

THE AP STLE

A Year of Discernment and of Moving Forward

“Waiting has been a theme for the last few years. Waiting for a new rector, waiting for the right time for a building... waiting for a second priest, waiting for the mortgage to be paid off. You get the idea.”

St. Thomas is filled with faithful and committed members who take seriously our call to “Come, Grow, Serve and Make a Difference.” This last week was the 5th Annual Meeting that I had the honor of serving as your Rector. In some ways, it seems that more years have past, but in other ways, it seems like I am still new. This last year we spent a great deal of time in discernment and study of our needs as a community as we move into the next years of our life together.

Waiting has been a theme of the last few years—waiting for a new rector, waiting for the right time for a building, waiting for new space to do the things we are called to do, waiting to get a better organ, waiting for a second priest, waiting for mortgage to be paid off. You get the idea.

So what are we waiting for? Last December, it was suggested that St. Thomas consider paying off the large mortgage early. After some discussion, the vestry and I decided to embark on a quiet campaign. To date over \$170,000 has been paid on the mortgage and just over \$65,000 is now owed. All of you will get a request to help us pay this off by Pentecost, so we can “burn” the mortgage.

The vestry asked you to consider increasing your giving so we could hire some needed staff. We have included in this year’s budget a new position for an assisting priest. Hopefully by the fall, we will be able to have someone in place.

In addition, we need to increase our ministry. There is a yearning to have something that is our own. There are growing needs in Johnson County. I’m challenging the Outreach committee to increase our outreach and consider opening a “Next-to-New shop” or a clothing pantry. We don’t have the space, but by thinking outside the box, can we take the risk and rent some open space?

The staff is challenged to come up with excellent offerings for our youth and children. This summer in addition to our VBS, ROTC and other programs, we will be sending youth on a mission trip to Puerto Rico, and will be adding an Arts and Music Camp for elementary students. We have great talent at our church. We need to be doing more for our children and youth formation.

The Long Range Planning committee (and now the Architect Committee) have listened to the requests of our individual members, teams, and committees and are presenting you with a master site plan and a suggested Phase I plan for consideration for a possible capital campaign. [Ed. note: see plans on page 3.]

During the month of February, the congregation is being asked to let us know if you can support this and if we have a good plan. There will also be an organ committee looking into ways to improve our organ.

At our meeting each person was given a pebble. That pebble is meant to help us remember that while we work to expand and grow our congregation, we are called to be a community of faith and outreach to those around us. If we remember to keep Jesus and our calling in our midst, the fruits will be great. I asked that you carry the pebble so that we can all remember what we are truly called to be as a community. We have much that God has called us to become.

*Blessings,
GARL*

Footnotes

Beth L. Elswick, Director of Music Ministries

“Look, Mom. I’m on TV”



Did you know that to produce **five** minutes of music that can be performed well consistently, it takes hours of preparation? The “performed well consistently” is the catch. In the preparation stage, the piece may sound great at the end of the rehearsal only to be “so-so” at the beginning of the next rehearsal if the kids have not been together for a week. Since it takes a while to prepare a piece of music, it dawned on me that our children needed to have more than one opportunity to share the five-minute work that took ten hours to prepare. The music at the pageant was fun, and it was the result of many, many hours of work for many people. I wish that it had been recorded.

The youth musicians have been invited to create a musical offering for the patients at St. Luke’s Hospital. Father Marshall Scott has suggested that we perform our musical works in their chapel. He will film the pieces, and the patients can watch the show that we create. In this way, our kids will get more mileage from the works that they prepare. In addition to contributing to our Sunday morning worship and Lenten Holy Week services, the kids’ musical program will be recorded for the patients in the hospital to enjoy.

I am looking for singers and instrumentalists who would like to help with this project. PLEASE CONTACT BETH ELSWICK OR KATIE KNOLL LENON IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HELP. The youth are such fun. They have energy and enthusiasm that is contagious. Their vitality is one of the great reasons why St. Thomas is alive and thriving. Parents, thank you for taking the time and effort to bring your children to church.

