

A Voice in the Wilderness

St. Andrew's in the Pines Episcopal Church



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The Rector's Remarks



Wes Shields

I hope that everyone has had a wonderful Easter season and is en-

joying the green grass and warm weather. I wanted to share with you some jokes that I have received over the last year or so and I hope that you will take a few minutes to sit back and enjoy them. There is a comedian that I like who often ends his show by saying, "If you ain't laughing, you ain't living." I think there is a lot of wisdom in that statement.

Billy Graham had just finished a tour of the Florida East Coast and

was taking a limousine to the airport. Having never driven a limo, he asked the chauffeur if he could drive for a while. Well, the chauffeur felt like he didn't have much of a choice, so he got in the back of the limo and Billy took the wheel. He turned onto I-95 and accelerated to about 75 MPH. WHAM! The blue lights of the State Highway Patrol flashed in his rearview mirror. He pulled over and a trooper came to his window. When the trooper saw

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Senior Warden's Report



Cally McKee

Spring is here. And in many ways, my life and the life of the church reflect this season. I love spring and the possibilities it brings. The

chance to open the windows, air out the house, get outside and enjoy the plants coming up and the trees budding out, take the dog swimming in the creek. Spring also brings with it a lot of work. Cleaning up the yard, clearing out the flower beds and getting them ready for planting, sweeping out the garage, taking off the flannel sheets and putting on percale, and I'm sure everyone has a different but equally long list. The point is getting ready to enjoy all that spring and summer have to bring takes a little preparation.

I am currently leaving a job and company and co-workers that I have been with for over 5 years. I'm looking forward to the opportunities where I am going, but the preparation has at times felt like a huge challenge, yet something in me says I need to make the move.

Every time I mark something off the list I put three more things on it. This reminds me of the church and where we are at in our journey. The preparation we are going through right now is extensive but it is also

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(Senior Warden's Report continued from page 1)

exciting—kind of like watching a tulip bulb dare to stick its shoots out of the ground in April. This time of preparation and hard work will allow

us at St Andrew's to enjoy the spring and summer to come.

Please feel welcome to attend the Kick off for the new property on May

7. The vestry will be working to make it a fun celebration of our success.

(Rector's Remarks continued from page 1)

who it was, he said, "Just a moment, please, I need to call in." The trooper radioed in and asked for the chief. He said, "I have a REALLY important person pulled over and I need to know what to do." The chief replied, "Who is it, not Ted Kennedy again?" The trooper said, "No, even more important." "It isn't the Governor Jeb Bush, is it?" asked the chief. "No, even more important," replied the trooper. "It isn't the President George Bush, is it?" "No," replied the trooper, "Even more important."

"Well, WHO in the WORLD is it?!" screamed the chief. The trooper responded, "I don't know for sure but I think it might be Jesus, because his chauffeur is Billy Graham!"

An old hillbilly farmer had a wife who nagged him unmercifully. From

morning till night (and sometimes later), she was always complaining about something. The only time he got any relief was when he was out plowing with his old mule. He tried to plow a lot. One day, when he was out plowing, his wife brought him lunch in the field. He drove the old mule into the shade, sat down on a stump, and began to eat his lunch. Immediately, his wife began harassing him again. Complain, nag, nag; it just went on and on. All of a sudden, the old mule lashed out with both hind feet, caught her smack in the back of the head. Done killed her dead on the spot.

At the funeral several days later, the minister noticed something rather odd. When a woman mourner would approach the old farmer, he would listen for a minute,

then nod his head in agreement; but when a man mourner approached him, he would listen for a minute, then shake his head in disagreement.

This was so consistent, the minister decided to ask the old farmer about it. So after the funeral, the minister spoke to the old farmer, and asked him why he nodded his head and agreed with the women, but always shook his head and disagreed with all the men.

The old farmer said: "Well, the women would come up and say something about how nice my wife looked, or how pretty her dress was, so I'd nod my head in agreement." "And what about the men?" the minister asked. "They wanted to know if the mule was for sale."

