

The St. Thomas Times and Tidings

In This Issue

January 2008

Volume 2, Issue 5

Notes from the Sr. Warden	2	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>He Cares for You</i></p> <p><i>Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. 1 Peter 5:6-7</i></p> <p>The Apostle Peter's first letter, written to believers and seekers in the later part of the first century, was a message of hope and encouragement. It reached people who were struggling with their faith as well as committed leaders in the church, and it proclaimed a timeless theme that also speaks to us today.</p> <p>Like the people who read Peter's letter, we cherish life's joys and endure life's problems. But sometimes the exhilaration of good things seems fleeting, while the burdens of our difficulties are more persistent.</p> <p>And as these difficulties persist they also can start to take over our lives. Without actually realizing it we can find ourselves so self-absorbed with the anxieties around us that we tend to forget about God and the comfort he offers.</p> <p>Saint Peter understood this. He knew that living in faith sometimes was not the normal or natural response to the struggles of life, and he called people to do two things when they found themselves in such situations. That advice is a model for us today.</p> <p>First, we are to humble ourselves before God so that he might lift us up. Why do we have to do that? Why can't God just help us without all this humility business? The answer lies in the meaning of humility. Peter did not expect people to become meek and submissive. He certainly was not that way himself. Rather, he wanted people to recognize that God sent Jesus Christ to be the Lord of their lives.</p> <p>This raises the simple question of priorities. Where do we look to find strength and support when we need it? The answer is easy if we put God first. The answer is futile if we place ourselves first. We can be relieved of the weight of our worldly burdens if we accept the godly burden. That does not mean that our problems miraculously will vanish, but it does mean we will be given the means to deal with them.</p> <p>The second thing goes beyond acknowledging God in our lives. It also means taking positive action to cast our anxieties on him, to place our burdens at the foot of the cross. And we can do that with assurance that God will help us carry those burdens because he cares for us.</p>
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Janis Floyd, Editor
janisfloyd@aol.com

Debby Jones, Publisher
deb@stthomasdiamondhead.org

The Rev. William R. White, Rector
5303 Diamondhead Circle
Diamondhead MS 39525
228-255-9213 (PH)
228-255-7044 (FX)
frbill@stthomasdiamondhead.org

Isn't that an awe-inspiring reality? We can cast all our anxiety on him because he cares for us. And when we do so we will be blessed, and we can find comfort and peace in a world that does its best to be demanding and stressful.

Fr. Bill

NOTES FROM THE SENIOR WARDEN

by Dick Park



The Vestry approved the budget for 2008 at its December meeting. Lou Crowe, as Treasurer, and I developed the draft budget with input from Debbye and Fr. Bill for presentation to the Vestry. In particular, we used spending patterns for 2007 to develop a realistic budget. Wherever possible, we decreased line-item amounts from last year. We will balance the budget through transfers from reserves. Many parishioners heeded our Stewardship Committee's call for a 30% increase in giving; others were not able to do so. We also gained several new pledge units, helping to offset those who died or moved away. As of December 27, we show an 10.14% increase in pledged amounts compared to this time last year. I intend to present a short slide show at our annual meeting on January 13, providing highlights of the budget. Meanwhile, if you are so inclined, it is not too late to make or increase your pledge!

Joe Floyd (our Junior Warden), Bobbie Stephens (who preceded me as Senior Warden), and Katherine Wilson are rotating off the vestry after three years of service. As the nominating committee, they have proposed a slate of nominees for election at the annual meeting. The slate is: Don Ball, Karen Hector, and Tyrone Sartin. We will provide short biographical sketches for the annual meeting; however, I think most of you know them and recognize that they have been active in the parish.

Parish Life & Public Relations

By Bobbie Stephens

As the year's end draws near, we can be happy to reflect upon the past twelve months with the gratitude of a healthy and happy parish family. It has been a good year with many good times.

Certainly the Twenty-Fifty Anniversary celebrated at the Diamondhead Country Club was a wonderful celebration in remembrance of the first St. Thomas service in 1982. The initial service was also held at the country club and was attended by a modest crowd of about twenty people.