The youth are not the only ones who can communicate energy. The congregation on Sunday morning can audibly send messages of vitality and health, or messages of “I’m too tired to sing. I think I will just sit this one out.” To that end, I am asking that the congregation truly “Lift up your voice.” Be honest when you respond, “We lift them up to the Lord.”

Singing requires an investment of physical energy. I am sure that if you inhale deeply in order to produce a healthy vocal sound, it requires that you use more energy. The choral sound of the entire congregation is invigorated. “Make a joyful noise.” Inhale deeply. Use your air. Please do. (You even burn more calories so that you do not feel guilty about nibbling on the goodies after worship.) I think I will market this as “The Rite Snack.”

The season of Lent officially begins on March 9th, Ash Wednesday. We have wonderful services to prepare. The kinds of music the choir and band can perform are determined by the numbers of people who are willing to participate. As our numbers increase, so does the opportunity for more creative music and liturgy. Please check your calendar and try to squeeze a few hours of time to join us on Wednesday evenings.

Finally, we look forward to summer. In addition to Vacation Bible School and ROTC, St. Thomas is going to offer an arts camp for children in the 1st–5th grades. The camp is currently in the planning stages, and we hope to offer a daytime experience that will include visual arts, music, creative writing, liturgical dance, improvisational drama, and even fly tying. Might be worth recording!

New Vestments given in memory of Altar Guild member

Susan Miller, Sacristan

Sadly, this year we lost a 19-year member of the Altar Guild with the passing of **Barbara Allison**.

The Altar Guild and others who contributed memorial funds for Barbara purchased a beautiful set of vestments and hangings in the Red Coronation pattern.

This set was first used for Christmas in 2010 and will also be used for funerals in the future.

OTHER NEWS:

This year we are opening up membership in the Altar Guild to members of both genders age 15 and up!

Congratulations to our newly elected Vestry members

Weldon Fate
Jack Dutra
Holly Farkes
Jason Barnes

2011 Lenten Booklet needs material

Editor, writer, and compiler **Kelly Demo** is requesting your stories for the upcoming Lenten Booklet. Just give her your ideas and let her write up the story.

This year’s focus is: *When has God used the sacrament of Friendship to touch your life?*

In other words, *when has God worked through friendship to change your life or a friend’s life?*

Send your ideas to Kelly at either kellydemo@aol.com or call 499-1159. **She needs your ideas by February 20, 2011.**

Gould-Evans presents preliminary design for church expansion

Building Committee Annual Report

—Weldon Fate, chairman—

[Ed. note: What follows is an edited version of this report.]

The Building Committee has met with **Gould-Evans** (the architect firm selected) on a monthly basis. Along with the architect in charge, **Dennis Strait**, our committee met with the various ministries to review their needs and hopes for the future. We also invited the architects to the Town Hall Meeting held December 1st.

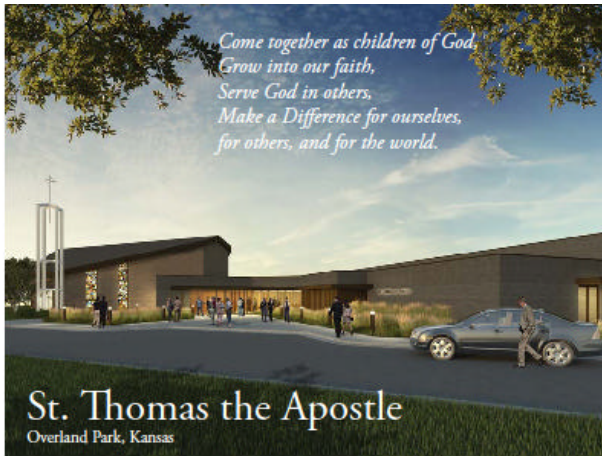
At the Town Hall Meeting, the architects revealed three possible schemes for the Master Plan that they are developing, and the congregation was given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments about the three schemes which were named: “Pair,” “Two Story,” and “Cloister.” The names briefly described the layouts of future additions. The majority of the parishioners in attendance voted for a combination of “Pair” and “Cloister.”

