

THE AP STLE

The Perfect Gift

My brother-in-law does the most amazing things. He comes for dinner and spends part of the evening walking around the house checking things like the dryer vent, the fence, trees, furnace filter and whatever else he can think of to check. He buried the downspouts so they didn't wash the mulch out of the flower beds when it rained. He dug tunnels under the sidewalks and ran the drains through the tunnels and out into the yard so the rain is used to water the lawn. He sealed my deck, trimmed the trees, changed the oil in my mower, and always comes running if I have a major catastrophe. He lets me pay for the materials, but does not take a dime for the hours of work he puts into my house and yard.

He does not spend money on himself, still wears some t-shirts he was wearing 40 years ago when my sister first "brought him home." He has a Lawn Boy mower from 1970, and does not believe in replacing things that work just because styles change. I always tell him I will hire someone to do the work, but he insists it would cost too much and does the work himself.

One day my brother mentioned something about a Marine GPS that our brother-in-law wanted but was not going to buy because "he didn't really need it, and it costs too much."

OK. I listened closely to the details about the GPS and started saving money to get it for him. I stayed away from Whole Foods, cut back on some activities I usually do in the summer, drove my car less, rode my bike more, and finally had the money to purchase the GPS.

I could not wait to give it to him! I was SO excited. The 18-mile drive to his house seemed like a hundred. I couldn't wait to get there and give him something I knew he would really like and use.

I walked to the door, rang the bell, and when he came to the door, I handed him the paper sack containing the gift. Immediately he wanted to know what was in the bag and why I was bringing him something.

When he finally looked in the sack, he could not believe his eyes! He continued asking why, saying he could not accept it. But at the same time he was protesting, he was opening the package to get the thing out. I knew he couldn't wait to begin the programming and get it set up.

When I saw the happiness and appreciation reflected in his face, I was thrilled beyond words. Finally, I was able to give him something that was just perfect! My first thought was "giving is really SO MUCH better than receiving." It had more impact since I had saved money over a couple months so I could pay cash.

As I drove back home that evening, it was impossible to keep the tears away. I had been able to show him just how much I love him and appreciate his unselfish generosity.

Then it dawned on me. This was the very same feeling I get when I serve at St. Paul's Neighborhood Pantry, spend the night with the guests at the Interfaith Hospitality Network, leave a memorial service where our church community has joined hands and reached out to a grieving family, and come home totally pumped after a 3-hour Vestry meeting because it resulted in ways we can accommodate the growth of children, youth, and adults coming to St. Thomas.

At least for me, putting God first and loving our neighbors as ourselves does not necessarily mean "giving till it hurts." It means giving my time, treasure and talent at a level that fills my entire being with joy and contentment.

Once I started living a life of stewardship, I realized it REALLY IS all about loving one another, being a grateful recipient of gifts during my times of need, and giving thanks to God for the way He provides the resources so I can give generously to others.

*Peace,
Sue*

[Sue Elliott is the our Senior Warden.]

Footnotes

Beth L. Elswick, Director of Music Ministries



Keeping good Time is essential to music and to life

We are all busy making plans. . . so much to do and so little time. In fact, the most important skill that I work on with college freshmen is time management. In the context of the classroom, I am talking about freshmen being away from home, and, for many, being on their own for the first time. Clearly, my point is that I feel the need to remind them to do their homework before 3 am.

Of course, I also relate the concept of time to musical time. If one plays all the right pitches, but the notes are not “in time” with the meter, the listener hears “wrong notes.” Turning one’s homework in after the test is over, a student loses the opportunity to practice the skills that were on the test. Keeping good time is essential.

Likewise we must check to make sure that our biological clocks are in sync with our spiritual clocks. Does getting out of bed for church on Sunday mornings seem to be a chore, a duty, or a joy? We are even instructed to have a day for rest and reflection, a notion that runs “counter-clockwise” to our work-oriented society.

Time management is an essential skill in our world. We must prioritize our commitments: church, school, family, job, recreation, fun, charitable work, and volunteering.

If you read between the lines, you can see that when time is an issue, one must make every heartbeat count. Do you think that I am going to ask you for some of your precious time? Of course I am. There is much more to it.

When you come to St. Thomas, you get real value for the time you spend. You can make time for Christ, be with your family, have fun, have recreation, be creative, join the choir or praise band, exercise your mind, be generous, and help other people all at the same time while you are, indeed, the recipient of God’s blessings.

