

THE AP STLE

Introducing Ben!

Ben Varnum will soon join our staff at St. Thomas. He is a native of the Kansas City area and will be starting on October 10, 2011.

Ben will soon be ordained to the Diaconate and will be ordained to the priesthood sometime next summer. Ben brings a solid foundation of education and experience to begin this new phase of his life, as well as what we need at St. Thomas.

Ben will be working in the areas of Pastoral Care, Adult Formation, Internet ministries, and young adult ministry. In addition, he will be a part of the preaching rotation, will help with weddings and funerals, and assist with youth ministry as a clergy resource.

Thanks to those parishioners who increased their giving in order for us to bring on a new clergy person. We are ready at St. Thomas and the timing couldn't be better. We will have some gathering times so you get a chance to meet Ben.



Who is Ben Varnum?

A native of Kansas City, **Benedict Varnum** has spent the last nine years in Chicago. He received his Bachelors and Masters of Divinity from the University of Chicago and spent time at Seabury Western Episcopal Seminary.

For several years, Ben worked part-time as a consultant for youth ministry and has interned with urban and suburban parishes and a campus ministry. Most recently, he spent a year doing a chaplain's residency at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago's near-west side, where he primarily worked with patients and families on the neurosurgery ICU.

Though Ben was baptized Catholic, he was raised in the Episcopal Church and had considered ordained life from a young age. Doing field work as a "required" part of the Masters of Divinity degree helped him realize that he belonged more in the church than in a university. Soon he began the formal discernment process towards ordination through his field parish of St. Chrysostom's in Chicago in 2007.

Ben still has a love of academic writing, as well as good fiction and science fiction. He has recently re-discovered a passion for complex board games.

Ben is excited to come to St. Thomas! The parish's clear commitment to outreach is a powerful sign of the need for the use of all our gifts to respond to the challenges of a world that is becoming smaller and more global day by day. Ben believes that God is always calling each of us into new growth and new possibility. He also believes that the community of the Christian church can be a warm, exciting, and loving place to hear God's calling, join hands in common work, share the stories of the lives God has called us out of and into, and celebrate our common life through worship. Ben believes that it's exciting to be called to a place that is lively and growing!



"Anchored in Faith"

Consecration Weekend

Saturday, October 22nd and Sunday, October 23rd

The St. Thomas family will gather together on October 22nd and 23rd to share our commitments to God and celebrate our many blessings. We are focused on our ministries, our outreach, and our youth. We are also building our community to help others and give back to God that which he has given us.

The St. Thomas community is a leader in the Diocese at fulfilling these goals. In the first edition of *Stewardship News*, mailed in early October, there is a list of the many outreach, small group ministries, mission work, community involvement, and educational opportunities that St. Thomas has to offer. All of the St. Thomas family should be proud of the good works that we have achieved. With our programs that are anchored in faith and continue to grow, you should know that there are always more opportunities to serve others through your time and talents.

Our weekend begins at the 5:30 pm Saturday service and continues on Sunday at 10:00 am; both services will be followed with a barbecue feast catered by *Culinary Cornerstones*. Entertainment will be provided for the children on Sunday. **Please note that there will be only one service on Sunday at 10:00 am.; please mark your calendar.**

Annual IHN Christmas Party to be held on December 10, 2011

St. Thomas is pleased to host the seventh annual **Johnson County Interfaith Hospitality Network Holiday Party**. Both graduates and current guests of the program are invited to the party which will be held on Saturday, December 10, 2011 from 11:00 am-1:00 pm.

The IHN families will receive a holiday food basket and gift cards. The "Kids Store" provides the children an opportunity to shop free of charge 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. Christ is truly present at this event.

More information about the party will be available in the weekly *Tower Talk*. Sign-up sheets—to provide food and gift cards as well as to volunteer for the party—will be available on the weekends of November 5/6, 12/13 and 19/20.



Questions?
Please contact
IHN Holiday
Party Coordina-
tor **Jean Adam**
(402-4392) or
Dola McNown
(541-9226).—
Jean Adam

Volunteers at last
year's Holiday Party
help IHN guest wrap
their gifts.