At the Annual Meeting, the architects presented a Phase I floor plan and colored rendering of the exterior view of the new addition (see accompanying diagrams). They also presented the future Master Plan.

As a committee, we came to the realization that we could not afford all the space needs that the various ministries asked for in our Long Range Planning interviews. Once we get an indication from our Capitol Campaign, we will be able to fulfill the most immediate needs in our new building. The Master Plan (see diagram) shows what the St. Thomas campus will look like when completed. Please note that this plan shows revised parking and approaches to the church.

As a committee, we appreciate all the input that has been given us by the parish. We know that we will be proud of our new addition when it is completed.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the members of our Building Committee—*Jim Birkhead, Andy Carter, Brent Ferren, Karen Leftwich, John McCall, and Gary Summers*— for their hard work.



Master Plan and Phase 1 Planning

Our Shared Vision

At the annual Retreat in 2010, the Vestry identified the following opportunities for continued growth at St. Thomas:

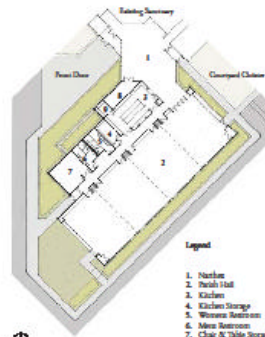
- Address Staffing/Clergy needs
- Improve communication
- Address physical space
- Grow and enhance existing ministries
- Expand Community Outreach
- Introduce new ministries
- Support Youth programs and other Christian education needs

Combining the opportunities identified by the Vestry, the strengths determined by the Mutual Ministry Review, and the priorities established by the parish in the Long Range Planning Questionnaire, a clear vision for the future of St. Thomas has emerged and has been captured in our master plan. The master plan illustrates the potential for our congregation on this site, making the best use of the land we have available.

Phase 1

The first phase of our master plan will allow us to:

- expand our narthex, the central gathering space for our community and our first impression space for visitors,
- build a new parish hall to accommodate all church functions and provide flexible meeting space,
- replace and expand our kitchen to make it more functional for meal preparation and serving,
- free up space in the existing building to provide an office for an assistant rector,
- provide new and accessible restrooms,
- provide additional space for the sacristy,
- increase storage space in the building, and
- provide additional parking spaces and an improved access drive off of 123rd Street.



Phase 1 - Floor Plan

The Master Plan

Beyond Phase One, the master plan allows for further expansion of the building for:

- additional nursery and education spaces,
- an expanded choir and music rehearsal space, and
- additional parking.



Phase 1 Site Plan



Master Plan Site Plan

GouldEvans

Dennis Strait from Gould-Evans discusses preliminary plans with the congregation at our December 1, 2010 Town Hall meeting. Photo/Dutras



Pastoral Care Ministries serves many needs

Pastoral Care Ministries offers many opportunities to grow by doing as God has asked us to do...serve others. We serve by delivering a home-cooked meal, taking communion to the homebound, giving newborns and their mothers a bag full of necessary items to assist with the first couple of weeks, by transporting those in need to doctors' appointments, by making hospital visits, and by offering assistance through *Starting Points*. We offer free training and growth through our seminars.

In this **The Apostle** edition, the focus is on our *Eucharistic Visitors* ministry, a wonderful and caring group of people who deliver communion to parishioners in the hospital, to those recovering at home, and to the dying. They keep the homebound in touch with our congregation through communion, conversation, and prayer. It is a blessing to both.

By letting members who cannot be with us at church know they are remembered and that they are being prayed for and loved is another important part of this ministry.

For the past five years, **Sally Morris** has chaired this group; she has been an outstanding leader.

If you desire to become a part of this enriching ministry, or if you are in need of a communion visit, please contact the church office.

Pastoral Care Ministries has a number of interesting events happening in 2011.

