 1 more to go. Items included gum; toothpaste; toothbrushes; foot powder; playing

cards; eye drops; lip balm; suntan lotion & flea collars. Once again our generous congregation has made it possible for this mission to be successful.

Meat Pie Supper--We are planning a meat pie supper to be held on Friday, Oct 20th, in the parish house to raise money for the Honduran church where Caitlin and Rev Beth went last year. We plan to divide these proceeds with the church in Biloxi, Miss. that was affected by hurricane Katrina and which Caitlin visited with the Episcopal Youth. Additionally, we are planning a "Gift Basket Auction" which will take place during the supper. Alan Scott will be our auctioneer. The proceeds from this fun event will go to our Jubilee Ministry for Aids Orphans in Africa. Please consider donating a gift basket for this worthwhile mission. There will be a preview of the gift baskets for those who wish to participate but are unable to attend the supper. This will take place Sunday, October 15th in the Parish House following both services.

We have a mouth watering menu planned of meat pie, baked beans, coleslaw, gravy, beverage and apple surprise dessert. Tickets are \$7.00 adults and \$3.50 for children 10 and under. Take out tickets will be available. Tickets will be available on Sundays at church or call the church office for reservations.

Teddy Bears-The Stuffing Party originally scheduled for Wednesday, November 8th at 7PM, we will be postponed until a later date. Currently we are in need of people to sew the bears together to prepare them for stuffing. If you have a sewing machine and would be willing to sew some pre-cut teddies together, please contact Marsha Gauthier. These bears are given free of charge, to those adults living with cancer. It

means a great deal to the recipients to know people are being supportive at this time in their life.

Prayer Bead Workshop- We will be having an Anglican Prayer Bead Workshop on Wednesday, November 8th at 7PM in the Parish House. The cost of supplies is \$5.00 per set of beads. We had a grand time at our first workshop. We hope you can join us. If you already have Prayer Beads you may wish to make some as gifts. You may also make them to donate to the Prayer Shawl Ministry who will be presenting these to those who may be in need.

Food Bank/Soup Kitchen--Please continue to bring non-perishables to church for our Food Bank/Soup Kitchen mission. Your generosity is greatly appreciated by those who are less fortunate than we are.

We are always open to new ideas. Please let any member of the group know if you have a suggestion. As always thank you for your support.

## **Fellowship**

### **Sunday School Halloween Party**

We will once again have our annual Sunday School Halloween Party; so be on the lookout on our Web Page and church bulletins for details! The time is 5:30 pm, the date is Friday, October 27, and the place is the Parish House We always have a great time, so you do not want to miss it!

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Potluck and Musical Revue**

On **Saturday, November 11, at 6:00 pm**, we will have our second **Annual Potluck and Musical Review!** We had a fantastic time last year, and hope that those of you who were unable to make it then will be sure to attend this year! People of all ages and with all talents welcome! There will be a sign up sheet in the church; or you can speak to our Minister of Music, Al Deston, who is coordinating the talent part of the event, and who will help folks with rehearsals. All acts need to be run by Al, please, in order to ensure that there is time enough for everyone – we do hope you will participate! Of course, we also need an audience, and food! This is a great family event!

### **Knitting Group**

The October and November Tuesday evening dates for the Knitting Group to meet at Esther Mello's home are: October 17, October 31, November 7, and November 21 – I think! Please check the bulletins or give Esther a call to double-check this. We begin at 6:30 pm.

### **Book Group**

We will meet on Wednesday, October 25 – book and place to be announced!

### **Stewardship Breakfast**

Please mark your calendars now, and plan to join us on **Sunday, November 12**, for a delicious **breakfast hosted by the Stewardship Committee**. We will have **one service that day, at 9:00 am**, and breakfast will be served immediately after. Come and celebrate the many gifts our parish has been given by God, and allow us to say “thank you” for being a part of it!

## **Around the Parish**

### **New Administrative Assistant**

We are delighted to welcome Leslie-Ann Ashing as our new Administrative Assistant at Christ Church. Leslie-Ann, her husband John, and her daughter Emily recently moved to the area from Switzerland; and Leslie Ann is a wonderful addition to our staff! She will be in the office Monday through Friday, from 9:00 until 12:00 – please stop by to say “hello!”

### **Vestry Notes**

The Vestry took a much-deserved break from meeting in August. The minutes of the September meeting will be posted in the church and the parish house as soon as they are approved at the October meeting. In the meantime, please remember that minutes and financial reports are always available through the office; and that anyone is welcome at any time to a vestry meeting.

**The deadline for submissions for the November issue of the Chimes in Tuesday, October 24. Please send them to the Rector at [reveag98@aol.com](mailto:reveag98@aol.com), or drop off a hard copy in the office. Many thanks!**

**Christ Church, Swansea, Massachusetts**  
**Directory**

The Right Rev. M. Thomas Shaw, SSJE  
**Bishop of the Diocese of Massachusetts**

The Right Rev. Roy Cederholm  
The Right Rev. E. Gayle Harris  
**Suffragan Bishops**

The Rev. Elizabeth Grundy  
**Rector**

The People of Christ Church  
**Ministers**