Photo/Dola McNown

Parents Night Out

1st Saturday of the Month

From October 2011
through March 2012

6-11pm in the
St. Thomas
Education Wing

This is a great program that benefits many different members of our church community. It is an evening the youth provide for our younger families.

Our youth come prepared to play, provide, and pray with our younger children of St. Thomas and their friends.

For those parents who participate, this program allows them to have an evening to themselves worry free!

Our goal is to provide an evening of fun for the children who participate at a rate that is competitive with having a babysitter at home. Through some research we have found that the average babysitter makes about \$10 an hour.

The funds we raise go towards registration fees for Diocesan and Church retreats and events. The sum of registration fees for an individual youth to attend all events open to them is around \$700.

At each PNO, we average about 20-25 children in attendance with 10 youth providing supervision .

If we maintain this attendance throughout this PNO season, we should be able to reward our youth's hard work with the registration fees they need.

So please do not miss out on this opportunity to have a relaxing night out, give to the youth, and provide a fun time for your children to enjoy their church community.

IHN makes a difference

IHN Inside/Out Race at the Great Mall! November 6, 2011!

Join us, whether you are a runner, walker or competitive racer! Register at www.GreatInsideOutRace.org to participate in the JoCo Interfaith Hospitality Network's (IHN) inaugural **Great Inside/Out Race** to benefit this critical ministry of help and support for homeless families in Johnson County.

IHN's unique race at the Great Mall of the Great Plains in Olathe is the first race in Kansas City where participants can choose from the following events: a one-mile run, a one-mile walk (either inside or outside the mall) or a 5K walk or run.

All runs will be timed and certified if desired.

IHN volunteers (or individuals planning to become trained volunteers) will receive a special registration discount.

There is a growing need in Johnson County to help homeless children; their number has nearly tripled in just two years. With support from St. Thomas and 33 other Johnson County congregations, IHN helps situationally homeless families get back on their feet by providing comprehensive services ranging from housing to transportation.

For more information about this ministry, contact coordinators *Dola McNow* (541-9226) or *Suzanne Hicks* (413-994-4010).

5th Annual IHN Golf Tournament raises needed funds

St. Thomas shows strong support for the 4th annual IHN golf tournament. The tournament raised over \$36,000 for IHN, an organization that helps situationally homeless families in Johnson County.



Pictured here is co-chair **Suzanne Hicks** with **Father Gar**. Photo/Suzanne Hicks

Is **Judy Dutra** exuberant because she had a hole-in-one or because she loves driving a golf cart?



Relaxing after their morning of golf are from left, **Dave Lichius**, **Weldon Fate**, **Bob Beeler** and **Joe Cox**.

Photos/John McNow



Fall season in full swing!

Ann Clements, Director of Childrens' Ministries

Our 2011-2012 Church School Year is off to a wonderful start. Rally Day was fun for all involved—meeting teachers, getting together after summer break, and of course enjoying the continental breakfast St. Thomas-style.

Attendance has been terrific! With classrooms practically bursting at the seams, our teachers and students are eagerly digging into Bible stories and lessons, learning all about God and his people, and celebrating our Christian heritage.

Godly Play is our preschool and kindergarten program. Here, children get to explore stories about God, the Bible, and the Church. Curiosity, imagination and play are encouraged as they seek and find the mystery of God's presence. The teachers for this group are *Dola McNow*, *Kay Childress*, and *Helen McDonald*.