The first one will be our *Spring Seminar* which we be held on Saturday, March 5th from 9 am until noon, it will be on Prayer. Please join us! There will be a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the church hallway.

In April, *The Guild of the Christ Child* will have its annual **All-Parish Baby Shower**. There will be more information about this important event in future *Tower Talks* and in **The Apostle** newsletter.

Everyone is welcome to join one of our ministries: *Eucharistic Visitors*, *St. Martha's Guild*, *Transportation*, *Guild of the Christ Child*, and/or *Visiting Ministries*. We work quietly assisting when a need arises.

Please call to become an important part of our amazing ministries. You will be an invaluable member of Pastoral Care.

Blessings,

Susan Strom

PCM Team Leader

Sixth annual IHN Holiday Party welcomed 91 guests

St. Thomas hosted the sixth annual IHN Christmas Party on Saturday, December 11, 2010. As usual, this congregation showed such generosity to our IHN families. We hosted 91 guests at the party. This number includes current IHN guests as well as graduates of the program.

We are grateful to those who donated gifts, gift cards, food for the lunch, items for the kid's store, money for the party and their time as volunteers.

I would especially like to thank: **Dola McNown, Donna Fye, Suzanne Hicks, Steve Leftwich, Bill Kidder, Dan & Donna Kopp, Ann Clements, Kay Childress, Diane Baxley, Tracie Hume, Cheryl Wichman, Debbie Lang, Linda Manuel, and Sharon Moorhead**. Very special thanks to Santa and Mrs. Claus (**Jerry & Connie Snider**) for making an appearance and posing for pictures with the kids. We can't forget to thank our ever faithful elf/photographer, **John McNown**, and **Don Fye** for printing the pictures.

'Til next year's party,

Jean Adam, Party coordinator



Photo above right shows the kitchen staff: from left, **Jan Summers, Jack Dutra, Donna Young, Lucky Hicks, and Steve Leftwich**. Left photo has **Suzanne Hicks and Dola McNown** preparing their welcoming table. *Photo/Jean Adam*



Small Group Ministry offers Bible Study to all parishioners

Katie Knoll Lenon, Director of Small Group Ministries

Our Small Group ministry has taught us as participants that making room for a Small Group study of the scripture is a great gift. At St. Thomas, we have many groups that have Bible study together. For instance, there are our Small Groups, our Agape Groups, our Dinner Groups, Bible Study Groups, and more.

But putting together a study can be somewhat daunting. The Small Group ministry is offering our families and groups that meet within and outside of the church a monthly Bible study. You can find cards with suggestions/reflections on them below the Small Group bulletin board just inside the entrance. It would be a great tool to use for a reflection before gathering for a meal or before an event. Pick one up and try it out with your small group of family and/or friends.

Let us know what you think by emailing Director **Katie Knoll Lenon** at kklenon@stthomasop.org.



Small Groups Listings

Journeyman

Meets at 6:30 pm on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of every month at the Dutra household. This is a group for couples. They are currently studying the Apostle Paul, and they are involved in preparing emergency bags and with Blue Valley Ministries.

Contacts: Jack Dutra at 851-4860 or Judy Dutra at 851-8217

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Meets at 7:30 pmon the 1st Monday of the month and the 3rd Saturday of the month at 9:30 am. Both times they meet in room 137 at St. Thomas.

Contacts: Linda Manuel at 438-7407 and Sharon Moorhead at 851-1899

“Coffee with a Hint of Christ”

Meets from 9-10:30 am on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday each month at St. Thomas. This group is currently involved with the BackSnack program.

Contact: Jean Adam at 402-4392 (home) or at 530-9097 (cell)

“Classics” Men’s Group

Meets at 7 pm on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month at St. Thomas. This group is made up of retired and semi-retired men of St. Thomas.

Contacts: Craig Christie at 544-1031 and Fred Roberts at 402-9813

“Tweens” Couples Group

Meets on Wednesday nights twice a month. They also get together once a month for a social outing and to try new places and new things! This group is made up of those parents who are or will soon be empty nesters—sort of in a **between** state.

