



ST STEPHEN'S SIGNPOST

ST STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
HEATHSVILLE, VIRGINIA



A welcoming family united in Christian love, worship, and
service

ststephensheathsville.org

THE RECTOR'S COLUMN

"What's the most important thing you want me to tell the Continuing Episcopalians in the Diocese of Fort Worth?" I asked the parishioners gathered at the Thursday parish dinner the evening before my trip. One of our quietest parishioners looked up and said simply, *"Keep the faith."* I saw other parishioners nod in agreement. Keep the faith.

It is a simple phrase with deep meaning. Nowadays we often use the word "keep" to mean "hold" or "possess." When we look back we realize it has even deeper meaning. It means "care for and tend to," as we see in words such as "beekeeper," "innkeeper," "zookeeper," "housekeeper" to describe the person who cares for the bees, the inn, the animals, the house. In the old-fashioned phrase "earn your keep" we retain the meaning that "your keep" is the food and shelter you need in order to be properly cared for. It can also mean to fulfill, as in "keep a promise." It means "maintain on a regular basis" as in "keep a diary" or "keep the books." It can also mean observe or celebrate, as in "keep the sabbath" or "keep the feast."

This parishioner's words, "keep the faith" remind us of what matters most. It is not just a matter of "having faith"; it is a matter of "keeping the faith." I love to see the ways in which the Continuing Episcopalians of St. Stephen's, like the Continuing Episcopalians of Fort Worth, keep the faith. We care for and tend our faith, in Sunday worship, Thursday prayer and fellowship and education, conversations and friendships with fellow parishioners, the annual parish retreat at Shrine Mont, and many other activities.

When we find at St. Stephen's a sense of peace, or hope, or healing, or a new insight about God or ourselves, we find that our faith provides food and shelter for our souls. As parishioners help with humble tasks such as sweeping the floor and mowing the lawn, they keep the faith as they keep a promise, fulfilling it with service. The financial generosity and stewardship of parishioners is one of the ways in which we keep our faith, as we would fulfill a promise. Like keeping a diary or keeping the books, one of the best ways of keeping faith is simply showing up and participating on a regular basis. And of course, we have plenty of partying and celebrating, and our Sunday worship is itself a celebration: some of the most joyful ways of keeping the sabbath, keeping the feast, and keeping the faith!

As you keep the faith, may the Lord bless you and keep you.

Lucia +



VESTRY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

August 13, 2009

Vestry members, Bill Kirby, Joel Stubbs, Rick Skelton, Dick Eager and Dawn Mahaffey and Ellen Kirby, Treasurer, and Delegate Rocco Tricarico were present.

Ellen reported that \$3,300 has been donated to the FF&E Committee to decorate the Chilton Chapel. 51 new chairs (at \$33 each) with upholstered seats have arrived at Northumberland Hall. Stained glass panels for several windows are being considered. Anne Silver has donated a rug. Sharon Nachman is coordinating other possible furniture donations from the ECW.

Pledges have caught up to budget and several unanticipated unrestricted gifts have been received.

The fall stewardship program will start on October 25th for four week ending on Sunday, November 22nd. Lucia asked it would be a good idea for vestry members to speak briefly at church about why the various kinds of stewardship are important to them and St. Stephen's.

Dick will represent the vestry at the Diocesan Stewardship Conference to be held on Saturday September 12th in Richmond. Rocco will also attend as a scheduled presenter.

Lucia asked vestry members to think how we can stay "connected" to those who attend infrequently. The vestry decided to contact each by phone or visit as appropriate. Bill will start a list and pass it around for additional names.

Fall Schedule: Methodist Appreciation Day will be October 11th following the Methodist service. A Thanksgiving season food drive was discussed; food would be distributed to St. Stephen's Water Ministry families with extra to be sent to the Shiloh Baptist Church food program. Alice and John Cooper will be married during the service on September 13; Leslie Hatch will make the cake and the vestry will provide the champagne.

Joel reported a new copier/printer has been donated to the church office.