We were delighted to have 92 people for the luncheon and time of remembering, and it was especially grand to have with us several of the original signers of the application to form a mission. They are Mary and George Cassis, Mary Griffin, Peggy and Holcomb Hector, Patty Hourin, Mimi and Ken Languth, and Mary Mizell.

If you have not decided on a New Year's Resolution, I have a suggestion. There is a true need for help with the **mentoring program at Hancock Middle School**. I started helping a few months ago and it is fascinating and rewarding. The day I met my thirteen year old student, it was heartbreakingly clear to me why she was recognized as a young person in need. If her attitudes toward people and life do not change, I believe she is definitely headed to an unhappy life.

The program requires only one hour a week. If you feel any call to help in the program, I'll be delighted to tell you about it (Bobbie 255-1241) or you can call Hancock Middle School and ask for Mrs. Stellar at 467-1889.



Diocesan Council

The Annual council of the Diocese of Mississippi will meet in Natchez January 25-27. This is a time for both business and fellowship. Among other things, diocesan officers will be elected, the diocesan budget will be approved, and various resolutions will be debated and considered. We will receive an advance briefing about resolutions and other matters on January 10 at a Pre-Council meeting at St. Mark's in Gulfport, beginning at 6:00 pm. Delegates to council from St. Thomas are Lynda Gilmore, Patty Hourin, and Bobbie Stephens. Alternates are Charlotte Crowe, Lou Crowe, and Joe Floyd. Our Senior Warden, Dick Park, will be attending as a guest. Sally Kappus will carry the St. Thomas banner in the Eucharistic procession on Sunday morning.

St. Thomas Annual Meeting

The annual meeting, of the congregation will be held following the 10:00 a.m. service on Sunday, January 13. The agenda includes election of three new vestry members, a financial report, and the Rector's and Wardens' reports. Your attendance at the annual meeting is very important. Please be sure to participate.

ECW News

by Judy Gaupp

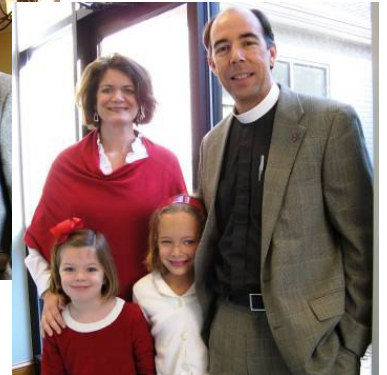


We would like to remind you that our next ECW meeting will be Saturday, January 12 at 10:00 a.m. in Johnson Hall. All women in the church are invited to attend.

We will be collecting stamps from the Choice (Diamondhead) Supermarket until the end of January. The store is ending the program at that time. Please bring any that you have and put them in the little wooden church in Johnson Hall. These stamps have been a great benefit, and we very much appreciate everyone's help.

For information about Episcopal Church Women (ECW), please feel free to call Mary Sartin (586-9007) or Judy Gaupp (216-3528).

25th Anniversary Pictures





Youth Ministry

by Penny Edwards

Greetings to everyone and Happy New Year 2008! The children had a great time watching the "12 Dogs of Christmas" in December. We learned that there are ways to change rules that you don't agree with, and lying makes us untrustworthy. Be sure to make it to our next Popcorn Theology night which is the second Friday night of the month. See the article below. Our next movie will be about a boy and his nightmarish paper route. Our Winter Fest is scheduled for January 20. We are going to have outdoor games and s'more making. Be watching for further details! The EYC will resume meeting in January at St. Thomas. Also see the article below. Sunday School attendance has been really high, and I am enjoying the fun we have as well as the Bible verses we share. Thanks to all the parents and grandparents who have been bringing the children to Sunday School. As we grow in our church, I feel so blessed to be here.

Sunday School



Sunday School is at 10:00 a.m. for pre-school kindergarten, and elementary aged children (grades 1-5). Please contact Penny Edwards (586-2984) if you would like to be a part of this important ministry.