Contact: Donna Kopp at 856-5798

New Group: Dinner and Recipe Swapping Group

Meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. They gather together at one person’s house to share a meal and swap recipes. Even if you think you don’t have any original recipes of your own, just remember that it only takes a pinch of something more or a bit of something less to make it your own.

Contact: Jenne Weil at 492-4835



The YOUTH GROUP Bulletin Board

YOUTH Lenten Program

For the 2011 Lenten Season, we are offering our YOUTH and their families, a Sunday evening program similar to the one we offered in December for the season of Advent. We discussed this idea with our Children and Youth Commission and came up with the plan to offer three to four mission or outreach workshops for our children and youth ages pre-K through 12th graders and their parents.

We are presently considering four projects for this session:

1) putting together a musical group that can provide music to the congregation during Holy Week, 2) provide music hospitals and nursing homes, 3) help God's creatures in animal shelters by providing toys and clean environments, and 4) helping with the various feeding ministries to which St. Thomas is very committed.

Our **Sunday evening** schedule will be as follows: from 5:30–6 pm: *Potluck dinner*, from 6–6:45 pm: *Outreach workshop* time, and from 6:45–7:30 pm: *classroom time*. **The program lasts 5 weeks from March 13th to April 10th.**

Each of our children will be able to pick a project to work on, and our youth will help them accomplish these goals. We also encourage our parents to stay and get involved in a project.

Agape Meal at our Maundy Thursday Service

This year the youth would like to serve you again during this contemplative service. We will have a simple meal with food that all ages can enjoy; bread, cheese, grapes, and soup. The service will begin at 7 pm. The dinner will take the place of the traditional Eucharistic meal. Please consider donating a crock-pot of soup for this enjoyable evening. Sign up is in the hall. For more information contact **Katie Knoll Lenon** at either 451-0512 or via email kklenon@stthomasop.org

Mission Trip: Puerto Rico

The St. Thomas youth ministry program will be taking a group of youth, parents and adults to Puerto Rico in July 2011. There we will be helping to repair homes damaged in the recent hurricanes and floods. We'll work in the morning, and in the afternoon, we will have an opportunity to participate in Vacation Bible School at the church where we will be staying in Ponce. The cost is around \$15,000 for us to take a group of 15. We are looking forward to planning and having fundraising opportunities before we head off on July 24, 2011.

Pancake Feed Fundraiser!

Shrove Tuesday occurs on March 8th this year and our doors will open at 6 pm for an evening of fun, scrumptious food, and laughter. For your enjoyment, our band will play ragtime and jazz and get you in a festive mood. Don't miss out on this very fun evening! There will be table favors for adults and prizes for our younger kids.

A free will donation will be requested with funds supporting the summer Mission Trip to Puerto Rico.

Summer Schedule and Activities

SAVE THESE DATES! **

MEGA Camp

for those in entering 4th grade to graduated seniors
from June 5th to 11th

Reaching Out to the Community

for 3rd-5th graders
from June 20th to 24th all day!

Vacation Bible School

for Pre-K through 5th graders
July 10th to 15th evening sessions

Reaching Out to the Community

for 6th to 8th graders
from July 11th to 15th all day!

Missionpalooza

for those entering grades 9th to 12th
July 19th to 24th

This involves staying overnight at St. Paul's KCMO.

Puerto Rico Mission Trip

for those entering grades 9th through 12th
from July 23rd to 30th

For more information and registration packets, please go to our website, www.stthomasop.org and click on the **Youth Page.

Parents' Night Out

Our last **Parents' Night Out** for the season will occur on
March 5, 2011 from 6–11 pm.



Our popular Sunday School always mixes learning with fun!

Ann Clements, Director of Children's Ministries

With the doldrums settling in after another crazy, snowy season, our Winter Party is back by popular demand! On Sunday, March 6th—the last Sunday before Lent begins—we are planning an awesomely-fun day for our church school kids.

