

# THE AP STLE

*“Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name, you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us, granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come, life everlasting. Amen.” – Prayer attributed to St. Chrysostom.*

When the disciples gathered around Jesus for the last time before He was crucified, He gave them a gift of a memorial meal. The meal was a simple one — bread and wine and the encouragement that whenever they gathered together, He wanted them to remember him. He said that in some way the bread and wine becomes His body and blood, and that when we have a meal in his remembrance, we become a part of Him. Did you know that each Sunday when we gather we celebrate this meal that we become a part of the Body of Christ?

In much the same way, prayer is becoming a part of God’s being. When we pray to God in meditation, in words, in action, or in silence, we become joined with his Holy Spirit. And better yet, when we gather with others, as St. Chrysostom so eloquently prays, God dwells in the midst of us.

Gathering in simple thanksgiving meals and prayer is the basic element of Christian community. From ancient times, this was the foundation of what the church community is called to be. However, it can’t stop there. We aren’t just a supper club or a group that gathers to meditate.

In the next weeks we celebrate and remember the most significant moments of Jesus’ life, death and resurrection. In those moments we hear the powerful story of how God’s love conquers, even vanquishes the evil powers of the world, and death is overcome. We live in the Easter time when the disciples, empowered by the gifts they had been given, proclaimed the love of God in Christ Jesus.

In the season of Lent, we spend a lot of time thinking and doing something about sin, temptation, reconciliation and prayer. This season calls us to a new kind of being: knowing that God’s grace is abundant and full, and our prayers are being answered—that God is in the midst of us.

Jesus is still giving us the gift of his presence. No matter where you are on your journey, no matter how awful your life seems, no matter how lonely, no matter how dire, Jesus is with you—He is really with you. Even if your life is perfect and things are going well, and you don’t feel you really need God—Jesus is with you.

What an amazing gift he gave us.

Now, what are you going to do with it?

*Blessings,  
GARL*

# Footnotes

Beth L. Elswick, Director of Music Ministries



## Active or Passive?

**Y**ou know the expression. The performer has just amazed us with his or her phenomenal performance, and the host requests, "Let's all *give it up* for \_\_\_\_\_." We smile and respond with an active, rousing physical clapping action accompanied by tumultuous waves of sound. Yet, when we "*give it up* for Lent," the whole process can seem so "passive." I will just simply refrain from doing something. Pretty easy, if you ask me. For some people, Lent can become a season of inactivity.

Not at St. Thomas. We do not even slow down for "Lent." Maybe I should tell the children's choir that Lent means slow, and they are supposed to *walk* into the Nave when it is time for rehearsal. (Well, actually this article is being composed during spring break, and, to be honest, I believe my musicians decided to "*give up* rehearsals" for the week.)

Puns aside, I believe that at St. Thomas we have "*given up*" procrastination for Lent. Maybe we have "*given up*" the fear of the unknown for Lent. As a congregation we are embarking on a journey of growth, hard work, and creativity. We are going to move ahead on projects with enthusiasm, and I am soooooooooo happy.

So for Lent I say, "Let's all *give it up* for our rector, Father Demo, our Vestry and wardens, our teachers, deacon, supporting priests, youth, choir, praise band, children's choir, youth leaders, cantors, floral arranger, janitors, staff, and parishioners."

Most of all, let's all *give it up* for the Lord and have an active Lent.

## Pastoral Care Ministries spotlights The Guild of the Christ Child

**The Guild of the Christ Child** is an on-going and, hopefully, permanent ministry of St. Thomas. For those of you who are not familiar with GCC, we assemble layettes for mothers-in-need. Our layettes are filled with basic needs to get a new mom and her baby through the first few days and weeks of care.

We provide a receiving blanket, a warm blanket or quilt, a daytime outfit, a sleeper, diapers, bibs, bottles, pacifiers, a toy, onesies, caps, and booties. We are funded through donations of monies and baby items. We have two primary fundraisers each year. **Our next opportunity is this coming April 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>.**

We also welcome anyone who would be interested in becoming a part of this vital ministry. Please contact **Tracy Ferren** if you are interested.