EYC Update

Our Youth Group from St. Thomas, St. Peter's by-the-Sea in Gulfport, St. Patrick's in Long Beach, and Christ Church in Bay St. Louis will resume its weekly meetings in January on a date to be announced in a service bulletin. Most meetings will begin at 5:00 with dinner in Johnson Hall, and then the two groups normally will break for separate programs. There are some combined programs being planned. Additional details will be available as soon as the coordination process with the other churches is completed.

FIRST ANNUAL CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

By Penny Edwards



Our first annual St. Thomas children's Christmas party was a great success. We made Christmas cards and ornaments, played bingo, had a guessing game, ate delicious cake, and had great fellowship. Everyone left with a prize and a smile on their face. The children did a beautiful job decorating the tree in the Great Hall. Thanks to Catherine Tibbs who donated ornaments and candies. Thanks to all the parents who supervised. We will have another fantastic Christmas celebration next year.

"Popcorn Theology" Movie Night



Every second Friday of the month, a movie night is enjoyed at the church for kids ages five through twelve, more or less. The movies lend themselves to discussions of some aspect of faith, or ethical, or moral, or Christian issues. Father Bill and parents are facilitating the discussions after the movies. Next movie night will be Friday, January 11. Showtime is 6:00 p.m. *St. Thomas kids are urged to invite their friends!*

Youth Winter Fest



Everyone is invited to attend our Winter Fest which will be held on January 20 outside in our new pavilion. The festivities will start directly after 10:00am service. We will have games set up, a barbeque, and cupcake decorating. St. Thomas is excited to have our first outside event held in the pavilion. Anyone wishing to donate small prizes for the children's games or decorating items for the cupcakes, please contact Penny by calling 586-2984 or 342-6769.

More Bulletin Bloopers

The eighth-graders will be presenting Shakespeare's Hamlet in the Church basement Friday at 7 pm. The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.

Next Thursday there will be tryouts for the choir. They need all the help they can get.

The fasting and prayer conference includes meals.



Attention all Hockey Fans

Parents, middle schoolers, and high schoolers are invited to attend the Youth for Christ night at Mississippi coast coliseum, on Friday, January 18. There will be a Christian concert at 6:00 pm and the hockey game starts at 7:15. The halftime will have games and fun. The cost is \$10.00 which include ticket and activities. Additional information available from Youth for Christ at 864-0788 ext. 300 or from Penny at penny@stthomasdiamondhead.org or 255-9213

Adult Education

Adult education will resume on Sunday, February 3, with a topic to be announced. We would like to form a standing Christian Education Committee in the church to help Fr. Bill and Penny with planning and programs. Please let Fr. Bill know if this is a ministry to which you feel called to serve.



Please join us as we

"Walk the Bible!" This exercise includes walking and discussing passages with no preparations needed. Just bring your

walking shoes! This is good exercise for our bodies and souls, physical and spiritual.

Where: Walking Path, DH Country Club

When: Wednesdays & Fridays, 9:00 a.m.

For more information or to see if weather permits the walk, please call Maren Casano (255-4117) or Susan White (255-2568).



Men's Breakfast

Men's Breakfast meets on the third Saturday of each month, 8:30 a.m., in Johnson Hall.

The next meeting will be Saturday, January 19. For more information, call Gary Gilmore (255-4396).

January Birthdays!

02—Rowena Zubieni
16—Maren Casano
16—Devin Lockard
23—Don Ball
25—Mary King
29—Barbara Boos



St. Thomas Website

The final but preliminary, and almost complete but still a work-in-progress version of the St. Thomas website is online at www.stthomasdiamondhead.org. Please look at it, test the links, evaluate its functionality, and let us know if you see anything that needs to be corrected, or if there are any links, drop down boxes, etc., that do not work properly. We know that parts of it are incomplete, and that we still need some text for pages that are under construction. All suggestions are welcome. Contact Debbye or Fr. Bill.

Do You Like to Sing?