Respectfully submitted,

Dick Eager, Register

2009 PLANT SALE

By most measures, the 2009 Plant Sale was a success. Virtually the entire parish contributed to the sale — by donating plants, making planters, helping with the set up and sale, arranging refreshments, baking cookies, making preserves, making a quilt, potholders, and even buying plants! We sold more plants and made more money than last year. Jim Schmalz became our first exhibiter, with a fascinating beekeeping display. Plus, it was a beautiful day!

Some excess plants found their way to the Cople Parish Barn Sale and more will be donated to Wicomico Parish Market Day. Plants and planters are still available for sale. Find them in the St. Francis Garden adjacent to the Chilton House ramp. Money for purchased plants should be given to the Treasurer. Raffle tickets—6 for \$5— for the tulip quilt are available from Ellen Kirby. The quilt will be raffled at the 2010 Bluegrass & BBQ Pickin' Party.

Plans for next year include creating a Biblical Garden. Contact Dolly or Bill if you have an interest in helping with this project.

The Plant Posse
(Dolly, Rocco, Barbara, Betty W., Sandy, Ellen, Bill)

UNITED THANK OFFERING (UTO) INGATHERING

Thanks be to God!

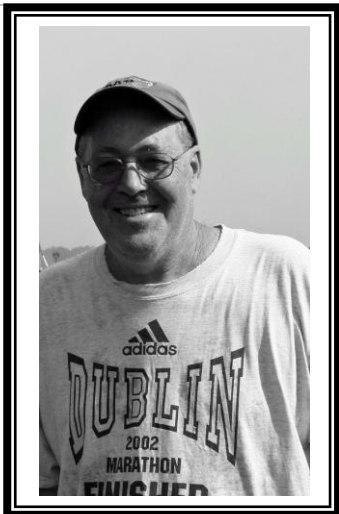
You will find this phrase elsewhere in this newsletter, and on our lips many times during the week other than on Sunday morning.

This is a good season to think about the reasons we have to be thankful, and to make our thanks concrete in an offering to help others.

Our thank offerings will be presented during the service on November 1. Make checks out to UTO or to St. Stephen's with UTO on the message line.

Mary Eager, UTO chairman

SENIOR WARDEN



Dear Folks,

I am writing this on the eve of our annual Shrine Mont Retreat. I tend to take the “long view,” so I always find it useful to look backwards as well as forward.

In 2007, we were about to head off to our first Shrine Mont Retreat as a “new” parish. In many ways we were just beginning to come out of the dark, but also very much still wandering in it. We had no Shrine Mont program, and no reservations! By the good graces of our friends at St. Mary’s we were able to share their weekend. Just as by the good graces of our friends at Heathsville Methodist, we had a place to call “church.” And by the good graces of a retired priest named Hal, we found a lantern to light the way. I remember having a fine time up in the mountains that weekend. The weather was great; the “porching” enjoyable; the service at the Shrine comforting.

But the way still seemed somewhat dark and uncertain. Two years later some things are the same, but much has changed. Some faces have gone; but, there are also many more new faces. Uncertainty still abounds, but there seems to be more certainty to it. The way is not as dim. The lantern has been passed from Hal to Lucia. Hopefully, the way will get even brighter.

In the next two weeks we will be saying thanks to our Methodist friends, and then dedicating Chilton Chapel: Our own “church.” There’s the Animal Blessing, and then on to Thanksgiving, the Oyster Roast, Christmas... After three years, we’ve

begun to develop both a weekly routine and an annual rhythm that’s comforting, if not comfortable. And this year we have our own reservations and our own program! By the grace of God.

Faithfully,
Bill

VESTRY NOMINATIONS

St. Stephen’s will be seeking two new members to succeed Dawn Mahaffey and Bill Kirby, who are completing their full terms in December. All members of the congregation in good standing are eligible to serve on the Vestry. The term is three years.

The Vestry will be announcing the formation of a nominating committee and a process to develop a slate of candidates. This is to assure that everyone in the congregation is fully aware of the Vestry nomination process and timeline; has an opportunity to have input into the process; and has ample time to get to know and consider the candidates prior to the Annual Meeting.

The slate will be announced in mid-November. Anyone interested in serving on the Vestry and any member of the congregation desiring to recommend nominees should make themselves known to the Priest-in-Charge or a member of the vestry.