**Saturday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> and  
Sunday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> will be the  
Second Annual GCC Baby Shower!**

We will have a table set up  
in the Narthex.

Stop by and enjoy  
a baby shower treat.



## JoCo IHN experiences exciting growth!

**D**uring the past two months, the **Johnson County Interfaith Hospitality Network** has added a new Host congregation and a new support congregation.

*Overland Park Church of Christ* will become our 11<sup>th</sup> Host congregation and will open their doors every eleven weeks so families can stay overnight in their converted classrooms. Recently they had 112 members attend volunteer training, preparing for their first Host week in April.

*St. Andrews Christian Church* is our newest support congregation and will be assigned to a Host congregation. The St. Andrews volunteers will help give support to their Host congregation by providing supplies and food.

These volunteers will attend training in the near future so they can help during evenings, overnights, and doing van driving.

**IHN**, a ministry to situationally homeless families in Johnson County, has a goal of expansion in terms of Host support congregations and volunteers.

Since June 2004, IHN has served 19 single women and 80 families with children, helping a total of 121 adults and 186 kids stabilize and return to independent living.

As a founding member of IHN, St. Thomas helps IHN continue to make a difference for families here in our community.

—Dola McNown



The *Café St. Thomas* Players are surely headed for (way) Off Broadway! From left are: **Steve Brotherson**, **Jerry Snider**, **Tracie Hume**, **Beth Anderson**, and **Spencer Manuel**.

Photos/John McNown

## LIONS, LEOPARDS AND CROCS....OH MY!

If you ever suspected that “It’s a jungle out there,” a short trek through the halls of St. Thomas on February 26<sup>th</sup> proved you right as the incredible *ShaLinda Catering Group* turned the Assembly Room into – AFRICA!

Like Alice and the Looking Glass, attendees crossed the threshold and were suddenly transported from Kansas to Kenya, from the broom closet to Botswana. Everywhere there were lions, giraffes, zebras, rhinos, hippos and mischievous monkeys. With the help of **Nyakio** and **Joe Bob Lake**, many pieces of Kenyan beadwork, jewelry and woodcarving lent an air of authenticity to the room. Others (**John** and **Dola McNown**, **Tracie Hume**, **Meg Cross** and **Gwen**, **Carlene Mischlich**, **Mike** and **Liz Stelhorn** and **Lois**



**Nyakio Lake** explains the significance of African items on display.

**Wohlgemuth**) who had visited various parts of the vastness that is Africa had things to lend such as pictures, statues, and memorabilia to complete table center

pieces that featured well-known African animals.

Of course **Café St. Thomas** is not only a place to feast the eye, but also a place to indulge one’s palate. An exotic and delicious African food smorgasbord was served. The camp crew of *Jan Summers*, *Sue Elliot*, *Linda Manuel*, and *Sharon Moorhead* set a stunning table featuring monkey bread, warthog tails, passion fruit and wildebeest kabobs, crocodile eggs, and South African mango salsa. Nyakio Lake baked a tasty batch of her native Kenyan flatbread, and Meg Cross provided “Nigerian Nuggets” that were as rich as King Solomon’s Mines.

Just as the sated diners eased back ready to tell stories of their adventures, *The Café St. Thomas* Players surprised everyone with a hilarious morality tale of snobbery and retribution.

**Charlotte Brotherson** narrated what can best be described as an African farce called “Ladies First” featuring *Tracie Hume*, *Beth Anderson*, and *Spencer Manuel* as the three girls on safari. Their bickering is short lived as they are eaten by a pride of hungry lions horrifically played by *Steve Brotherson* and *Jerry Snider*. By the end of the play, tears of laughter ran down the cheeks of many in the audience.

Once the entertainment was over, the patrons turned to the serious business of

exchanging the “white elephant gifts” that everyone had brought. The gift exchange turned into the most vicious, animalistic display of the whole day as the more predatory of the group swapped their just-opened gift for one that someone else had picked out earlier.