Weaving God's Promises is the curriculum used for 1st-5th grades. This program was developed and written exclusively for The Episcopal Church. It gives students a basic knowledge of church teachings in Christian education, worship, and service. Both Old and New Testaments stories are taught, along with learning about the life and teachings of Jesus, church history and practices, applying principles and practices of Christian living, and importance in fostering their growing faith. Those teachers who lovingly work with this curriculum are:

1st & 2nd—*Lynn Elman, Ashley Fleischaker, and Charlotte Brotherson;*

3rd-5th—*Laura Taylor Wiltanger, Ellen Peters, and Charlotte Brotherson.*

Fall is already busy! We've already had our annual hayride and Blessing of the Animals, and we are looking forward to the following events:

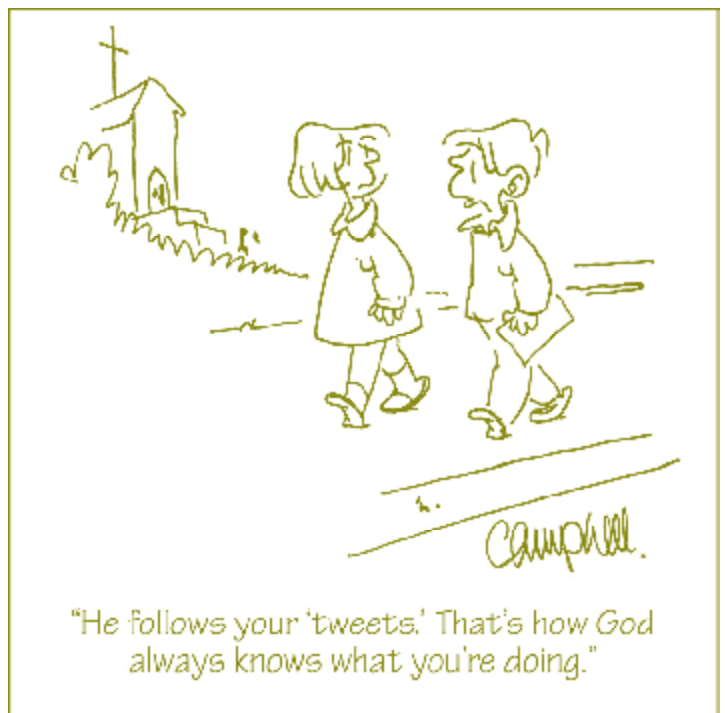
October 30: Halloween Party, 4:00 pm. The youth will once again create a haunted house, and we'll have some fun games as well.

November 27: Family ADVENTure, 9:45 am. Join us for St. Thomas' annual Advent wreath-making activity. Look for a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board for wreaths, food, and evergreen/holly donations.

December 24: Christmas Pageant, 4:00 pm. Our children's pageant will be held at the early Christmas Eve service. Look for details regarding sign-ups and practice times soon. We are blessed to have the talents of *Kelly Demo* and *Barbara McCall* as co-directors this year.

On a final note, we are incredibly blessed to have had the talented *Steve Rimmer* and *Tracy Ferren* create (with the help of VBS kids) some lovely wall art for the children's wing. Make sure you make a visit down the hallway to see their beautiful creations.

Plans are under way to add more as the year goes on; we'll keep you updated.



Youth Director “baptized” by her fans!



Great Kids...Lots of Fun...Our Youth Group has it all!

We meet on Sunday nights from 6:30-8:30 pm
in our Lower Level Youth Room.

All youth in grades 6th-12th are invited to join us!

Annual Youth Camping Trip

October 21st-22nd

Shawnee Mission Park, Camp Site 2

After last year's camping trip success, we will be having another trip this year, but in a much cooler season. We will camp at Shawnee Mission Park and enjoy its hiking trails, lake, woods, and much more.

We will be staying in tents that we bring and cooking our own food.

This was a very fun experience last year, and we are looking to repeating it. Warm clothing is advised. The trip is open to all youth who are in grades 6th-12th.

For more detail visit online or contact *Katie Knoll Lenon* at kklenon@stthomasop.org

Registration and \$30 fee are due October 17th.

Plaza Lights Trip!

December 11, 2011

from 6:30-8:30pm

Grades 6th-12

Mark your Calendars!

Confirmation: It Takes a Village

This year we have five youth attending our Sunday morning Confirmation classes in preparation of receiving the Sacrament this winter.

Cheyenne Sida, Maddie Pickett, Courtney Lorey, Jocilyn Schmidt, and Patrick Brough are our youth who are committed to taking the class.