Bill Kirby

Current Vestry and Officers

Bill Kirby '09, Senior Warden	
Joel Stubbs '10, Junior Warden	
Dawn Mahaffey '09	Nancy Gates '10
Dick Eager '11, Register	Rick Skelton '11
Ellen Kirby, Treasurer	
Priest in Charge	The Rev. Lucia Lloyd
Minister of Music	Alice Cooper
Parish Administrator	Amy Jones

SHRINE MONT PARISH RETREAT

Our retreat at Shrine Mont was held the first weekend in October and we were blessed with perfect autumn weather, good fellowship, and an educational and thought-provoking program.

Bill and Lucia led the program on Prayer and Temperament. Bill gave an overview of the Myers-Briggs Temperament Indicator which provided a deeper understanding of ourselves and others, and insight into relationships with people of differing temperaments.



Lucia led a discussion of how people of each temperament relate differently to God through various types of prayer. Using prayers suited to one's own temperament enriches one's prayer life.

For those who missed the presentation at Shrine Mont, Bill and Lucia will be presenting Thursday night programs beginning October 15.

Shrine Mont is always a time of relaxation, spiritual growth, and fellowship, and we hope you will plan to participate next year!

Ellen Kirby

Use of hand sanitizers is the most effective way of avoiding the spread of flu or other viruses.

We will make bottles of hand sanitizer available for parishioners to use during the passing of the peace and before administering communion.

The Episcopal Prayer Book also recognizes that while it is the norm to receive both bread and wine at communion, it is also acceptable if a person choose to receive the bread only or the wine only.

National Church News:

- Judge returns all diocesan property to the Diocese of Pittsburgh on October 6.
- U.S. Supreme Court declines to revisit California court's decision to return church property to Episcopal Church.
- Diocese of Fort Worth suit to return property of Episcopal Church in discovery period.

SUNDAY SCHOOL'S "OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD"

Jesus said, *"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."* Matthew 19:14

Our Sunday School children are starting their own ministry—*The Shoe Box Ministry*, an outreach of Operation Christmas Child/Samaritan's Purse.

This ministry brings joy and hope to children in desperate situation all over the world. Each child will fill one or more shoe boxes with toys, school supplies, hygiene items and a variety of gifts. The boxes are then transported to regional centers and shipped overseas in time for Christmas.

Operation Christmas Child's goal is to introduce the children to the Bible and Jesus Christ through booklets in their own language. These booklets are added upon delivery of the shoe boxes. Then, through follow-up ministries, these children are invited to join the Operation Christmas Child Discipleship Program.

Our children will receive a Certificate of Participation in the joy of giving and the power of Jesus' birth as we get nearer to Christmas.

Adults can make financial contributions toward the cost of postage, or even fill shoeboxes of their own. Details will be posted on the web site.

Dolly Rabalais

CHILTON CHAPEL DEDICATION

The months of work and planning will come to fruition on October 18 – the day we celebrate the dedication of Chilton Chapel as our worship space for the immediate future. We are thankful for the vision, talents and contributions of those who have created a chapel as part of our parish home.

We are grateful for the leadership and vision of Bill Kirby, the Vestry and Lucia Lloyd; for the architectural talents of Rocco Tricarico and the skill of Mike Gardner and his assistant, Travis; for David Chilton's generosity and support; for the confidence and encouragement of Bishop David Jones, and his and Bishop Shannon Johnston's financial support; for painters Nancy Gates, Tony Rabalais and Ellen Kirby; for the time, energy and ideas of the Furnishings, Fixtures & Equipment Committee: Anne Silver, Dolly Rabalais, Dawn Mahaffey, Nancy Gates, KK Crowther, and Ellen Kirby.

We have comfortable seating, light from beautiful windows, and altar furnishings thanks to the generosity of parishioners and friends far and near. Wherever she traveled, Lucia spread the word of our ambitious conversion from parish house to chapel. We have received gifts from Episcopalians throughout Virginia, and from Washington, D.C., Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Wyoming (!)

