



THE VISION

Church of Our Saviour

December, 2007

Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart

As the Church of Our Saviour focuses on our 2007 Stewardship campaign, we are reminded of St. Paul's words to the Thessalonians. He told those early Christians to "give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." (I Thessalonians 5:18 NRSV)

Did he really mean that "in all circumstances" we should give thanks? We believe that is exactly what St. Paul meant. How else can we, as Christians, recognize that Christ is the center of our lives. Giving thanks for our many blessings is a worthy response and can be done in many ways.

What are some of the ways we can give thanks? Obviously, we can give thanks when we pray. Many of us begin our prayers with the phrase, "Lord, I am thankful for" The list we provide in our private prayers is endless; there is so much we have to be thankful for.

And since this is the season of both Stewardship and Thanksgiving, the giving of our time and talent to the Lord is a very tangible way to give thanks. Our church could not operate without the faithful volunteers who give of themselves as Sunday School teachers, Church Treasurer, Choir, Bishop's Committee members, Altar Guild members, ushers, lectors, acolytes or greeters – just to name a few areas of service.

Our financial gifts of thanksgiving are

vital as well. The annual church budget is constructed of the financial gifts that we give to the Lord. Please pray about your gift for the coming year. Please discuss the dollar amount and the timing with those who share your world, be it your spouse, your family, your partner, your friends.

After prayerful deliberation, please make a financial commitment with thanksgiving that your gift will continue the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church of Our Saviour, the community in which we live and work and in the larger Church throughout the world.

Pledge card Sunday is set for December 9. You can pick up your pledge card at the church or you may receive it by mail. After the pledge cards are turned in on December 9 or before, we will have a grand celebration during the fellowship potluck lunch that follows the 11 a.m. service. The church will provide ham, rolls and a festive cake. Just bring a dish to go with all this. We are thankful for the good people of God in our family of faith! God's blessings to you all!

By Sandra Plant and Tom Bryan, co-chairs, 2007 Stewardship

Points to Ponder

- *I will ponder Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all year—Charles Dickens*
- *The spirit of Christmas is annual; the Spirit of Christ is eternal.—Stuart Briscoe*
- *Blessed is the season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love.—Hamilton Wright Mabie*
- *Christmas—it's that time when even the strongest of men get emotional over family ties—especially if they have to wear them.—Bob Monkhouse*
- *How many observe Christ's birthday! How few, his precepts! O! 'Tis easier to keep holidays than commandments.—Benjamin Franklin*
- *Should a total stranger watch us this year, what would be his definition of Christmas?*

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A Christmas Gifting Idea

By: Leslie Farris

Christmas is closing in on us rather rapidly. The holiday stress is mounting. What on earth do we get for all those people on our list? Most of our family and friends already have everything they need and Macy's is not the reason for the season. How can we de-stress Christmas? How can we get past the commercialization of the season and remember the true gift of Christmas.

I would like to share a gift idea with you. This is not my idea, nor is it a new idea, but here it is, instead of purchasing another tie, or sweater or pair of jeans for that loved one on your list try sending a donation in their name to an organization works in an area in which you or your loved one has a passion.

One of my personal favorite organizations is for gifting is World Vision, primarily because they have such a wide variety of gifting opportunities, over 100, to nearly every country, including our own. World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice. Gifts that you can give include:

- Chickens, goats, alpacas and cows that can benefit families by providing fresh milk, eggs, or wool; a fish pond, fishing kits, or how about an oxen and plow that will help a farmer provide income for a family or help to feed a village;
- Perhaps clean water is Granny's thing- you can purchase for her a share in a well for a village or a school. Nearly 2 million children die each year from illnesses that could have been prevented through access to safe, clean water;
- Many people in our world live without protection from the elements; help give them a safe place to live. You could help build a home, provide warm clothing, food and other basic needs in folks in Mongolia, Honduras and here in the United States.
- Do you have a teacher on your gift list? Why not purchase a share in a school, provide musical instruments, sports equipment or help provide needed educational supplies. Right here in the United States many parents cannot afford to purchase school supplies for their children, and you could purchase a backpack of supplies.
- How about a daughter or a sister? Help stop the cycle of abuse and sexual exploitation for someone's sister or daughter in another country. Job skill training or small business loans for women,

safe orphanages, shelters and education programs for girls are among the gifts that can keep a family from starvation and a young girl from slavery.

- There are also gifting opportunities in health care. You could provide Caregiver kits, or help provide food, blankets and medicines for persons suffering from the effects of HIV and AIDS, or help with an AIDS prevention program. You can give the gift of vaccines, or help build or supply a health clinic.