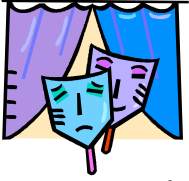


The choir needs you. We would like to expand the St. Thomas choir and add some new voices to the already beautiful ones we have. We know there are some great voices out there in the congregation, and that you could contribute in an important way to our worship and liturgy on Sunday. Rehearsals usually are Tuesday at 6:30 pm. Please contact Bob Bruce (255-9502) if you would like to join the choir, or if you have any questions about serving in the choir.

Service of Confirmation & Reception

During Bishop Gray's visit on December 16, there was a service of confirmation and reception. Those confirmed were Alan Bruce, Penny Edwards, Devin Lockard, Christy Lott, and Tyrone Sartin. Arva Kyger was received. We welcome each of them!

St. Thomas Amazing Praisers



The Amazing Praisers presented a two part Christmas play on December 23 and 24. It was well done and well received. Photos are below.

Our next drama will be a Lenten production. We again welcome all actors, costume makers, and set designers, and the like. Please contact Susan White (255-2568).

We continue to plan for an Actor's Workshop by John Maxwell in the spring. Lots of exciting work is to be done as we present the Gospel Message and Scripture based dramas during the year. Please join us. We thank those who volunteered to put their creative talents to good use with costumes and makeup artistry. We can also use carpenters/painters to make simple set designs as well as anyone who can work stage lighting.



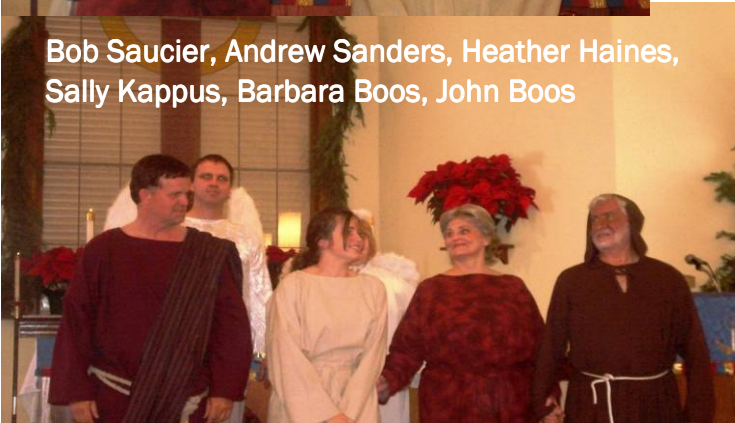
Barbara Boos and Heather Haines



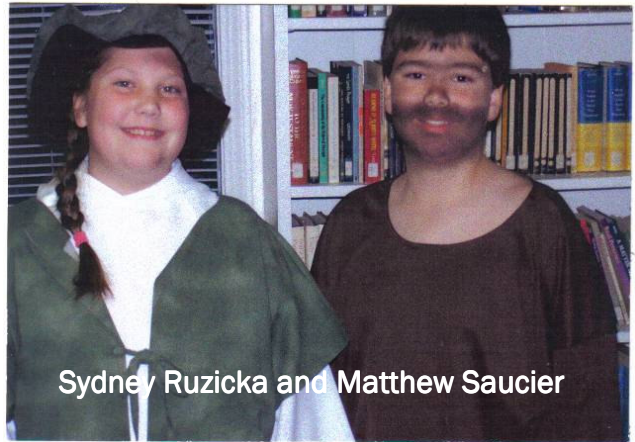
Judy Gaupp



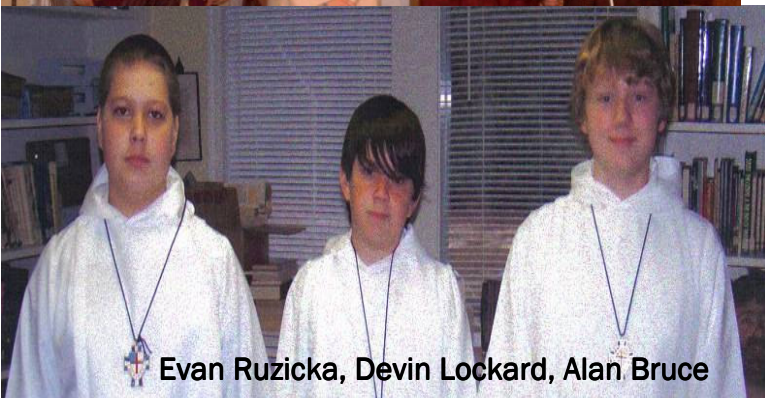
Allie and Reagan Edwards



Bob Saucier, Andrew Sanders, Heather Haines, Sally Kappus, Barbara Boos, John Boos