Our class is taught by *Barbara McCall* and *Katie Knoll Lenon*, but we are blessed to have others from our St. Thomas community to teach specific topics.

Parishioner *Chuc Barnes* recently taught a class on the Bible. We look forward to learning about St. Thomas history taught by *Jim Birkhead*.

The Reverend Kelly Demo will instruct our confirmands about the Sacraments and *Father Gar* will also make an appearance and do some teaching.

We are so grateful to have these youth show an interest in taking this adult step in our church; we are thankful as well for all those who give of their time and talent to teach them.

Boo Bash

October 30th at 4 pm at St. Thomas

With such a successful party last year, we will be repeating this Halloween Celebration again this year.

There will be carnival games upstairs and a haunted house in the lower level youth room. There will be candy and sweets this year and everyone is encouraged to come dressed up. So come on over and bring the kids, grandkids and the adults in your life who are kids at heart.

Happening #86 November 18th-20th

at St. David's, Topeka, KS

For Youth in Grades 9-12th

Cost \$45

Happening is an event by youth for youth. It's a weekend retreat, focusing on Jesus and what he taught. There's games, music, great food, and a chance to talk with peers about things that really matter.

For more information and registration visit this website: <http://www.episcopal-ks.org/youth/happening.html>.

Small Group Ministry— Spotlight on our Prayer Shawl Ministry



Prayer Shawl Ministry

When we first launched our new **Small Group Ministry** back in 2008, we had two women knocking on our door almost immediately. *Linda Manuel* and *Sharon Moorhead* were on fire with this idea to have a Prayer Shawl small group.

After attending the leader training, they got right to work on recruiting. Within a few weeks, they were meeting with their group and knitting shawls left and right. These ladies meet twice a month, bringing their knitting with them. They share fellowship, knitting tips, coffee, their struggles, and thanksgivings with each other. They pray together over their work, and the prayer continues as each person continues to work at home completing a shawl.

Each shawl takes about 60 hours to complete.

Almost at the same time St. Thomas blessed the first batch of shawls completed by the group, they were delivering these gifts to people in need within the community.

Many people of St. Thomas have received these works of love in a time of great need. What better way to receive God's healing power than being wrapped in a shawl that has been made with such love and prayer by someone in our community.

The group is about to bless its 70th shawl. These shawls are available to any and all who need to feel God's love.

Contact *Sharon* at 707-9690 or *Linda* at 438-7407 for more information.

Women of St. Thomas attend weekend retreat



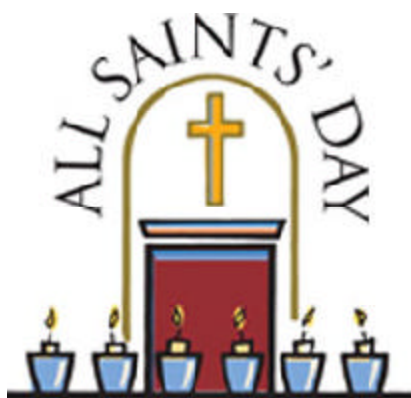
The STA Women's 2011 "Heart and Home Retreat" took place on the weekend of September 30-October 1. Thirty-six ladies attended this year's retreat which was held at the Heartland Center.

Lisa Wells offered her musical talents and **The Reverend Kelly Demo** was our speaker on the topic of "Prayer and Meditation."

It was a beautiful fall retreat for the women of St. Thomas and their friends.



Text and photos/Judy Dutra



We will observe our custom of remembering the faithful departed at all services November 5th at 5:30 and November 6th at 8:45 and 10:45 am.

A notebook has been placed in the narthex to list the names of your loved ones.

We ask that you print legibly so we can properly announce their names in the service. The deadline to submit names is Sunday, October 30th. You may also bring pictures of your “special saints” on November 5th and 6th to be placed on a table set up in the narthex.