My philosophy is that God instructs us to do what is GOOD FOR US. We need to remember the Sabbath because WE NEED A DAY. We are instructed to praise God and make music because the music/communication/joy or sorrow/art is great for the heart and spirit of the musician and the listener. (In my heart, I feel that God loves to hear our praises, but I feel we must do it because it is GOOD FOR US.)

I leave you with two thoughts: the first, “Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy” [Exodus 20:8], and two, the choir practices on Wednesdays.

Gift Card fundraiser to help missions in Haiti

Have you ever received a gift card that you never used? Maybe you received a gift card to Starbucks, but never go to Starbucks. Or maybe you received a gift card to a restaurant you don’t frequent.

If you have a card like this, the Outreach committee is asking you to donate it, and let them try to turn the cards into cash for our ministries in Haiti.

We’ll be collecting these cards the second weekend in November. The following week, we will be selling them.

With the holidays coming up, purchasing these cards could be a way of knocking a present off of your shopping list as well as helping a good cause.

In the coming weeks, look for more info in our weekly *Tower Talk* bulletin.



IHN volunteer training coming in January

January 22, 2011
from 9:30 to noon

All new volunteers who interact with guest families must attend one training session.

Sessions are open to everyone and are also an excellent refresher and energizer for volunteers who have already been through training.

Ministry Fair

October 23/24 and October 30/31 after each service

Looking for a way to get just a little more involved
in the ministries of St. Thomas?

Thinking about ways to grow, serve, and make a difference?

The Ministry Fair will showcase the parish ministries and give all parishioners the opportunity to see the full scope of what St. Thomas does for our members, our community, our nation, and the world.

We will have representatives from most of our 30+ ministries on hand to explain how we live out our mission to **Come, Grow, Serve and Make a Difference.**

We would like to give you the opportunity to get caught up in the excitement, and be a part of the growth of St. Thomas by serving others through the gift of your time and talent.

We'll be set up in the back of the Nave (sanctuary), so please stop by, grab a treat, and see what we are all about!



Outreach makes a difference

December 11, 2010

SAVE THIS DATE!

This year's Johnson County **Interfaith Hospitality Network Holiday Party** will be hosted again by St. Thomas. The party for both graduates and current guests is set for **Saturday, December 11, 2010** from **11:00 am to 1:00 pm**.

The IHN families will receive a holiday food basket, gift cards, and a single gift per guest. The "Kids Store" provides the children an opportunity to shop for gifts for parents, grandparents, teachers and siblings. The party will include activities/games for the children, a visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus, as well as lunch for our guests and volunteers.

The party is also a great chance for IHN guests to visit with other guests and volunteers.

You'll discover that there is a true spirit of Christ in the air when you volunteer to help at this party.

More information about the party will be available in the weekly *Tower Talk* bulletin.

Sign-up sheets will be available the weekends of November 6/7, 13/14 and 20/21.

Questions? Please contact either **IHN Holiday party** co-chair **Jean Adam**, 402-4392 or **Dola McNown**, 541-9226.



Photos/Dola McNown



Success of the IHN Christmas party wouldn't be possible without the support of volunteers. Both **Bill Kidder** (above) and **Donna Young** (left photo, on the right) are extraordinary. They have been tireless volunteers each year for the Christmas party. [ed. note: the other woman in the left photo is Mary Neely, sister of Suzanne Hicks.]

I Can....You Can....We Can....FILL A VAN!

As part of *Hunger Action Month*, St. Thomas' Outreach Team sponsored a "**Fill A Van**" event on September 25th-26th to restock the shelves at St. Paul's Neighborhood Pantry.

The *Episcopal Community Services* van was parked in the parking lot for the Saturday evening and Sunday services. St. Thomas showed its generosity by filling the van with bags of food to feed our hungry neighbors at St. Paul's.

Thank you to everyone who donated items, and to the volunteers who loaded and unloaded the food items. —*Peggy Salts*, chair of Outreach Committee

In the photo, Outreach team member **Heather Bradley-Geary** receives a food donation from **Jerry Carmen**. Helping in the background are **Breanne** and **Micah Geary**.
Photo/Rosemary Abbott



IHN Golf Outing scores a hole in one!