Sydney Ruzicka and Matthew Saucier



Evan Ruzicka, Devin Lockard, Alan Bruce



Heather Haines and Bob Saucier

January 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Office Closed 	2 12:10 pm—AA 6pm—HE and Healing Service	3 10am—Samaritan Guild	4 12:10 pm—AA	5
6 8am—HE Rite I 10am—HE Rite II 10am—Sunday School 5-7pm—EYC	7 12:10 pm—AA 1:30pm—Shawl Ministry 3pm—Bible Study	8 6:30pm—Choir 7:30pm—Al-Anon	9 12:10 pm—AA 6pm—HE and Healing Service	10 10am—Samaritan Guild	11 12:10 pm—AA 6pm—Popcorn Theology Movie	12 10am—ECW in Johnson Hall
13 8am—HE Rite I 10am—HE Rite II 10am—Sunday School ANNUAL MEETING 5-7pm—EYC	14 12:10 pm—AA 1:30pm—Shawl Ministry 3pm—Bible Study	15 6:30pm—Choir 7:30pm—Vestry 7:30pm—Al-Anon	16 12:10 pm—AA 6pm—HE and Healing Service	17 10am—Samaritan Guild 6pm—Parents' meeting	18 12:10 pm—AA	19 8:30am—Mens Breakfast Group
20 8am—HE Rite I 10am—HE Rite II 10am—Sunday School 5-7pm—EYC	21 12:10 pm—AA 1:30pm—Shawl Ministry 3pm—Bible Study	22 6:30pm—Choir 7:30pm—Al-Anon	23 12:10 pm—AA 6pm—HE and Healing Service	24 10am—Samaritan Guild	25 12:10 pm—AA	26
27 8am—HE Rite I 10am—HE Rite II 10am—Sunday School 5-7pm—EYC Annual Council Meeting, Natchez	28 12:10 pm—AA 1:30pm—Shawl Ministry 3pm—Bible Study	29 6:30pm—Choir 7:30pm—Al-Anon	30 12:10 pm—AA 6pm—HE and Healing Service	31 10am—Samaritan Guild		

January 2008

	January 6 Epiphany 8:00 HE: Rite I 10:00—HE: Rite II	January 13 8:00—HE: Rite I 10:00—HE: Rite II Annual Meeting	January 20 8:00—HE: Rite I 10:00—HE: Rite II	January 27 8:00—HE: Rite I 10:00—HE:Rite II
Altar Guild	<u>Team 3</u> Boos, Crowe, Pickens, Swayze	<u>Team 4</u> Allen, Floyd, Giffin, Gilmore	<u>Team 1</u> Ball, Bentson, Breen, Hourin	<u>Team 2</u> Bryan, Casano, Park
Flower Guild	Travella Dabler	Sue Stewart	Arva Kyger	Rusty Cobb
Lector—MP Chalicers—HE	Ed Weidlich-Chalice	Ed Weidlich Jackie Calvert—Reader	Ed Weidlich-Chalice	James DeDeaux-Chalice Jackie Calvert—Reader
Usher—8	Don Young	Bruce Frallic	Don Young	Bruce Frallic
Acolytes—10	Matthew Saucier Sydney Ruzicka Ciara Ford	Evan Ruzicka Heather Haines Devin Lockard	Matthew Saucier Sydney Ruzicka Ciara Ford	Alan Bruce Heather Haines Devin Lockard
Lector(s)	Paul Montjoy	Jim Williams	Patty Hourin	Maren Casano
Chalicers	Skip Giffin Susan White	Sally Kappus Frank Gaupp	Bobbie Stephens Darlene Park	James DeDeaux Bill Frisbie
Usher—10	Bob Eddy and Paul Montjoy	Bob Eddy Lou Crowe	Bob Eddy Gary Gilmore	Bob Eddy John Boos
Greeter	Paul Montjoy	Barbara Ford	Pris Williams	John and Barbara Boos
Hospitality	Judy and Frank Gaupp	Georgia Pickens Helen Davis	Corny Swayze	Travella& Edward Dabler Mary & Tyrone Sartin
Bulletin Helpers	January 4 Mary Minor Fargason Genie LeBlanc Barbara Ford	January 11 Mary Sartin	January 18 Mary Sartin	January 25 Travella Dabler