A Note from the Diocese

The month of April was devoted to celebrating everything we can do to transform our community into a place that cares about and actively supports families and children. By ensuring that all parents in our community have access to quality childcare, affordable health services, parenting education resources, and substance abuse and mental health programs, we make progress toward what April stands for: Child Abuse Prevention. The majority of child abuse cases stem from situations and conditions that are entirely preventable in an engaged and supportive community. A community that cares about early childhood development, parent support and maternal mental health, for instance, is more likely to see families nurturing children who are born healthy and enter school ready to learn. Cities and towns that work to create good school systems and who come together to ensure that affordable housing is available in good, safe neighborhoods are less likely to see stressed, isolated families who don't know where to turn. Child Abuse Prevention Month is about connecting all of these dots so that the solutions to child abuse receive the attention the public craves. In a recent poll, 89% of Americans reported that child abuse was a "very important" moral issue to them. But it's not enough to care about the problem and address its consequences. We have to pay attention to the kinds of efforts that will prevent it from happening in the first place. So, learn more about what you and your community can do to support child abuse prevention. It's a shared responsibility and we're stronger together. Find out more about child abuse prevention in your community. !





Health Ministry News

Fran Milde, Ph.D., RN

Child abuse affects children of every age, race, and income level. It often takes place in the home and often comes from a person the child knows and trusts such as a parent, relative,

babysitter, or friend of the family. As many as seven children die each day from abuse. Another 12 abused children each day suffer brain damage. An untold number of children suffer emotional consequences of abuse.

What is abuse? Child abuse is any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker, which results in death, or serious physical or emotional harm. Abuse can take many forms: neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse. Neglect is a failure to provide for a child's basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, medical care, education, or proper supervision. Physical abuse is intentional injury inflicted upon a child from severe shaking, beating, kicking, punching, or burning. It often occurs in the name of discipline or punishment. Sexual abuse is any sexual act (fondling or rubbing the child's genitals, penetration, incest, rape, sodomy, indecent exposure, and using the child for prostitution or pornography) with a child by an adult or older child. Emotional abuse may occur when a parent fails to provide the understanding, warmth, attention, and supervision the child needs for healthy psychological growth.

Why do parents abuse their children? Three common themes help explain the main reasons. First, many child abusers themselves suffered abuse as children or had unhappy and insecure childhood. Second, child abuse often happens when the family is experiencing emotional or financial stress. Third, child abuse is more likely to happen in families that are socially isolated and have few or no friends or little or no contact with relatives.

Are both parents usually child abusers? No, one parent usually is the child abuser. The other parent often knows or suspects child abuse, but chooses to allow, ignore, or deny it.

What are the signs and symptoms of child abuse? Some indicators that may be a sign of child abuse include:

- Physical abuse: unexplained bruises and welts on the body, unexplained burns, behavioral extremes (withdrawal, aggression, regression, depression), inappropriate or excessive fear of parent or caretaker, antisocial behavior (substance abuse, truancy, fear of going home), unbelievable or inconsistent explanation for injuries, and unusual shyness or wariness of physical contact.
- Sexual abuse: torn, stained or bloody underclothes, frequent and unexplained throat, yeast, or urinary infections, somatic complaints including pain and irritation of the genitals, sexually transmitted diseases, bruises or bleeding from external genitalia, vaginal or anal region, pregnancy, regressive behaviors (thumb-sucking, bedwetting, fear of the dark), promiscuity or seductive behaviors, disturbed sleep patterns, sudden decline in school performance or truancy, and difficulty in walking or sitting.

- Emotional abuse: eating disorders, speech disorders (stuttering), nervous disorders (facial tics, stomach aches), habit disorders (biting, rocking, head-banging), cruel behavior, age-inappropriate behaviors (bedwetting, soiling), and behavioral extremes.
- Neglect: poor hygiene, unsuitable clothing, untreated injury or illness, lack of immunization, unusual pattern of school attendance, chronic absenteeism, chronic hunger or tiredness, and assuming adult responsibilities

How does one individual help stop child abuse? As an individual and as a member of our community, we have the power to prevent child abuse. The Administration for Children and Families suggest seven ways that we can contribute to prevention of child abuse.