In a recent letter to members of the IHN family, Executive Director **Vicki L. Derscher**, MSW, LCSW, praised the success of the recent IHN Golf Tournament fundraiser.

What follows is an excerpt from her letter:

Dear IHN Family,

As the seasons change and the beautiful colors of fall near, our IHN Family has much to CELEBRATE....

Last Saturday was the Fourth Annual IHN Golf Tournament. 136 golfers and countless volunteers arrived at Falcon Ridge Golf Course bright and early last Saturday morning. Thanks to the tireless efforts of our key volunteers (Suzanne Hicks, Lucky Hicks and Larry Cook), this years tournament raised over \$34,000.00! Thank you to all who participated in making this years golf tournament a HUGE success for IHN!...

In closing, I was blessed and honored to celebrate my five year anniversary at IHN on August 31. As I reflect over five years at IHN, my heart fills with overwhelming gratitude for ALL of you who make up our IHN Family. Together, our IHN Family has provided over 62,000 meals and over 20,000 bednights to close to 300 of our brothers and sisters in need of a "lift up." I have been abundantly blessed by all of you, and honored and humbled by the opportunity to share in the journey of our guest families.

*Feel the love and gratitude,
Vicki*



Our Annual Consecration Weekend is November 6 and 7

Again, the community of St. Thomas will gather together to celebrate the blessings that God has given us.

The weekend focuses on two things:

**our spiritual development and
our commitment to God as a community.**

Please make plans to attend our worship service
on **Saturday at 5:30 PM**

or our **single** service on **Sunday at 10:00 AM**
and celebrate with your St. Thomas family.

As we did last year, the catered meals will be served
from the narthex with tables in the nave.

This year

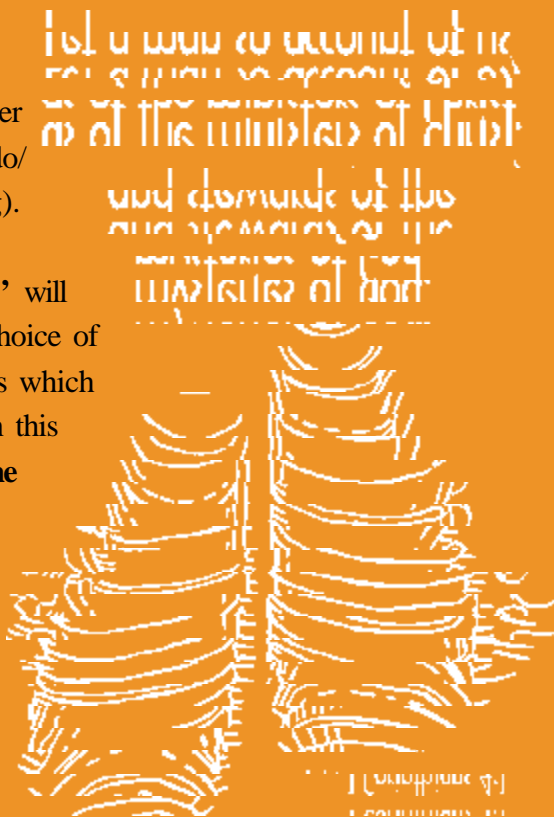
"A Touch of Class"

will cater the Saturday dinner
(lime chicken with alfredo/
spinach artichoke topping).

"Soul Delicious Foods" will
cater the Sunday lunch (a choice of
two entrees and three sides which
had not been selected when this
article was prepared for **The
Apostle** deadline).

On Sunday there will be
activities and entertain-
ment for the children.

—Gerry Miller, co-chair
of Stewardship Committee





YOUTH GROUP

Bulletin Board

Parents' Night Out

Summer is officially over and time for our monthly **Parents' Night Out** to begin. On the first Saturday of the month, parents are invited to drop off their younger kids and enjoy a night out worry-free. Our youth plan all sorts of activities with the younger children. There's games, coloring, movies, big group games, and delicious snacks. We do not provide a meal for the children, but you are welcome to drop your child off with dinner, and we will see to it that they have a chance to eat.

Parents' Night Out is a fundraiser; the monies we earn provide financial assistance to kids for registration fees for youth events. Our **PNO** schedule for the remaining year is:

October 2nd

November 6th

December 4th

Where? St. Thomas Church

Time? From 6 pm until 11 pm

If you are interested, please sign up for our **Parents' Night Out** on the sheet found on the hallway bulletin board.

