

The Chimes
The Newsletter of Christ Church, Swansea, MA
March 2005

From the Priest-in-Charge

Dear friends:

I write this on the second anniversary of the day I became your Priest-in-Charge. Serving among you and with you has been a privilege and a joy. I couldn't have asked for a more fulfilling call. These have been two exceptional years. I feel God's blessings each and every day.

We are also coming to a turning point in the life of the parish. We will be starting work very soon on a process of discernment and strategic planning to determine the mission of Christ Church in the world today, our goals for ministry, and how we see God at work in our lives. This will help the parish determine what kind of clergy leadership is needed here at this point in time. I will also be engaged in my own discernment of how I believe God is

calling me at this time. Together, we will pray our way into the path that God is dreaming of for Christ Church.

I believe this process will be a very fulfilling and exciting one. And yet, it is not easy to begin, in some ways. It is often easier and safer simply to sit where we are and enjoy what we have. And although God wants us to enjoy things, God always calls us out of ourselves to envision the possibilities of new life because of Jesus Christ.

And that is what I want us to remember. That where Jesus is, there is always new life. And Jesus is always with us. Always. I was visiting a very wise and very faithful dear woman in the hospital today. She looked right at me and quoted directly to me from the Great Commission of Jesus to his disciples in Matthew 28:20: "*And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*"

And it is so. Knowing this, we are beginning even now to move into the future where new life always awaits.

Please know of my love and my prayers for you. And please continue to pray for me.

Faithfully, *Beth+*

Outreach News and Updates

Florida Hurricane Assistance Project – Jan Fairman and Sue Carvalho, Co-chairs

We are partnering with the Church of the Ascension in assisting a family who have suffered the devastation of the Florida hurricanes. They are two grandparents and two children. A poster has been made with their photos and pictures of the devastation. A \$100 donation has already been received towards this mission, and is being sent to cover the cost of a weekend at the Episcopal Church Camp for Joshua. We will be continuing to raise money for a summer campership for Joshua. Please take a few moments to read Jan Fairman's article, which is included in this issue of the Chimes.

Sunday Visitors – Marsha Gauthier, Chair

We are still in need of folks to volunteer to be Visitors. Please contact Marsha Gauthier if you are able to help with this heartwarming ministry.

Food Bank/Soup Kitchen – Olive Ormerod, Coordinator

Our delivery volunteers are Nancy Teasdale, Chris Gillett, Diane Stinton, and Hank Fairman. Please continue your generous donations towards the Ascension Soup Kitchen and the Food Bank at the Church of Our Saviour.

Teddy Bear Project

There will be a Stuffing Party on **Wednesday, March 30, at 7:00 pm** in the Parish House. (Please note the change in date) A sign-up sheet will be posted for parish participation. Men, women, and

teens are all invited to join the fun of stuffing bears for those who are struggling with cancer.

Project Linus

We donated 18 handcrafted blankets for traumatized or critically ill children from infants to the age of 18.

Prayer Shawls – Betty Traynor and Marsha Gauthier, Co-chairs

Approximately 17 shawls have been knitted and presented to those in need, and many more are in progress.

A Bake Sale will be held in May to build up the Outreach Fund. Caitlin Scott and Marsha Gauthier are the Co-chairs.

The next **meeting of the Outreach Committee will be on Tuesday, April 26, at 7:15 pm** in the Parish House.

Adoption of a Punta Gorda Family

The Outreach Committee of Christ Church met recently and discussed, among other projects, the adoption of a Punta Gorda, Florida family devastated by Hurricane Charley. We were able to connect with Carolyn Brenner who, together with her husband Richard, is raising two grandchildren, 12 year old Joshua and 5-year-old Samantha. Carolyn and the children are active parishioners at the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, and thought by the associate rector to be among their most needy victims of the disaster. The family spent the hurricane huddled in a closet. Joshua has written a letter to Christ Church telling us he is sure that "God had His arms around" their house, because it was left standing. All windows need to be replaced, and Ms.

Brenner's upholstery business was destroyed, along with all inventory/supplies. She has now "set up shop" in a nearby industrial park.

After unwelcome 'Charley' left town, the diocese of Southwestern Florida arranged for teens in the parish to attend the diocesan camp for a weekend in order to relieve some stress and allow them to share experiences. Joshua would like very much to return to camp, and, since Ms. Brenner cannot afford the tuition, we are attempting to assist in this matter. The parish discretionary funds are stretched very thin because of Charley.

We hope to remain connected with Church Of the Good Shepherd and the Brenner family for one year, making this our first long term project. In addition to sending a boy to camp, and assisting with other needs, we are aware that the church building itself was severely damaged, as was the surrounding neighborhood. Initially the problems faced were obtaining water and electricity; more recently, mold blossomed and more homes were determined inhabitable. Trailer parks still house thousands of families. Almost all schools were severely damaged or destroyed, and until this week Joshua attended a makeshift school two to eight P.M.

In addition to all the physical damage that occurs during a disaster, the anxiety and depression that follows can be just as difficult to rectify as destroyed windows and walls. We hope the helping hands offered the Brennens and Church Of the Good Shepherd bring joy and some measure of relief as they work toward recovery.