World Vision could be one stop shopping! They'll even send the gift card for you, and you don't have to wrap anything! You can get more information at www.worldvisiongifts.org

There are several organizations similar to World Vision that you can make gifts to, Heifer International, is a charitable organization that promotes sustainable development to end world hunger. Their web address is www.heifer.org. Other places you may wish to consider are the American Cancer Society, the Susan G. Komen Foundation, and don't forget our local Habitat for Humanity or Episcopal Relief and Development. Many organizations can send acknowledgement of your gift to the person, if you request them to. It doesn't hurt to ask; after all they need your money to do their work. If they can't, you could always make a certificate yourself to include with a nice holiday card.

Whatever organization you may choose, please make sure they are reputable. Find out what percent of their funding actually goes to help the work they espouse. While most all organizations have costs and overheads, take care that the percent of expenses is not higher than the percent of aid. Reputable nonprofits generally have a financial statement available in some fashion. One of the many resources you may wish to use is www.GuideStar.org. With their basic service (no cost), you can verify tax status and financial information for many nonprofit organizations. And, don't forget to keep a record of your donations; they might be tax deductible (how many blenders are tax deductible!).

The most important part of this gift idea is in the giving to those who need. I'm not suggesting that you deny your family of necessary items, but perhaps Aunt Lou or Uncle Jack would be happier with a gift that helps our fellow human beings than with another set of potholders or tie rack.



OUR SAVIOUR'S CHOIR TO PERFORM HANDEL'S "MESSIAH"!

by Jane Rainey

Well...not all by ourselves. But the choir WILL be singing in the second annual Richmond community "Messiah" presentation on Tuesday, December 4, at 7:00 PM at First Baptist Church on the Eastern By-Pass. We will be joining with choirs from other Richmond churches, the ECU Concert Choir and String Orchestra, and ECU organist Hayward Mickens.

This is a grand opportunity for our choir to sing a larger work under professional direction and to be part of this ecumenical offering to the community, and it is an equally wonderful opportunity for the congregation of Our Saviour to enjoy a type of church music that we alone are simply unable to provide. The program is free and all are invited. It will consist only of

parts of the Christmas portion of this great oratorio--ending, of course, with the "Hallelujah" chorus, and should probably not be too long even for older children or those with a short attention span for classical music.

Financial Statement

By: Laura Melius

OPERATING FUNDS		
10/31/2007	Checking Account Balance	\$ 309.98
10/31/2007	Reserves - Hilliard Lyons Investment Account*	<u>\$ 10,892.78</u>
	Sub-total	\$ 11,202.76
10/31/2007	Accounts Payable & Designated Payables 2007	
	Designated - Youth Mission Trip	\$ 1,049.36
	Designated - Building Fund	\$ 1,815.00
	Designated - Youth	\$ 386.89
	Designated - Music	\$ 149.00
	Designated - Hispanic Ministry	\$ (249.13)
	Designated - Altar/Flowers	\$ 186.00
	Episcopal Relief & Development Fund	\$ 0.75
	ECW	\$ 30.00
	Men's Group	\$ 1,150.54
	Memorial Garden	\$ -
	MacSwords Memorial Fund	\$ 464.50
	Sub-total	<u>\$ 4,982.91</u>
10/31/2007	Net Operating Fund Balance	\$ 6,219.85
BUILDING FUND		
10/31/2007	Hilliard Lyons Building Fund Account	\$ 17,312.66
9/30/2007	Endowment Fund at Diocese	<u>\$ 19,568.75</u>
	Building Fund Balance	\$ 36,881.41
	Loan From Diocese	(\$180,000.00)
	Interest Accrual Year 1 (10/1/2006)	(\$11,700.00)
	Interest Accrual Year 2 (10/1/2007)	<u>(\$12,460.50)</u>



Serving in December

Date	2nd	9th	16th	23rd	30th
Acolytes ~	Wallace Louise	Angie Louise	Wallace Cheri	Angie Louise	Wallace Louise
Altar Guild ~	Sally Louise	Sally Louise	Marilyn Pat	Becky A. Peggy	Whole team for 24th and on
Greeters ~	Sandra	Grace	Stephan	Sandra	Sandra
Lectors ~	Danny	Charlie	Tom	James	Rosanne O'Connor
Tellers ~	Charlie Don	Louise Sally	Sandra Anna	Greg Charlie	Louise Sandra
Ushers ~	Carrie	Dan	Max	Barbara	Carrie

Women's Bazaar is December 1st

The Women's Bazaar will be on December 1st, beginning at 10AM.