Blessing of the Animals 2011

After a short service to commemorate St. Francis of Assisi, **Father Kevin Schmidt** and **Mother Kelly Demo** said a blessing prayer over each animal. Francis, the patron saint of animals and the environment, saw the natural world and the creatures in it both “as a gift from God the Creator and as a sign of Christ’s presence.”



Photos/Judy Dutra

PARISH NOTES

Baptisms

Cora Rose Hammond
was baptized on September 25, 2011.
Her parents are
Don and Nancy Hammond.
Her brother is Nicholas.

Deaths

The sympathy of the St. Thomas family is extended to the loved ones of:

Shelton Bilger,
uncle of *Mark Ash.*
Shelton passed away in August 2011;

Jim Sandilos,
husband of *Sue* and
a long-time parishioner,
passed away on August 1, 2011;

Michael Wiltanger,
father of parishioner *Matt Wiltanger.*
Michael passed away
on September 16, 2010;

Dr. Henry “Hank” Stephens
A parishioner, Hank passed away
on September 20, 2011;

Adrienne Adam,
mother of *Jim Adam,*
grandmother of *Blair Adam,*
and great-grandmother of *Abigail,*
Hayden, and *Spencer Adam,*
passed away on September 28, 2011
at the age of 100.

Save This Date!

Our next *Blood Drive* with the American Red Cross will take place on Sunday morning,

December 11, 2011.

During the holidays, donations of blood are always down, so all donations are greatly appreciated.

Save the Date to Save a Life!

Footnotes

Beth L. Elswick, Director of Music Ministries



“It’s beginning to look a lot like Christmas” at least in Walmart, Costco, World Market, and SAM’s. Wait a minute! We have much to do this fall, and it is not even Advent, yet. We have to celebrate a ground breaking, Consecration Day, All Saints, Veteran’s Day, Thanksgiving, Christ the King, and the Hanging of the Greens.

For all of these wonderful occasions we will have wonderful music provided byYOU!

Who? YOU! Who? YOU! Youwho youwho youwho.

**I AM CALLING YOU——YOOOU HOOOO!!!!
Yuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuu!!!!**

Please help . Who? You know who.

WHOOO? You —w h o w h o—how?

We need seasonal help. You can participate for a season, and it will really ease the burden of the choir and praise ensemble who have participated and provided fabulous music throughout the entire summer and fall.

We will need parents who will bring children to rehearsals for the Christmas pageant which will be presented at the family service on Christmas Eve.

We need musicians for special music at the 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. services. This year, we will be performing music from *Handel’s Messiah*. Please join us for our fall rehearsals on Wednesday evenings. Child care is provided. The rehearsals are fun.

Please join in the merry music making.



St. Thomas the Apostle Church
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Holy Communion Services

Saturdays

5:30 Holy Communion

Sundays

8:45 Holy Communion
with praise music & band

9:45 Sunday School/Adult Forum

10:45 Holy Communion
with traditional music

Return Service Requested

The next deadline for
The Apostle
 is **October 30, 2011.**



Nursery now offers Wednesday night hours

We are now offering childcare in our nursery on Wednesday evenings from 7-9 pm for those attending music rehearsals!

The Nursery is available for all children birth through 3 years of age. It is open every Sunday from 8:30-12, and for most all-parish events.

CALENDAR

October:

- 10: *Ben Varnum*, our new assistant priest, joins St. Thomas.
- 22/23: **Youth Fall Camping trip at SM Park**
CONSECRATION WEEKEND, Saturday at 5:30 pm; Sunday at 10 am.
- 29: **Breakfast at St. Paul's, KCKS**
- 30: **BOO BASH at 4 pm**

November:

- 5/6: **All Saints Day celebration**
- 6: **IHN "Inside/Out" Race at Great Mall of the Great Plains**
- 18/20: **Happening #86 for youth held at St. David's, Topeka.**
- 23: **Thanksgiving Day service at 7 pm.**
- 24: **Gobble, Gobble.**
- 27: **Family ADVENTure -- Advent wreath-making, 9:45**

December:

- 10: **IHN Christmas party**
- 11: **Youth group Plaza Lights trip**
Blood Drive at church