Sue Carvalho and I Co-chair this project, and Church Of the Ascension in Fall River is also helping. We are planning a bake sale in April! Donations marked for Punta Gorda will be gratefully received.

Many thanks for your help and prayers!

- *Jan Fairman*

Social Committee

Dinner Dance at White's

Everyone who attended the Dinner Dance at White's Restaurant last May had such a good time that the Social Committee has decided to sponsor another one! Please mark your calendars NOW for **Friday evening, April 29**, and plan to join the Christ Church family at White's for another wonderful evening of music, dancing, food, and fellowship! More details will be forthcoming very soon.

Worship and Education

Lenten Series

Our Lenten Series, "A Christian Pilgrimage," led by Peggy Deston and sponsored by the Stewardship Committee, continues on **Wednesday evenings March 2, 9, and 16, from 7:00 – 9:00 pm**. We are exploring together what it means to be on a spiritual journey as we continue to discover more about who God is for us. The fellowship is wonderful and light refreshments are served. Please feel free to attend any or all of these evenings of prayer and reflection.

Educational opportunity at the State House in Boston

Raise your voice for justice at the Episcopal City Mission Lobby Day on April 12! Each year, over 100 men and women come to the State House for ECM's annual Lobby Day. It is an opportunity to learn about **health care** and **housing** initiatives and lobby your legislator. ECM offers two morning workshops on current legislation and how to advocate (9:00 am and 10:30 am, repeat sessions. Come participate in the workshops, lobbying, or just lunch. For more information or to register, please call or email Rachel Anderson at Episcopal City Mission at 617-482-4826 x579 or randerson@diomass.org.

Easter Morning Easter Egg Hunt

The children of the Christ Church Sunday School are invited to participate in an Easter Egg Hunt on Easter morning at 9:00 A.M. As always, we appreciate your help in making this a joyous event for them. Are you able to donate one dozen plastic eggs with wrapped candy inside? Please feel free to bring them to church or to drop them off at the Parish House during regular office hours. Many thanks!

Confirmation

Confirmation will take place on **Saturday, May 21, at the Church of the Ascension in Fall River.** Bishop Bud Cederholm will be preaching and celebrating. We have two young people and one adult planning on being confirmed at this time: Alex Morse, Amanda Morse, and Kelly Riley. Kelly's fiancé Matt Croft will be received into the Episcopal Church at that time. Please mark your calendars now and plan to join us for this festive occasion! And please keep Alex, Amanda, Kelly, and Matt in your prayers.

Holy Week Schedule of Services – March 20 through March 27

The following is a list of services that will take place during Holy Week, from Sunday, March 20 through Sunday, March 27.

Sunday, March 20 – The Sunday of the Passion, Palm Sunday

8:00 A.M. Liturgy of the Palms and Holy Eucharist, Rite I

9:45 A.M. Liturgy of the Palms and Holy Eucharist, Rite II
(Please note that the service will begin in the Parish House and begin 15 minutes earlier than usual!)

Tuesday, March 22

10:00 A.M. Morning Prayer and Holy Eucharist, Rite II

Wednesday, March 23

7:00 P.M. Holy Eucharist, Rite II

Thursday, March 24 – Maundy Thursday

7:00 P.M. Service of Footwashing and Holy Eucharist, followed by the Stripping of the Altar and the Watch in the Garden. (Please note that the service will begin in the Parish House, and we will all process to the church together. Please bring a flashlight if you have one.) Following the service, the church will remain open for several hours for people to keep watch and pray.

Friday, March 25 – Good Friday

12:00 noon Good Friday Liturgy and Communion from the Reserved Sacrament

4:00 P.M. Children's Service of Stations of the Cross (adults most welcome, too)

7:00 P.M. Good Friday Liturgy and Communion from the Reserved Sacrament

Saturday, March 26

6:30 P.M. The Great Vigil of Easter, followed by refreshments in the Parish House

Sunday, March 27 – The Feast of the Resurrection – Easter Day

8:00 A.M. Festival Holy Eucharist, Rite II

10:00 A.M. Festival Holy Eucharist, Rite II with choir

There will be an Easter Egg Hunt for all the children of the parish at 9:00 A.M. on Easter Day.

Reminders

Office hours

The **Parish Office** is open each week on **Mondays, Tuesday, Thursdays, and Fridays from 9:00 A.M. until 12:00 noon**. These are the times when Karen is in the office. The Priest-in-Charge is generally in the office on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings, and at other times throughout the week, depending on visits, meetings, etc. Her Friday mornings and early afternoons are set aside for study and sermon preparation at home, but she is generally in the office at some point on Friday

except for the first Friday of the month which is reserved for a study group. Currently Karen is not in the office on Wednesdays, and Beth's day off is Monday. Always remember that any messages you leave on the answering machine at church will always be picked up the following day at the *latest*. Also, please do not hesitate to call Beth at home in case of an immediate pastoral need. If she is not there, she will either be there shortly, or will retrieve her messages and respond as soon as possible.