1. Understand the problem: The first step is to recognize and understand that the problem exists in our community. According to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System, an estimated 903,000 children were victims of maltreatment in 2001. Most experts believe that actual incidents of abuse are more numerous than the statistics indicate.
2. Understand the causes: Many parents themselves were abused. Very young or inexperienced parents might not know how to take care of their children or what to expect from children at different stages of development. Circumstances that place families under extraordinary stress sometimes take their toll in child maltreatment. Also, parents who abuse alcohol or other drug are more likely to abuse their children.
3. Support programs that support families: Donate your time and money to programs such as parent education, substance abuse treatment programs, and church and community programs.
4. Report suspected abuse: Reporting suspected abuse may save a child and a family. If you suspect child abuse call the local police.
5. Spread the word: Help educate others in the community about child abuse.
6. Strengthen the fabric of our community: Know your neighbors' name and names of their children, and make sure they know yours. Give stressed parents a break by offering to watch their children. Volunteer.
7. Be ready in an emergency: If you find yourself in a situation where you believe a child is being or will be abused, the Prevent Child Abuse America program suggests the following:
 - Talk to the adult to get their attention away from the child. Be friendly.
 - Say something like, "Children can really wear you out, can't they?"
 - Ask if you can help in any way "Could I carry some packages? Play with an older child so the baby can be fed or changed? Call someone on my cell phone?"
 - If you see a child alone in a public place stay with the child until the parent returns.

All of our children must be safe. Each of us needs to act to prevent physical, sexual, or emotional abuse for any child. Child abuse is not just an event that happens when a child is being abused. Child abuse casts a shadow that lasts a lifetime.



ECW News



ECW Retreat, Laura Shields

What are Spiritual Gifts? Barb Pape

A group of St. Andrew's ladies met April 14-15 to determine the spiritual tools that are given to us to do God's work and ministry. To arrive at some understanding of what our spiritual gifts are we were asked to draw a lifeline graph depicting high and low events in our lives and in our spiritual growth. From this line we each wrote a spiritual autobiography to help us determine where we are now and where we feel God is leading us in the future.

Prior to the retreat, each person did a personalized Spiritual Gift analysis on the Internet, using three categories of gifts: miraculous, charismatic, and enabling. After answering the questions each person brought an analysis of our gifts and strengths. We discussed the patterns and determined that the group most generally gravitated to showing mercy, pastor/shepherd, serving, giving, and teaching. Perhaps as revealing as what were our strengths were what were not included in most of our lists: evangelism and prophecy.

The workshop was capably organized and led by Laura Shields. Our hearts go out in gratitude to her for a beautiful and useful two days! We each go away with greater awareness of how we can more completely serve God.

Adult Christian Education, Fran Milde

The next sessions for adult Christian education will be Wednesday, May 10th. The group with Laura, Collin, and Ellen as facilitators will meet at the home of Jocelyn. The group with Gail R., Gail G., Irene, and Fran as facilitators will meet at the home of Fran and Irene. If you need directions to find these locations please call one of the facilitators. The following meeting will be May 24.

Unconditional Love: An experience in Bangladesh



Meghan Carrier

Living overseas is an amazing experience, one that changes a person's life in various aspects. When having to acclimate to a new culture, language, a whole new way of eating, using the toilet, knowing which side of the street to walk down, and whose hand you can shake and whose you cannot, puts one's adaptable skills to the test. However, through it all, the embarrassing moments, the struggles and challenges, and the times of accidentally acting terribly offensive, one begins to find great joy in the simple accomplishments. Effectively communicating with the man running the copy store that you need 50 two-sided copies from the two pieces of paper in your hands becomes a huge accomplishment, one worth patting yourself on the back for. Not only did successes like these seem magnified to me while in Bangladesh, other things such as a beautiful skyline, a new friendship, a helpful stranger, or my students' eyes lighting up when they understand something new, seemed more joyful than perhaps they would have been before. Minute experiences some times have the greatest effects on us.