We're having a

BOO BASH

All Parishioners and their friends invited!

Put on your costumes and come see what a spooky good time the youth have cooked up for you this Halloween. To raise funds for our summer outreach projects, we are putting on a **Boo-Bash**, complete with some traditional and new Halloween games, a chili cook-off, and an age-appropriate **Haunted House**.

The cost is \$7 per person or \$20 per family. Each ticket to the **Boo-Bash** includes a meal, a Haunted House pass, and a pack of tickets to play games.

This fun event will take place on
Sunday, October 24th from 5:30-7:30pm.

Youth Lock-In

Come have a night of fun at the church!! We will have our **Fall Lock-In** on **October 15-16th**. It will be packed with games, fun activities, food, and more.

The **Lock-In** begins at 7 pm on Friday night and finishes at noon on Saturday. The cost is \$30 per youth; scholarships are available. Registration will be available on the hall bulletin board and on the website.

Registrations are due October 8th.

Happening # 85 is coming on November 12-15th

Happening is a great Senior High diocesan youth event that will be in town this time! It is an event that is for youth and put on by youth and is lots of fun.

Anyone in the 9th grade or older can attend this event. If you have been to **Happening** before, there is a spot for you to be on staff. The cost is \$45 per youth. You can find registration on the youth bulletin board or on the website www.episcopal-ks.org/youth/happening.html.

Registration fee must be given to **Chad Senuta** by November 1st or there is a late fee attached.

2010 Confirmation Class

We will be confirming these fourteen youth this December: **Spencer Adam, Clare Bullock, Stratton Georgoulis, Chris Gerhardt-Mathews, Lynda Johnson, Logan Kane, Evan and Justin Kline, Anthony Plescia, Matt Pratt, Paige Salts, Jackson Fuller, Carson Ferren, and Emma Hardeman.**

Please pray for these students and their teachers, **Emily Barnes** and **Barbara McCall** as they work together to learn about the Episcopal Church. It is such a blessing to St. Thomas to have so many youth learning about our history, traditions, and customs.

Fall means FUN while learning at Sunday School

Ann Clements, Director of Children's Ministries



What a delight it was on September 12th—known at St. Thomas as **Rally Day**—to see so many sweet smiling faces as we began another church school season. And that includes all the clergy, teachers and parents . . . ba-da-bum. Seriously, it was a pleasure to see people of all ages in our halls greeting one another after summer vacations, welcoming new families to our church, and sharing classroom activities, food and fellowship as our new year began.

Here's the program for each of our classes

Preschool-Kindergarten—The Godly Play class is being led by **Dola McNown** and **Cheryl Wichman**. This program introduces the children to God and invites them to learn about God, themselves, and the world through play, imagination, and storytelling.

1st & 2nd Grades— **Ellen Peters** and **Lynn Elman** are teaching this class. Using the WorkshopCycles rotation-model curriculum again this year, they will explore the stories of God and God's people using a wide variety of learning approaches.

3rd -5th Grades—Also using WorkshopCycles, our older class is led by **Laura Wiltanger** and **Janine Atteridge**. **Jennifer Barrington** is floating as a co-leader between the two older classes. We are expecting lots of energy from this group as it is our largest by quite a few numbers!

Guest teachers will join us on occasion to share their gifts and talents, and parents are encouraged to come into the classroom for a week or two during the year to share in our wonderful ministry and help our regular teachers who selflessly give of their time. Sign-up sheets are in the classrooms.

Fall is going to be a busy time and not just on Sunday mornings!

Our annual **hayride** is scheduled for October 10th at Shawnee Mission Park, from 4 to 6 pm. A beautiful trip through the park will be followed by hot dogs, s'mores and cider around the campfire. Sign-up on the bulletin board outside the church office where you will find directions and other information. Cost is \$5.50 per person; kids under three are free. We are instructed to arrive 15 minutes prior to make sure no one gets left behind!

The **Boo Bash** on October 24th is going to be a blast! This all-parish event is being planned and hosted by our youth. This is one you won't want to miss. Food, fun and games will be in abundance!

Also look for more information in the upcoming weeks for our **Family ADVENTure** on Thanksgiving weekend. Held during our education hour on Sunday morning, this beloved activity includes gathering with friends, yummy food, and making Advent wreaths for families to take home. Details and sign-up sheets will also be on the bulletin board and in weekly *Tower Talk* editions.