**Ginger Shields** proudly displays her White Elephant.

**Charlotte Brotherson** snatched the day’s most coveted object, “The American Cow Bird House” away from its third owner. Like the raucous voices of a clan of baboons, howls of disappointment and glee filled the assembly room as Charlotte raced around the room with her prize triumphantly held aloft.

With that, it was back out into the Kansas cold with only warm African memories and Father Gar’s pictures on Facebook to remind us of the wonderful morning safari with **Sharon Moorhead** and **Linda Manuel** as our guides through the jungle at *Café St. Thomas*.

by **John McNown, Jr.**

# The YOUTH GROUP Bulletin Board

## *Shrove Tuesday Pancake fundraiser supports summer mission trip*



Photos/Father Gar

### **Puerto Rico Mission Trip**

You might have heard little mumblings here and there that the youth will be taking a trip to Puerto Rico this summer. Well, we are! We will be doing mission work in Ponce, Puerto Rico the last week of July.

Our work will consist of doing home repair in the morning and helping those who cannot otherwise afford the repairs left from hurricane damage. In the afternoon, we will be teaching Vacation Bible School to the neighborhood children. We will be staying at a church event center where we will eat together with other youth groups from all over the United States. We will also have our evening program there.

Nine youth and six adults have signed up to go on this journey, and we will need to raise over \$15,000 to be able to take the trip with our group. Our fundraiser Pancake Feed put over \$2000 into our coffers. Thank you for your generosity!

We still have some fundraising to do. Follow our progress and pray that our youth will be able to have this experience.

They did it again! Our youth group's annual Pancake Feed was well-attended and raised \$2000 for the summer mission trip to Puerto Rico. The photo on the left shows a huge gathering of parishioners chowing down on yummy pancakes and sausages. **Carson Ferren** (in photo below) awaits her turn to wait tables along with **Keanu Sida**, **Rachel Haley**, and **Kit Bradley**. Applause, applause to **Katie Knoll Lenon** and her youth crew for this outstanding event!



### **Puerto Rican Benefit Dinner**

Join our Mission Trip team on **Sunday, May 1<sup>st</sup>** for a traditional Puerto Rican meal and entertainment. We will start at 6 pm and the youth will be serving you. Stay tuned for more specifics and mark your calendars. This is a night you won't want to miss!

### **Arts Camp**

This is a new program coming to St. Thomas this summer. It will give your child a chance to experience a variety of arts such as singing, creative writing, acting, cartoon writing, fly fishing, movement, nature walks and more! **Beth Elswick** will be directing this camp and enlisting other talented people from our community to lead each class. This camp is open to our children grades K-5<sup>th</sup> and will occur daily from June 13<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>, 8 am to 3 pm. The children will bring a sack lunch to enjoy mid-day. The cost is \$100 per child.



# Looking ahead to a wheelbarrow load of activities for spring and summer.

Ann Clements, Director of Childrens' Ministries

**O**ur Winter Blues Party—back by popular demand—was a huge success! See photos on following page. We made a few changes this year, mainly starting our morning at 8:45 with a special children's worship service, and celebrating fun and friendship during our regular education hour. A delicious continental breakfast was served, and we read Eric Carle's *Walter the Baker*, a great story about how pretzels came into existence. Our party was held on the Sunday before Lent began, so we also learned all about the pretzel and its significance as a special Lenten food.

**We are busy with a number of offerings this spring for children and all of St. Thomas:**

**Sunday Supper and Study.** This is a family-oriented program held during each week in Lent through April 10<sup>th</sup>. It begins with a meal and continues with programs for all ages. Children will share in some special outreach activities with the youth, while adults have their own study time. Then the youth will break out into their own group, while kids and their parents take a prayer journey. There will be presentation from our youth ensemble and children's choir with **Beth Elswick** as well. All preschoolers through 5<sup>th</sup> graders and their families are encouraged to join us each Sunday beginning at 5:30.