We heartily thank: Carl and Marlene Alexoff for their gift in memory of Bev Carter, Loretta and Lew Blakely, Marcia Carter, Arlene Casmiro, John and Connie Cermak, Tal and Barbara Day, Pat Dean, Leslie and Doug Hatch, Barbara Heyl and the Rev. Marion Kanour, Mary Page Jones, Susan Kendall, Meade Kilduff in memory of Leslie Kilduff, Bill and Ellen Kirby, Sandy and David Kirkpatrick in honor of Sandy Kramer, Caroline Lindemann, the Rev. Lucia and Marshall Lloyd, Delores Martin, Sharon Nachman and the Altar Guild of the Diocesan E.C.W., the Rev. David and Elizabeth Poist, E. S. Porter, Region 2 of the Diocese of Virginia, Penelope DeB. Saffer, Anne and Ron Silver, Rick Skelton, Roger

Westman, Ben and Constance Wilmot, Barbara and Rocco Tricarico, and the Rev. Hal and Sally White.

Throughout our continuing journey, we have truly been blessed by the generosity and love of family, friends and community. We are especially grateful to, the congregation of Heathsville United Methodist Church, who shared their sanctuary with us for over two years. Although now settled in our own space, we will forever remember that they opened their hearts and doors to us.

Let us celebrate the dedication of Chilton Chapel on October 18 and rejoice in God's many blessings!!! THANKS BE TO GOD!!!

Ellen Kirby

Dear Diocesan Family,

A panel of the Virginia Supreme Court will hear our petition for appeal on October 21 and, while it is unfortunate that these legal proceedings were necessary, I trust that this hearing will bring us one step closer to resolution....

For nearly 225 years, the Episcopal Church has had the freedom to govern itself according to its beliefs. But that freedom is under direct attack here in our diocese in the form of a Virginia law that allows the government to interfere with the faith, polity and structure of our Church and other hierarchical churches in the Commonwealth.

I believe that this law is unconstitutional and that there is too much at stake to let it remain in effect. Loyal Episcopalians have been exiled...for too long and I ask you to keep all of them in your prayers. This includes St. Stephen's, Heathsville; St. Margaret's, Woodbridge; Epiphany, Oak Hill; and The Falls Church, Falls Church.

These parishioners have been denied the ability to worship as they wish at the very same churches where they were married, where they baptized their children and where they buried their loved ones. I view this next hearing with great hope...

Faithfully,

The Rt. Rev. Shannon S. Johnston,
Bishop of Virginia

THE RAGAMUFFIN GOSPEL

(Brennan Manning, 2000, Multnomah Publishers, Inc. OR.)

Brennan Manning is a fascinating guy. This former Roman Catholic priest was a long-time member of a Spanish religious order devoted to serving the poor. For some time in the order he was a voluntary prisoner (incognito) in a Swiss jail providing pastoral care to his fellow inmates. Later for six months he was a solitary contemplative in a cave in the Zaragoza desert.

Manning has been at various times a teacher, preacher, and poet; a water carrier and mason's assistant in the blistering heat of Spain, a shrimper and carpenter in Alabama, and a dishwasher in France. More recently a recovering alcoholic, he has married and is living and ministering in Louisiana,

With all that life experience, he has, as you might imagine, a great deal to say, and he says it in numerous books, among the most popular of which is *The Ragamuffin Gospel*. Manning writes to those of us who, down in our secret heart of hearts, have a lingering fear that we're not good enough to earn God's love. He speaks to those of us who labor under our inadequacies and wish we were better (holier, prettier, faster, smarter, richer) and thus worthy.

Backing up his theme with quotations from the Gospels and theologians ranging from Augustine to Tillich, Manning insists that God's grace cannot be earned, only accepted. God gives us love and perfect acceptance, in unlimited quantities; all He asks is that we open our hearts to Him. "When will we acknowledge that we need not and cannot buy God's love? he demands. And to those of us who think that diligent church attendance, service work or rigorous self-discipline will earn brownie points with God, he says, "How long will it be before we discover we cannot dazzle God with our accomplishments?"

Manning's book is a dance before the Lord, a rich rousing unbuttoned hymn of thanksgiving and pure joy in the presence of God's love for us. He writes in a poetic, earthy sometimes elliptical narrative that is read with the heart as much as with the mind. Perhaps Manning feels his topic is too enormous and wonderful to be squeezed into a logical thought-progression. If so, he's right. This is a joyous, joyful book, packed with great insights, and a rousing good read.

