



The St. Francis Bulletin

FROM THE RECTOR:

Since I last wrote we have experienced one passing and one new birth. Mary Born St. Martin, wife of Donald St. Martin, left this life for the next on February 27. We will certainly miss her. Our prayers go out to Don and to all those who loved Mary. On March 4, Katherine Elizabeth was born to Tim and Elaine Williams. Congratulations to Tim and Elaine on their first child.

Post Easter Letdown?

With the great celebrations of Holy Week and Easter behind us, there is a tendency (at least in those who actually celebrated Holy Week and Easter) to have a bit of a letdown. It is hard to sustain that kind of enthusiasm and spiritual intensity over a long period of time. But the church does try. Easter is a season, not just a day and the celebration goes on until Pentecost (May 11). So the church thinks that Easter is at least a fifty day celebration. The readings and the music of this season continue to remind us of the great event of our salvation in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Since we spent forty days of Lent preparing for Easter, we can spend fifty day celebrating it. Try to remind yourself often of how blessed you are to be who you are in the love that God has shared with you (1 John 3:1). There doesn't need to be the usual post Easter letdown. It's up to you.

Prayer

More than once in the past months I have asked that you pray for our country. There are many reasons for doing so. We have a general election this year during which we will elect a new president, once third of the Senate, and the entire House of

Representatives, not to mention the myriad of local elections for just about every office you can imagine. Pray daily that this nation will turn back to God. The last half century has seen a great separating from the Lord and in that separation an extraordinary decline in the nation's moral compass. Even the church has tried to create a new image for itself and in doing so many branches of God's church have gone astray, accommodating themselves to a secular humanist culture that actually sacrifices God on the altar of political correctness.

If that were not enough, the immorality and violence that has overtaken our society at an alarming rate in the past few decades should drive us to our knees. Pornography of every kind is rampant and the internet, which can be a great tool for good, is being used for the spread of evil. It is hard to pass even a few days that we do not hear of yet another kidnapping, sexual assault, armed robbery, murder, etc. There is no longer any respect for life in our society, a situation I lay strictly at the feet of legalized abortion. All of this because we, as a nation, have abandoned God.

May 1 marks the 57th Annual National Day of Prayer. This year's theme is "Prayer—America's Strength and Shield." We will have a Holy Communion Service at 7:00 that evening. It is also Ascension Day. But please don't wait for this annual observance. Pray now. Pray today that God will forgive us as a nation and restore us to His favor; that He will once again let His face shine upon us. It is pure myth that we have become what we are by ourselves. We have no future without the blessings He bestows on us.

A Word of Thanks

I want to express my thanks to every one who made our Lenten observance and Easter celebrations what they were. There are many of your fellow parishioners who volunteer countless hours to make sure that things go as well as they do. My thanks to all of them.

Letters to Malcolm submitted by Ellen Stults

Letters to Malcolm is a compilation of essays in the form of correspondence between Clive Staples Lewis and his (presumably fictitious) friend Malcolm. The letters focus on the subject of prayer, specifically when and where and why. This book was published posthumously like many of Lewis' books

Lewis starts with musings on liturgical service content. He said that many churches try to keep drawing people in through novelty at every service. Lewis said that occasionally having something different and maybe unusual in the service was fine, but didn't novelty for the most part distract the worshippers from the main goal of attending church, that is, to worship God? "Novelty," said Lewis, "...simply as such, can have only entertainment value." Lewis believed that a steady, structured service was vital to a Christian's spiritual growth and that God does require Christians to partake in "corporate prayer." Lewis said, "I can make do with almost any kind of service whatever, if only it will stay put."

Lewis next discusses the pros and cons of "ready made" prayers. These are prayers that people write for other people to use. The prayers in the prayer book, for example, are "ready made" prayers. Lewis didn't particularly like to use "ready mades" in his personal prayer life but he said that at the beginning of his Christian walk he tried to pray without words at all. He tried to convey his thoughts and feelings to God through mental images, not words. He realized that this form of prayer is very difficult to put to practice and requires great mental and spiritual strength which he didn't claim to have. Lewis expressed a belief that people each have different ways of communicating to God, so if

someone felt they could better express themselves through another persons words, let them have at it!

Lewis asked the question, if God is omniscient why do we give Him information? Lewis answered himself by saying that of course God knows everything about us but there is a very significant difference between being known and offering yourself. When we talk to God and give Him information we are giving our permission to let God know us. God does not need our permission to absorb the knowledge we have, He already has it. God does want us to offer ourselves for His viewing though, and in offering ourselves we offer our knowledge, our mind and outlook.

Lewis discusses many other topics within prayer such as petitionary prayers and prayer as worship and does an adequate job of answering most of his questions. It remains to be seen whether or not his deductions and assumptions are correct but I felt fully satisfied with his answers. This was one of the last of Lewis' books, poems, or essays to be published (published in 1964, Lewis died in 1963. We don't know when the "letters" were written but it is assumed close to the end of his life. They were certainly written after he had rallied from being very ill later in life.) and is proof that Lewis kept his mind and spirituality awake and active to the end.