Servers if you are unable to serve when scheduled, obtain your replacement and if possible, let Debbye know by Wednesday the changes.

Stewardship Update



Our stewardship campaign is wrapping up, with just a few pledge cards outstanding. As of December 27, total pledges were 10.14% ahead of last year. A preliminary final report will appear in the January 6 service bulletin, and a final report will be presented to the annual meeting on January 13.

Dates To Remember

- Jan. 7— Women's Bible Study resumes (Monday, St Thomas, 3:00 pm)
- Jan. 10—(Thursday) Pre-council meeting, 6:00 pm, St. Mark's, Gulfport
- Jan. 11—(Friday) Popcorn Theology (St. Thomas, 6:00 pm)
- Jan. 13—Annual Meeting (after the 10:00 Service)
- Jan. 17—(Thursday) Monthly Parents' Meeting (St Thomas at 6:00 pm)
- Jan. 25—Diocesan Annual Council, Natchez thru 27

Wednesday Healing and Eucharist Service at 6:00 pm



We celebrate a service of Holy Eucharist and Healing at 6:00 p.m. each Wednesday. The service is designed so that you can come to either or both parts of the service. Eucharist is celebrated first, and there is a dismissal for those who leave at that time. You may remain for healing prayer and anointing, which can be offered for yourself or for others about whom you might be concerned.

Prayer Ministry



The St. Thomas prayer ministry emphasizes intercessory prayer on behalf of members of the church, their families and loved ones, and the church as a whole.

A *24 hour Prayer Line* for emergency or immediate needs is available and staffed by people in the church committed to offer prayer for these needs. Please call Susan White at 255-2568 (home) or (228) 229-4881 (cell) to alert the prayer ministry team.

Women's Bible Study



Women's Bible Study meets Mondays at 3:00 pm in the large Sunday school room. This group will continue its study of Mark. Everyone is welcome! For information, please Contact Maren Casano (255-4117).

A *Prayer Corner* is available in the choir loft during Eucharist and in the back of the sanctuary after the 10:00 a.m. service for those who prefer not to climb the stairs. Two prayer team members are available for anyone wanting personal prayer.

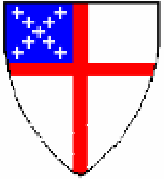
An *Intercessory Prayer Request* for anticipated or long-term needs is available for you to write a prayer request on a form available on the table in the foyer outside the sanctuary in the box on that table, and each Sunday after the 10:00 a.m. service a group of prayer warriors will pray for these needs during the week.

Brown Bag Sunday



The first Sunday of each month continues to be Brown Bag Sunday when we all are asked to bring nonperishable food items to the church for delivery to the Hancock Food Pantry. Please place your items in the designated area in Johnson Hall.

All requests will be treated with confidentiality. If you would like to become a part of *any* of these prayer ministries, please call Susan White at 255-2568. For example, you may choose to be a part of the telephone chain, *or* to pray during the week in response to written prayer requests, *or* to serve the prayer corner, *or* some combination of these. Plans are to have a prayer ministry workshop. Be watching for more information to come!



St. Thomas Episcopal Church
5303 Diamondhead Circle
Diamondhead MS 39525