Long-Range Planning update

[Ed. note: To be sure every parishioner knows what is going on with our Long-Range Planning, the article below, which appeared in the last issue of the Apostle, is reprinted here. Re-read it before reading the new article in the box.

Thank you for your support of the Long-Range Planning Committee

With the information gathered from over 115 household survey forms, the Long-Range Planning Committee of St. Thomas is developing a plan to meet your suggested requirements for the future of the parish.

Your information told us that 78% of you wanted a new Parish Hall, and that 69% of you saw the need for additional staff and paid clergy.

The Long-Range Plan information indicates that we should evaluate construction of a building to provide a

large multi-purpose area for parish functions which would include meals and new classrooms for the Sunday school programs.

The new building addition will in turn permit renovation of existing areas to accommodate the need for additional office space, meeting rooms, storage space, and selected parish activities.

The Committee will be requiring the services of an architectural firm to develop preliminary schematic drawings and cost estimates for the expansion project directed by your input.

This information will be incorporated into a preliminary report which will be presented to the parish Vestry later this year.

Following review and approval of the preliminary report by the Vestry, a final draft will be prepared with architectural plans developed to refine the cost estimates.

After review and approval of the final report, a formal feasibility study will be initiated by the Vestry and Rector of St. Thomas.

—Jack Dutra

“And the Design Firm Is.....”

As you know, the Long-Range Planning Committee has been asked by the Vestry and Rector of St. Thomas to develop a long-range plan to address our parish needs. Our desire is to keep everyone informed of the progress.

The *Architect Selection Committee* has been busy this summer in soliciting *Request for Proposals* from potential design firms and conducting the interviews. Based on the interviews, references, cost estimates as well as design capabilities, the Architect Selection Committee recommended **Gould Evans** to be the design firm for our project. This recommendation was supported by both the Long-Range Planning Committee as well as the Vestry and Rector of St. Thomas.

Given that our future needs will likely exceed the initial budget available, we have recommended that a Master Plan be developed concurrently so that St. Thomas has a road map for the Vision of our church. This will allow integration of future phases of the overall project to be implemented.

Once a contract with Gould Evans is finalized in early October, this firm will begin the *Master Planning & Schematic Design* phase. This will include additional interviews/meetings with our Building Committee and various ministries/parishioners to prioritize our needs. Our goal is to develop our *Schematic Design and Master Plan* before the end of the year.

The outcome of this phase will include a colored interior and exterior rendering as well as a floor plan of the major phases of the project. After this is completed and approved, a formal feasibility study will be initiated by the Vestry and Rector of St. Thomas.

Respectfully,

Becky Rimmer on behalf of the Long-Range Planning Committee

Looking for ways to be involved?

The best kept **SECRET** at STA is...

...the Sunday evening **Men's (Fellowship) Group** which meets monthly, usually on the **THIRD** Sunday at 5:30 pm at church. (There will be no meeting, however, in November.)

Like to chow down? Like to play poker and do other "guy stuff?" Want to get to know more men at the church?

Reverend Kevin Schmidt leads the group for a couple of hours of pure fun and fellowship.

Last month, for instance, Barbecue Master **Steve Leftwich** prepared fabulous smoked pork tenderloin, ribs and smoked chicken! The men wasted no time in chowing down.

Got ya' drooling yet? The guys enthusiastically gave Steve "two thumbs up" for this fantastic dinner.

With tummies filled and satisfied, the men proceeded to play several hands of **Texas Hold 'em** with all monies donated to charity.

Having great food, warm fellowship, and fun is a relaxing, enjoyable way to begin the week ahead.

Their next meeting is on **Sunday, October 17th** at 5:30 pm.

Sign up on the sheet posted on the hall bulletin board.

All ages are welcome.

Don't be shy.

Come on and join them!

Calling all **Bridge** players

Fall is upon us and time for us to crank up many of our activities that slowed down during the Summer.

If you like to play Bridge, we have two different groups available. YOU are invited (men, women, beginners to masters) to join either or both groups.