Quickly becoming a Church of Our Saviour tradition, the Bazaar is held each year as a fundraiser for the Women's group, but also serves as a great way for the ladies to fellowship in preparing for the event. Many have participated in the weeks leading up to the Bazaar, working on crafts in groups and at home. There have been Friday night get-togethers at the Parish house and outings to a home to paint ornaments. There have been donations, but more is needed. If you would like to bake a scrumptious pie, cake or cookies to be sold at the Bazaar, please mention it to Louise Locke and have your item to the church by Friday, 11/30 or first thing Saturday morning. The

group could also use help setting up on Friday evening. There will be some ladies getting ready for the event at the Parish house by 6PM on Friday evening, and YOU are invited to join in!

If you have been unable to help in preparing for the bazaar, your chance to support it will be on Dec. 1st! Come and shop for many of your Christmas needs! Bring your friends and family. Some of the items offered for sale at the bazaar include: ornaments, crafts, baked goods, candies, pet treats, Christmas décor, and many items in their "granny's attic".



Women's Bazaar is Dec. 1st, 10-3PM.



DOK News **By: Grace Sears**

Four women interested in taking vows to become Daughters of the King have entered a period of study and discernment that will last until March. They are: Melissa Wiesmann, Betsy MacSwords, Muriel Stockburger, and Stephanie Stockburger. Study sessions are scheduled for Wednesday, November 28, at 7:15 and Wednesday, December 5, at 7:15. Daughters who plan to attend the study sessions with the candidates should notify Grace Sears on each date so she can copy enough handouts.

The Daughters of the King will hold their regular meeting on Thursday, December 13, led by Anna Haug.

Care Packages for Students **By: Grace Sears**

Once again the Daughters of the King are preparing CARE packages for our college students during exam week. On Saturday morning, December 8, at 10 am, we plan to pack gift bags with goodies, small practical gifts, and encouraging notes. These are the kinds of things we include: microwave popcorn, cocoa packets, cookies or fudge, pens, post-it notes, white-out pens, hi-lighters, cards with verses or encouraging words, and tissue packets. If you would like us to be sure to remember a particular college student, please supply the name and address. Or if you would like to help us fill the bags, please leave home made goodies or other items in the parish house kitchen table.

What is Parent's Night Out?

Parent's Night Out is a fundraiser sponsored by the teens and adults from the combined youth groups at Our Saviour and St. Thomas. They offer a fun filled evening for pre-school and elementary aged children that includes lots of activities, and the parents can enjoy the down time. Some choose to do Christmas shopping, some go on a 'date', some wrap presents at home, and some just go home and relax! This year's theme is

Christmas! The evening will include snacks, crafts, music and a movie. Times are from 6-9:30PM at St. Thomas. As you pick up your children, simply leave a check or cash to pay a sitter as you normally would. All proceeds go towards the youth group and their annual mission trip they take in the summer. Plan to participate in this fun event. You AND your children will thank you!

Important December Dates

Women's Bazaar—Dec. 1, 10-3pm
Messiah community performance—Dec. 4th, 7pm
Mid week services—each Wednesday, 6:30pm
DOK class—Dec. 5th, 7:15pm
Men's breakfast—Dec. 8th, 8:30am
DOK Care packages—Dec. 8th
Parent's Night out—Dec. 8th—6-9:30PM

Fellowship pot-luck lunch—Dec. 9th, after services
DOK meeting—Dec. 13th, 7PM
Community caroling—Dec. 15th, St. Thomas, 6:30pm
Bishop's Committee meeting—Dec. 16th, after services
Children's Christmas Pageant—Dec. 23rd
Christmas Eve services—5:30pm
Christmas Day services—10am

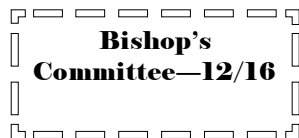
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Serving Madison County

Birthdays and Anniversaries in

December:

Doug Chaney—4th

Eva Miller—5th

Erin Tuck—8th

Patrick Tuck—9th

Nancy Wise—12th

Wallace Arthur—23rd

Doug & Amy Chaney—16th

Greg & Rhonda Uber—28th

If we do not have record of your birthday or anniversary,

please call the parish office.

A Christmas Dream

Oh, happy chime,
Oh, blessed time,
That draws us all so near!
“Welcome, dear day,”
All creatures say,
For Christmas-tide is here.

- Louisa May Alcott, excerpted from “A Christmas Dream, and How It Came True”



A Blessed Merry Christmas to all and a
Happy New Year!