As I began to live in a new environment and become acquainted with a new culture, I underwent much growth mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. From the moment I was born until the day I left the U.S. I had never lived in an environment that was not Christian. I have traveled to different parts of the world, to both developing and developed nations, but in every situation I always lived in a Christian community. Traveling to Bangladesh was definitely a new challenge for me and for my faith. There were a couple Americans in my Peace Corps group who considered themselves Christians, but many had become disillusioned by Christianity and religion in general, and wanted no part with faith or God. So not only was my Christian community small, I was also living in a country where about 85% of the population is Muslim, about 15% is Hindu, and a mere 1% is Christian, Buddhist and other religions. Although this was difficult throughout my stay in Bangladesh, it also provided a great opportunity to focus on my personal relationship with Christ, rely on His strength, and ask the hard question of "who is my neighbor?"

In the beginning of my time in Bangladesh, I lived with a very conservative Muslim family that was not well edu-

cated. They were strict followers of the Koran and prayed five times a day. This family was convinced that while I was in Bangladesh I should convert to Islam and then return to Christianity once I went back to the U.S. Although living in a situation where a group of people was completely set on one manner of living, together (the family and I) we were able to have thoughtful conversations and have open question and answer sessions. I felt like this situation not only challenged the strength of my faith, but also forced me to consider why I believe what I do.

The last four months that I was in Bangladesh I lived with a different Muslim family; however, this family, although strict followers to their faith, had a more open mindset of religion in general. At one point this family told me that even though they were Muslim and I was Christian, they believed that God was love and He loved all. With this mentality they were able to accept me into their family with loving arms and had no expectations of me changing my faith practices.

Living in a community that in less than one mile encompassed Muslims, Hindus, and Christians, I was led to eventually become friends with people of all faiths. My colleagues and students were of all these religions as well, which allowed me to learn more about their faiths and attend religious functions of theirs. I realized while I was learning more about other religions I was also becoming more in-tuned with my own inner faith. In no way was I ever convinced that I wanted to "convert" to a new faith, yet, I began to see many parallels between the faith groups. It seemed to me that almost everyone whom I met, no matter what religion they claimed, believed that faith of some type was essential, kindness to a stranger was expected, and extreme hospitality was unquestionable. Day in and day out, the Bangladeshi people practiced two of the most important commandments Jesus gave us: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind...Love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:37,39 NIV). What a strong lesson to be reminded of by people who many of them did not even know of Jesus Christ or this Christian commandment. Although I have read this passage many times and have tried to practice it in my daily life, when I lived in Bangladesh and as I was leaving, I was forced to reconsider who I actually considered my neighbor and how far this "neighbor idea" extended for me.

When we actually think about who our neighbor is we have to accept that the loving friend who is always by our side through thick and thin, is just as much our neighbor as the cruel terrorist who will kill his own kind in the name of religion. For me this concept is one of Jesus' most challenging commands and yet I have seen it applied all over the world and by people of all faiths. If non-Christians are practicing love to strangers i.e. their neighbors so willingly, shouldn't we as Christians be all the more convicted to do the same? As we begin anew after the Easter season, let us make it our challenge to embrace, rather than fear other people such as family, friends, neighbors, and strangers no matter their belief system. From a person who struggles with this commandment, I feel that the more we practice such an unconditional love the end result has to be better than what we begin with and quite possibly may be the only way we might one day have peace among all nations.

Vestry Meeting minutes, Cheryl Essington

April 10, 2006

Present: Wes, Cally McKee, Jon Boroff, Gail Grubb, Fred Petersen, Fran Milde, Donna Skinner, Gail Randall, Cheryl Essington

The meeting was called to order with prayer.

Minutes of the Last Meeting: Fran moved to accept the minutes from the last meeting; Jon seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Jon moved to accept the Treasurer's Report; Fran seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Senior Warden: Cally is working on a brokerage account to enable us to accept donations of stock.

Rector's Report: Big Piney: The attendance has been good and growing.