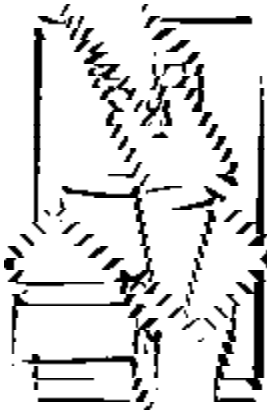
BRIDGE 2010 meets on the last Friday of every month beginning on Friday, September 24th at 7:00.

DAYTIME BRIDGE meets from 12:30 to 2:30 on the 4th Thursday of every month.

Signup sheets will be posted for another week before so that the tables can be evened out (important part of playing Bridge). If you would like to bring friends, just sign them up so they'll be in the count.

Both groups always welcome new players. I know there are many of you who are anxious to join.

Questions? Give **Marge Dellinger** a call at 492-3305.



Parish Notes

Births

Avery Lee Rodriguez was born on July 22, 2010. His parents are *Joseph & Isabel Rodriguez.*

Langston Matthew Heffner was born on July 23, 2010. His parents are *Matthew & Olivia Heffner.*

Camilla Halliwell Minelli was born on July 25, 2010. Her grandparents are *Doug & Christy Halliwell.*

Addison Ann Lambert born on August 3, 2010 and

Lyla Claire Bredenberg born on August 27, 2010 are the great-grandchildren of *Ed & Barb Sisk.*

Lyric Ashlee McConnell was born on August 12, 2010.

Her grandparents are

Russ Miller & Jane Mallonee.

Chloe Renee Honaker was born on August 15, 2010. Her parents are

Drew & Amanda Honaker.

Liliana Page Fry was born on August 15, 2010. Her parents are

Doug Fye & Natalie Gieschen.

Grandparents are *Don & Donna Fye.*

Cameron Grace Bemis was born on August 31, 2010. Her grandparents are

Ted & Linda Bemis.

Deaths

The family of St. Thomas mourns the loss of two long-time members of our church:

BARBARA A. ALLISON

who passed away unexpectedly on August 16, 2010, and

RYAN THOMAS HENDERSON

who died accidentally on September 5, 2010.

Our condolences to his parents, *Bill & Kathy Henderson*, and to his siblings *Connor & Paige.*

Address Changes

Bill and Jean Mathiesen have moved back to their roots in Michigan. Their new address is 12047 Elk Run, Apartment N209, Traverse City, MI 49684. They are living at Cedar Creek Senior Apartments.

Has your address changed? Please let the office know so we can be sure to continue sending you **The Apostle** newsletter, the Diocesan publication **The Harvest** and other important mailings.



Holy Communion Services

Saturdays

5:30 Holy Communion

Sundays

8:45 Holy Communion

with Praise music & Band

9:45 Sunday School and Adult Forum

10:45 Holy Communion
with traditional music

Openings available for PARENT'S DAY OUT

St. Thomas' Parent's Day Out program started on September 13th for the 2010-2011 school year.

We are excited that we are offering **two** days this year on Mondays and Tuesdays. There are a few openings available both days.

Parents may enroll their child for 1 or 2 days. The hours are from 9 am until 1 pm. The openings are for children from age 12 months and walking through 2 1/2 years old.

We have a few returning kids, and several new kids this year. They are all very excited to come! The smiles on their faces is great to see each day!

If you would like additional information about our program, please contact **Anne Thompson** at aet130@yahoo.com or call her at 231-9701.



THE APOSTLE
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Return Service Requested

The next deadline for
The Apostle
is **October 31, 2010**

CALENDAR

OCTOBER

15-16: **Women's Retreat at Heartland Center**

15-16: **Youth LOCK-IN** held at church.

22-23: **Diocesan Convention**

23-24: **Ministry Fair in NAVE after each service**

24: **"BOO BASH"** — an All-Parish event, 5:30 pm

30-31: **Ministry Fair in NAVE**

31: **Next Apostle Deadline**

NOVEMBER

2: **All Saints Day**

6: **Turn clocks back ONE hour (remember "Fall Back")**

7: **STANDARD TIME BEGINS**

6-7: **CONSECRATION WEEKEND** — One service on Sunday at 10 am.

12-13: **Happening #85**

14: **Gift Card Fundraiser** — turn in unused cards

21: **Gift Card Fundraiser** — purchase cards

24: **Thanksgiving Service** at 7 pm

25: **Thanksgiving Day—Office closed.**

26: **Office closed.**

28: **FamilyADVENTURE** — families make Advent wreaths