St. Francis Choir

Inviting all singers! There is enough interest that a choir can be formed at St. Francis again. The plan is to rehearse weekly after the late service beginning April 6 and to sing every few weeks during the 11:00 service. All interested singers are invited to join the choir. Amy and Jim Crandell are spearheading this effort.

Sunday School News

Thank you to those who donated for the Lenten Sunday School Project. All the funds have not yet been counted, but it appears that the children were

able to reach their goal of \$100 for school supplies sent to Iraq to be distributed to the children.

Games Night

Lest you think that Games Night is only for children -- let it be known that there are more adults coming on the first Friday of each month than the younger generation. The evening begins at 6:30 pm with a potluck dinner. Soon after, the group decides to play a board game for the next 1 1/2 hours. The evening is always pleasurable with plenty of laughs exchanged. This is a wonderful opportunity for fellowship with other St. Francis members. The next Games Night is April 4.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

The Prayer Shawl Ministry Group will meet on the first Saturday of every month, at 11:00 a.m. in the Parish Hall. Anyone interested in joining this group is welcome.

The Prayer Shawl group knits and crochets shawls with prayer and love to be given to anyone who could benefit from the warmth and comfort they bring. If you know of anyone you would like to see receive one, please call Phoebe Hughes at 476-6216.

St. Clare's Guild

Rescheduled Meeting

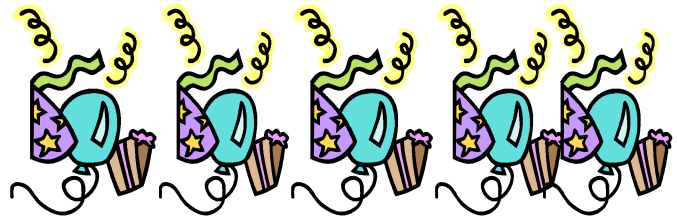
The combined service committees of the women of the church will hold their spring meeting on Sat., April 12, at 10am in the Parish Hall. Refreshments, a short devotional message, and a number of important issues to be discussed, are on the agenda.

Please join in the life of St. Francis Church by attending.

Rector: The Reverend Len Giacolone

Senior Warden: Mark Rambin

Junior Warden: Keith Harrell



Birthdays

1	Susan LaRoux
2	Jay Brummett James Ogden LaRoux
4	Don Watkins
5	Paige Adkins
6	Elliott Wilkes
8	Micah Looke
9	Julie Rambin
10	Shannon Adkins
16	Graham Kinahan
17	Jason Kranzusch
20	Ray Merrill
21	Jim Crandell
22	Victoria Ruth Stults
23	Diane Darling Jace Phillips
24	Steve Ogden
25	Hoyt Scharff
26	Lorraine Pangle
27	G.W. Martin
28	Kim Kinahan
29	Miller Hicks

Anniversaries

3	Jack and Mildred Farris
5	Roy and Nancy Jones
8	Karl David and Pam Stephan



Associate Rector: The Reverend John Stults

Organist: Paula Blaha

Server: Ray Merrill

Newsletter Submissions

Any parishioner that has news of any kind they would like to share with everyone is welcome to send it in writing to Tricia Denslow at 640 B Lakeside Dr., Wimberley, TX 78676 or to her e-mail address (triciadenslow@yahoo.com). If received **by the 20th**, it will appear in next month's newsletter.

St. Francis Episcopal Church

1408 West 9th Street
Austin, Texas 78703

APRIL

2008

-
- | | | | |
|----|---|----|--|
| 4 | <i>Evening Prayer, 6:00 pm Church
Game Night, 6:30 pm</i> | 14 | <i>Mothers' and Grandmothers' Prayer
Group, 11:00 am</i> |
| 5 | <i>Prayer Shawl Ministry Group, 11:00
a.m</i> | 14 | <i>Vestry Meeting, 5:30 pm</i> |
| | | 18 | <i>Evening Prayer, 6:00 pm Church</i> |
| 6 | <i><u>Holy Communion, 9:30 am, Morning
Prayer and Holy Communion, 11:00
am,</u></i>
(Acts 2:14a, 36-47)
Psalm 116
I Peter 1:17-23
Luke 24:13-35
<i>Children's Sunday School, 9:30 am
Parish Hall</i> | 20 | <i><u>Holy Communion, 9:30 am and 11:00
am,</u></i>
Acts 17:1-15
Psalm 66:1-11
1 Peter 2:1-10
John 14:1-14
<i>Children's Sunday School, 9:30 am
Parish Hall</i> |
| 11 | <i>Evening Prayer, 6:00 pm Church</i> | 25 | <i>Evening Prayer, 6:00 pm Church</i> |
| 13 | <i><u>Holy Communion, 9:30 am and 11:00
am,</u></i>
Acts 6:1-9,7:2a,51-60
Psalm 23
1 Peter 2:19-25
John 10:1-10
<i>Children's Sunday School, 9:30 am
Parish Hall</i> | 27 | <i><u>Holy Communion, 9:30 am and 11:00
am,</u></i> Acts 17:22-31
Psalm 148
1 Peter 3:8-18
John 15:1-8
<i>Children's Sunday School, 9:30 am
Parish Hall</i> |