**Celebration Sunday, May 1.** Join us as we ring in the wonderful Easter season during the education hour. We'll begin in our classrooms with our annual Easter Egg hunt and continental breakfast at 10:15. A special reception honoring all our school graduates will be held after the 10:45 am service.

## SUMMER PROGRAMS—SAVE THE DATES!

**MEGA Camp**, our diocesan summer camp, for those entering grades 4-12. *June 5-11*

This is a week filled with wonderful opportunities and activities that starts on Sunday, June 5 at Camp Wood, a YMCA camp in Elmdale, Kansas. We stay in cabins or platform tents all week and our meals are eaten in a comfy lodge. The daily program is geared towards each of the three separate age groups. There are many activities to do in the afternoon such as swimming, using the water slide, tower climbing, horseback riding, hiking, crafting, sports, and much more. The cost for this mega camp is \$390 per youth and registration forms are available on the youth bulletin board or on the diocesan website [www.episcopal-ks.org/youth](http://www.episcopal-ks.org/youth).

**Arts Camp** with Beth Elswick, grades K-5. *June 13-17, 8 am-3 pm*. This program is described on the Youth page.

**Summer Sunday School**, begins June 19 and continues each week through July.

**ReachingOut to the Community**, is a week of mission projects for those children in grades 3-5, from *June 20-24, 8 am-5 pm*. A second week for older youth will be held from *July 11-15, same time*. Both are directed by **Katie Knoll Lenon**.

**This year we will be offering ROTC twice!** Our first session will be from June 20<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> for our 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> graders, and our second will be from July 11<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> for our 6<sup>th</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup> graders. We start the day driving to our worksite; worksites in the past have included *Heart to Heart*, and *Kansas City Community Kitchen*. Afternoon activities include putt-putt golf, bumper boats, a pool party, going to the Zoo, and movies. We also have a special celebration on Friday. For the younger kids, it will be at Zonkers; for older youth, we'll celebrate at Worlds of Fun. St. Thomas church will open at 7:30 am and we will return to the church for pickup between 5 to 5:30 pm. Adult volunteers help to transport the children and youth around town. The cost is \$100 per youth. **Summer Registration** is available on the St. Thomas website: [www.stthomasop.org](http://www.stthomasop.org).

**ReNew, the Green VBS**, for those in grades PreK-5 will occur *July 10-14 in the evenings*. **Kelly Demo** and **Emily Barnes** are co-directors this year. We are excited to put our stewardship talents to good use again with ReNew!

**We've created a booklet with all of our summer children/youth offerings that includes a registration form for all of these programs. These are available in the office, in the narthex, or call Katie or Ann if you need one.**

# Sunday School kids lead church on day of Winter Blues party!



They were greeters.



They were choir members.



They were lecturers.



They were Lay Ministers.



They learned yoga poses.



They worked well as a team.

## Three St. Thomas members honored for work at St. Paul's Food Pantry

**Rick Bush, Donna Fye and Kim Palmer** were honored at Stone Soup on March 1, 2011 with Certificate(s) of Appreciation for their volunteer work for the Pantry, going back to 2007.

Rick and Donna pretty much designed the current pantry layout on St. Paul's lower level; this area had been unused for some time before that, and Donna was in charge from the move on February 2008 until August 31, 2008 when she departed to go back to work. **Deacon Gail Reynolds** is now in charge of the Pantry.

Kim was the Volunteer Coordinator for the Pantry for a few months, then hired for the church office upstairs until she left for an HR job.

The fact that these three knew each other was important since the relationship synergy added significantly to their efforts for the Pantry.

In addition, Rick also volunteered for the building at St. Paul's taking his own crews there to replace light bulbs and do other essential repairs.

Rick and Kim have now retired from St. Paul's; Donna continues to volunteer for the Pantry by ordering from Harvesters and comes in on second Saturdays with St. Thomas' group.