Things are busy with the Easter season, and the preparation for the kickoff on May 7th. Phil has asked that there be an exception to the Vestry's motion that 2 signatures be required on all checks over \$500.00. He would like to be able to sign payroll checks without requiring a second signature. Gail Randall moved to make an exception to the need for 2 signatures on checks above \$500.00, that would allow one signature on payroll checks. Gail Grubb seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Other Reports: There will be a training for greeters on the 23rd. The welcoming committee will be notified.

Master List: Fred asked that the Master List be amended to have the bleeder line turned off in May instead of April.

Old Business:

1. Website Cally has spoken with Irene about the website and will continue to work on it throughout the next month.

New Business:

1. Property Plan:

- a. Fundraising Plan: For the May 7th kickoff, the Vestry will provide the main dish, with dessert, which Donna will handle. Cally and Fran will be taking pictures and will arrange for the decorations. On April 24th we should be receiving a letter about Wind and Wings, the kickoff being April 30th. Wes suggested that the Vestry might want to make a leadership donation to encourage individual church members to give. Gail Grubb moved to pledge \$5,000.00 over the next five years; Gail Randall seconded the motion and the motion was passed unanimously. There was further discussion that we might be able to give more down the road.
- b. Payment Plan: Depending on payment plan and down payment a year's worth of payments will be roughly \$30,000.00. Fran made a motion that we will reserve \$30,000.00 in the event of hardship. Gail Randall seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. Fran made a motion that whatever money we have as of May 1st will go entirely to the down payment. Any money received after that will be reserved until \$30,000.00 accumulates to be held in reserve in the building fund. Gail Grubb seconded the motion, and the motion passed with Jon opposed. Fran made a motion that any money above \$30,000.00 be paid monthly to be applied to principal. Gail Randall seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.
- c. Future Plans: Costs of an auction will be investigated to clean out the property after we take possession. There was discussion about the future renovation of the Rectory in order to make it more appealing as a rental and or as housing for future priests. Jon made a motion to move the income from the Rectory to the building fund to make improvements to the Rectory in the future. Fran seconded the motion and the motion unanimously passed.

2. Newcomers Plan: Carla and Wes are working out the details and will bring back more information to the next meeting.

3. Honduras: The Vestry received two applications for assistance to participate in the Honduras mission trip. Fred made a motion to support each applicant in the amount of \$1,000.00 out of the operating fund; Jon seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

*Allen and Mary Rutherford
Ferguson donated funds for the
printing of this newsletter.*

Thank You!



May 2006

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 Confirmation 9:30	1 Sublette Cen 10:45	2	3 Wed School	4	5	6
7 Confirmation 9:30 Property Kickoff	8 Sublette Cen 10:45	9	10 Adult Christain Ed. Wed School	11	12	13 Reg Confirm 11
14	15 Sublette Cen 10:45	16	17 Wed School	18	19 Newsletter Deadline	20
21 Seven at Six Dinner	22 Sublette Cen 10:45	23	24 Wed School Adult Christain Ed.	25	26	27
28	29 Sublette Cen 10:45	30	31 Wed School	1	2	3

Book review by Cheryl Essington Lamb by Christopher Moore

This is a purely fictional story about Jesus and the chronicles of his youth told by Jesus' best, yet , friend Biff. Many mysteries are explored here, some of which include where the "H" as Jesus' middle initial originated, the invention of sarcasm, and last but not least the discovery of cream in coffee (at the expense of an unsuspecting goat).

Biff tells of many adventures during which the reader sees the boys playing typical childhood games such as Kick the Canaanite, and Stone the Harlot. Their adventures take some serious turns, however, the author becomes more playful as Biff falls into every sin imaginable (and some unmentionable)

only to be

saved by his trustworthy best friend, the Messiah. Together they conquer demons, discover the joys of bacon; and Jesus decrees that bunnies shall always abound in time of sorrow! (Hence the beginning of the Easter Bunny.)

This was a hysterical and lighthearted exploration of the youth of Christ. I would recommend Lamb to anyone who is looking for a laugh.



Notes from the editor:

- You may view the newsletter in color at our website: www/standrewsinthepines.org
- Anyone who has contributions (text, pictures, suggestions monetary donations) for the newsletter please see me.

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