The 8:45 worship service will be a Children's Eucharist, complete with a children's sermon, great music, and lots of participation from our youngsters. Immediately after, during the education hour, preschoolers through 5th graders are invited to a great party feast where we will dine, play some games, and learn a bit about Lenten traditions. This party is hosted by our Sunday School teachers especially for the purpose of promoting fellowship and fun among our kids. More information will be available soon.

Since we had a wonderful turnout for our Advent Sunday night program, we will be gathering each Sunday evening in Lent, beginning March 13, for more intergenerational activities. With an emphasis on outreach, we'll join forces—adults, youth, and children—on some special projects helping our hunger ministry and animal outreach, to name a few. Music and prayer exploration will be offered, along with St. Thomas' favorite activity, supper. Details are available on our website, in *Tower Talk*, and on the bulletin board.

Some important dates for you to note

May 1—CELEBRATION SUNDAY!

Join us for our annual **Easter Egg hunt** during the education hour, followed by a continental breakfast in the assembly room. A reception will also be held for all high school and college graduates (and others!) after the 10:45 service in the narthex.

May 22—Last Day of Sunday School

June 19—Summer Sunday School

begins and continues through July 31st.

July 10-14—VBS!

ReNew-A Green VBS was such a hit last summer that we want to try it again in 2011. Volunteer recruiting will begin soon, and we'll announce our plea for donated materials as our planning progresses. Registration forms will be available after Easter.

As you read this, I'm hoping the sun is shining and spring is trying to show itself. If it is snow you see outside your window, say a thankful prayer—if for no other reason than for our beautiful Kansas winters.



THANK YOU TO OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS

Letter from Anglican/Episcopal priest in Egypt sheds light on the current turmoil

[Ed. Note: St. Thomas parishioners, **Gerry and Susan Miller** and their children lived in Egypt from 1990-1993. It was at this time that they met four other Episcopalian adults who banded together to ask the Anglican Bishop to allow them to reopen the Anglican/Episcopal church, The Church of St. John the Baptist in Maadi. The church was originally built in the 1940s by the British. They felt there was a need for an alternative to the Catholic Church and also the ecumenical service that was held in the church still owned by the Diocese. Their first priest was an ex-Roman Catholic priest who added his family of four to their ranks. They diligently scrubbed the church clean and rescued the communion set and linens. By then, they had a retired Australian Air Force chaplain leading services, followed by an Australian, an Irishman and a local Brit. When they left in '93, there were 25 members of the church. Sometime in the mid-90s, Paul-Gordon Chandler, who had spent many years in the Middle East and Africa, and his family were called to St. John's. Since that time, he has shepherded the congregation to an average of 135 people at services, a full youth program, scout troop and all the amenities of an Episcopal church. When the Millers returned to the USA, they were instrumental in getting St. Thomas and the Bishop of Kansas to spiritually support St. John's. Individual parishioners also made contributions for prayer books that were sent to Egypt, and that relationship is very important to them today. The Millers feel humbled and blessed to have been a part of this rebirth and the introduction of our two congregations. Currently a Coptic Christian Congregation, a Korean Church, and the ecumenical church share the same place. Reverend Chandler believes in promoting education and respect among all faiths. *This background information provided by Susan Miller.*]

January 5, 2011

Dear friends,

Hello from Cairo. Many of you have heard of the recent terrorist suicide bombing at a church here in Egypt and have written us wanting to learn more about the situation as well as concerned.

On New Year's Eve, just after midnight, a bomb exploded outside a church in Alexandria, Egypt just as worshipers were beginning to leave the church. 21 were instantly killed (four others died later) and more than 90 were seriously wounded.

Since the terrible explosion last October in a Catholic Church in Baghdad, El-Qaeda terrorists in Iraq have threatened to attack churches in Egypt as well. Despite increased security by Egyptian police at the more than 3000 churches in Egypt, with thousands of worshippers entering and exiting services, it is humanly impossible to prevent ill-intentioned incidents like that in Alexandria on New Year's Eve.