Reporting illnesses

This is just a reminder that hospitals **do not** call church offices to let us know if a parishioner has been admitted. This is because of the stringency of confidentiality laws. It means that the only way I know if someone is in the hospital is if a member of the family, friend, or member of the parish calls me and lets me know. I want to thank those of you who have done this, and say that it is always a priority for me to make hospital calls, so please don't ever hesitate to let me know if there is someone who is in need of a visit. Thanks!

EAG+

Vestry Notes

From the meeting of January 11, 2005

The Treasurer presented a first draft of the proposed 2005 Budget. Everyone was invited to look it over carefully, and be ready for discussion before accepting it at the February meeting. A meeting of the Executive Committee will be held before that time for suggestions and changes.

The Stewardship Committee reported that the number of pledging units has increased this year to 1134 from 113 in 2004; however, the pledge income is only at \$94,000. It is expected to increase by about \$1,000 at least. The Nominating Committee also presented its report for the slate of officers and vestry for 2005.

Gladys Shaw has stepped down from being Financial Secretary and will be recognized with a gift and thanksgiving during our worship. It was noted unanimously how generous and giving Gladys has been with her time.

The vestry reviewed and accepted new guidelines for Vestry membership, including responsibilities and requirements.

Beth stated that she feels some intensive work is needed on Christian Education for all ages, including support for those engaged in this ministry. She will be working on re-forming the Christian Education Committee.

There have been requests to look into a new sign and better outside lighting for the church. This will be researched in the next few months.

The Day School has financial concerns, and Carl will be looking into the financial implications for the church's budget.

We continued to brainstorm and discuss ways for the parish as a whole to continue to improve communications.

Sunday Lectionary March 6 – April 10
Sunday, March 13 – Fifth Sunday in Lent

Ezekiel 37:1-3 (4-10) 11-14
Psalm 130
Romans 6:16-23
John 11(1-16) 17-44

Sunday, March 20 – The Sunday of the Passion – Palm Sunday

Isaiah 45:21-25
Psalm 22:1-11
Philippians 2:5-11
Matthew (26:36-75) 27:111-54 (55-66)

Sunday, March 27 – The Feast of the Resurrection – Easter Day

Acts 10:34-43
Psalm 118:14-17, 22-24
Colossians 3:1-4
John 20:1-10 (11-18)

Sunday, April 3 – Second Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:14a, 22-32
Psalm 111
1 Peter 1:3-9
John 20:19-31

Sunday, April 10 – Third Sunday of Easter

Isaiah 43:1-12
Psalm 116:10-17
1 Peter 1:17-23
Luke 24:13-35

Reflections

I Love What I Do

This past weekend, my stepson was coming to visit with my grandson, so I went to Sam's Bakery in Fall River to purchase meat pies, spinach pies, and some pita breads. The minute you walk in, the aroma of the food cooking is intoxicating. There is always a long line, and there are several people waiting on customers. Every time I go in there, one of the owners is always waiting with a HUGE smile and a willingness to make sure you have gotten everything that you need. You can tell how much love goes into the food they prepare. The other day when I went, this same woman gave out pieces of fresh pita bread while they waited for their mother to get waited on. It is always a pleasurable experience when I go in there. Also, this past weekend, in honor of Valentine's Day, my husband and I went to Confections on New Boston Road. The owner, James Kennedy, had created my wedding cake, and whenever we get the occasion, we get our desserts from there. On Valentine's Day, he opens up for several hours and serves coffees and desserts. The tables were set with flowers and candles and the desserts were like works of art. Hi storefront is always elegantly displayed for the season. He truly loves what he does and it shows. You can tell he puts a lot of time and effort into what he does.

During the really cold weather, I stopped at a gas station to have my gas pumped, and there was this one man who, every time he waited on me, with all the enthusiasm you can imagine, would always say, "have a great day," and I know he meant it. Don't

you enjoy it when, during your daily travels, you encounter people who truly love what they do? It always makes the experiences so pleasurable. When I encounter people who are this enthusiastic and loving of what they do, I try to take the time to tell them how much I appreciate the effort they make. AT the gym where I take classes, there is one class called, "Hip Hop Jamz" that is like dancing that you see in music videos. The instructor always has a packed class and it is lots of fun! She loves what she teaches, and everyone feels comfortable.

For the past nine months, my husband and I have attempted to learn ballroom dancing. The instructor is always smiling and laughing (not at us) and encouraging us with her kind words. She always seems to know when we are taking things too seriously and comes over to break up the serious mood. We recently found out that she is seventy. And were surprised as she moves around the floor better than all of us. She is amazing.

I especially love to watch parents who lovingly and patiently tend to the needs of their children. You can tell they truly love what they do. I have to go to work every day, and although I like what I do, I don't love what I do. I work part-time for Weight Watchers, and I truly love that job. I spend more money in preparing for my meeting every week than I earn. Oh well, I love what I do.

Even with this church, I love what I do, writing articles for the Chimes, serving as a Eucharistic Minister, decorating for events, they are all labors of love. What a difference it makes when we love what we do. What do you love to do? Are you loving what you do and doing what you love?