Starr Morrow, Cople Parish

COOPER WEDDING: OUR FIRST!



The wedding couple (right) with their attendants, Bill and Mary Small and flower girl, Vicky

Dear Lucia and congregation,

Words cannot express the amount of love and appreciation for everything that way done to make our marriage ceremony so perfect.

Remember the phrase "a picture is worth a thousand words"? Our friend Erik Bergland took over 600 shots that day—and maybe, just maybe, 600,000 words would do it.

Thank you for welcoming our guests.... My mother commented a few times about how friendly everyone was. The reception was lovely and the cake was beautiful. We love the Excalibur food dehydrator, and will think of St. Stephen's whenever we use it. The food will be truly blessed!

We have decided to use the check and all cash gifts toward a "baker's oven." This is a compact wood burning stove that also has a cooktop and small compartment for baking. So you will help to keep our house warm, and feed us too,

And last but not least, we are so grateful and overwhelmed by how wonderful the marriage ceremony was. So beautiful and spiritual, and the love we all shared once again surpasses any words.

Thank you so much for everything and we look forward to a loving future with St. Stephen's Episcopal Church.

Love,

Alice and John

THURSDAY NIGHT PROGRAMS

Thursday, Oct. 22	Taize service
Thursday, Oct. 29	Healing Service
Thursday, Nov 5	All Souls celebration
Thursday, Nov. 12	Vestry; social hour
Thursday, Nov. 19	Taize service

Thursday Nov. 26. 7 p.m.

Thanksgiving Service

Sponsor: the Northumberland Ministerial Association

preacher: the Rev. Lucia Lloyd

Macedonia Baptist Church,
10246 Northumberland Highway,
(south of Heathsville on the right)

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Oct. 12	Leslie Hatch
Oct. 23	Elsbeth Scott
Oct. 27	Pauline Brashears
Nov. 1	Margaret Horsmon Barbara & Rocco Tricarico
Nov. 7	Ron Silver
Nov. 11	Ellen & Bill Kirby
Nov 18	Anne & Robert Reamy
Nov. 8	Justin Fulcher
Nov. 14	Anne Reamy

** November 17 is the wedding anniversary of two friends of this congregation whose spouses have died during the past year. We remember with love Jane Henson and Bev Carter, and we share the grief of Bill Henson and Susie Carter.

NOVEMBER CELEBRANTS

November 1	Hal White
November 8	Hal White
November 15	Lynn Holland
November 22	Hal White
November 29	Lucia Lloyd

IN THE LORD'S SERVICE

Usher

October:	Herb Cox
November:	David Kirkpatrick



Altar Guild

Oct 18	Leslie Hatch	Nov 8	Betty Whiteside
Oct 25	Lynn Hower	Nov 15	Leslie Hatch
Nov 1	Loretta Blakely	Nov 22	Lynn Hower

Lesson Readers

Oct 1	Kendall Lloyd (L), Bill Kirby (P)
Oct 25	Ted Hower (L), Evie Cox (P)
Nov 1	Nancy Gates (L), Lea Tilbury (P)
Nov 8	Amy Jones & Rain Eguiguren (L), India Eguiguren (P)
Nov 15	S. Kirkpatrick (L), Dawn Mahaffey (P)
Nov 22	Bill Kirby (L), Ellen Kirby (P)
Nov 29	Mimi Stoner (L), Rocco Tricarico (P)

Eucharistic Ministers

Oct 18	Nancy Gates
Oct 25	David Kirkpatrick
Nov 1	Lea Tilbury
Nov 8	Ellen Kirby
Nov 15	Rocco Tricarico
Nov 22	Nancy Gates
Nov 29	David Kirkpatrick

Coffee Hour Hosts

Oct 18	Meade Kilduff & KK Crowther
Oct 25	Loretta & Lew Blakely
Nov 1	Rocco & Barbara Tricarico
Nov 8	Mimi Stoner
Nov 15	Dick & Mary Eager
Nov 22	Tal & Barbara Day
Nov 29	Phil Moore & Gary Chafin