**Donna Fye, Kim Palmer, and Rick Bush** proudly hold their Certificates of Appreciation presented to them recently at a meeting of Stone Soup. The current rector of St. Paul's, The Reverend Dixie Junk, stands behind them. *Photo and story courtesy of Deacon Gail Reynolds.*

### St. Thomas youth win medals in Special Olympics!



Olympians **Morgen Diaz** (above) and **Eric Kling** (right) took home Gold and Silver medals in skiing, cross country skiing, and snow shoe racing at the recent Winter Special Olympics! Congratulations to both of you!



*Photos/Father Gar*

### Parish Notes

#### Baptisms

**Aron Robert Baggenstoss**, son of *Robert and Leslie Baggenstoss* was baptized on Feb. 13, 2011

#### Deaths

The sympathy of the St. Thomas parish is extended to:

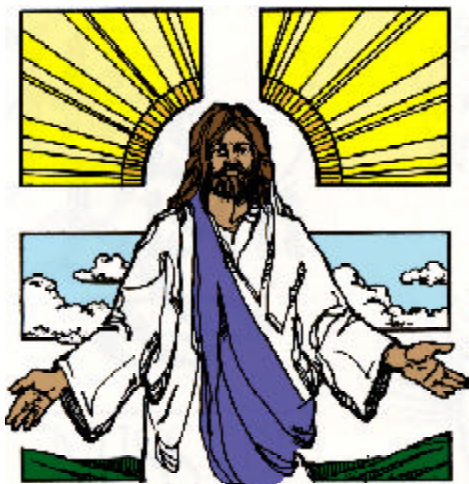
**Don Harkins**  
on the death of his father, *Donald*;

**The Sommer family**  
on the death of their son  
*Francis D. Sommer*;

**Becky Rimmer**  
on the passing of her father, *Ralph Allen*;

**Mark Ash**  
on the death of his grandmother  
*Marge Mulrey*;

**Pat Seiler**  
on the death of her mother *Ann Widmann*.



*"Why do you look for the living among the dead?  
He is not here but has risen."  
Lk 24:5*

## Holy Week Services

### Palm Sunday, April 17

Services at 5:30 pm Saturday,  
and 8:45 am and 10:45 am on Sunday.

### Tenebrae Service, April 20, 7 pm

A meditative service that includes  
lessons, chants and Psalms

### Maundy Thursday, April 21, 7 pm

### Good Friday, April 22

Stations of Cross at noon  
Good Friday liturgy at 7 pm

### Holy Saturday/Easter Vigil, April 23

Holy Communion and Baptism at 7 pm  
Please contact Father Gar  
if you wish to have your child baptized.

## EASTER SUNDAY

Services at 6 am, 8:45 am, and 10:45 am



### THE APOSTLE

St. Thomas the Apostle Church  
12251 Antioch Road  
Overland Park, KS 66213  
• phone: 913-451-0512 •  
• fax: 913-451-1966 •

Non-Profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Shawnee Mission, KS  
PERMIT NO. 82

Return Service Requested

The next deadline for  
**The Apostle**  
is **May 15, 2011**



The Apostle is a publication of St. Thomas the Apostle Episcopal Church which is located at 12251 Antioch Road, Overland Park, KS 66213. This newsletter is published on an irregular basis. This current issue is Vol. 22, number 2. Our email address is [stthomas@stthomasop.org](mailto:stthomas@stthomasop.org). Our staff includes: **The Rev. Gar Demo, Priest**; **The Rev. Kevin Schmidt, Assisting Priest**; **Barbara Adam, Deacon**; **Beth Elswick, DMA, Director of Music**; **Katie Knoll Lenon, Director of Youth Ministries and Small Groups**; **Ann Clements, Director of Children's Ministries**; **Meribeth Risebig, Parish Administrator**; and **Rosemary Abbott, Editor of The Apostle**; **Jean Adam, proofreader and bulk mail coordinator**. All articles are edited for space as well as clarity. Email editor at [rnrse71@kc.rr.com](mailto:rnrse71@kc.rr.com).