Due to the media showing quite horrific pictures of those who were killed in the attack, many frustrated Christians across the county took to the streets in anger and significant violence. Many have a sense that they are discriminated against as a minority, and the incidents of attacks on Christians in the past few years, and the general economic crisis, all have built up frustration which, when sparked by this tragedy, finally erupted.

All church leaders are distressed by the violence and anger expressed by

mobs of "so-called Christians" around the country at this time and have been working hard to calm and restrain this mob reaction, which is against the spirit of forgiveness and peace.

Also, the majority of Muslims have expressed deep sorrow about what happened in Alexandria. Last night, Thursday, the night of Feast of the Epiphany (January 6th), the Coptic Christians across Egypt celebrated Eastern Christmas. While many people were afraid, church attendance this Christmas Eve was most probably greater than ever before.

Also, there is a considerable movement throughout Egypt among Muslims to stand in solidarity with the Christians at this time, and many Muslims therefore attended the services with Christians, to show unity with them and to send a message to terrorists that if they attack churches they will be harming Muslims as well as Christians.

Christmas Eve is also the time when the Muslim government officials (Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers, City officials) attend services with Christians to share with them in their feast. Hundreds of Muslim government officials were at Coptic churches last night.

To help give some context, here is a little overview of the situation of Christians in Egypt. The Christian minority (up to 12%) in Egypt is unique in that it represents a remnant of the original Egyptians (descendents of the pharaohs). In spite of the discrimination

felt by many Christians here, and in spite of the many limitations they experience and the perception of some that they are "second class" citizens, many Christian business persona have thrived with the new free market economy brought in by President Sadat in the early seventies, and it is estimated that they now control nearly 30% of Egypt's wealth.

Many churches in Egypt are flourishing with plans to expand their facilities to accommodate the growing numbers of weekly worshipers. In spite of the great difficulty in getting permission to build new churches, many new church buildings are opened every year. And Christian ministries of all sorts are also booming, with expanded programs and modern facilities to help accomplish their activities.

So while often Christians in Egypt experience hardship as a minority, they are nevertheless a thriving community.

One of the primary challenges at this time is the escalating tension within the country between the vocal advocates of

Continued on page 9



The Chandler family
Paul-Gordon, Lynne, Britelle, and Treston

Continued from page 8

an Islamic State (which would undoubtedly be more restrictive than at present) and the majority moderate Muslims and Christians who are working peacefully within the present legal system for a more balanced democracy which respects human rights for all.

In response to this tragedy, coalitions are being formed between the faith communities and actions are being planned to seek ways to increase solidarity, to bring greater peace to the nation and to ensure full citizenship be applied to all Egyptians.

Our hearts go out to all those who were affected by the terrorist attack in front of the church on New Year's Eve. And we grieve with them the loss of lives and heightened sense of fear in Egypt.

We personally feel very safe. Our church now has many machined-gunned security forces in front of it that have been sent by the government to protect us, for which we are grateful.

Times such as these remind us of one of the main reasons we are here in Cairo at St. John's Church.... building bridges of peace, understanding and friendship between Muslims and Christians through our work at St. John's and all its various interfaith projects.

For example, in the wake of this suicide bombing, we will be hosting our interfaith *CARAVAN Festival of the Arts* to be held in early February, —with the goal of building bridges between Muslims and Christians, through the visual arts, literature, film and music. It will be held our church and officially opened by the Grand Imam of Al Azhar in Cairo, the intellectual and spiritual heart of Sunni Islam.

We thank God for your concern and support, and treasure your prayers for Egypt, for our church, and for us all at this time. It has been some time since we sent you a photo of our family. Therefore please find attached a photo taken this last Christmas.

Warmly,

Paul-Gordon Chandler
Rev. Canon Paul-Gordon Chandler
Rector, St. John's Church-Maadi
Cairo, Egypt

www.paulgordonchandler.com
www.maadichurch.org

The 2010 STA Vestry thanks you for your support this past year and wishes you a very Merry Christmas and Happy 2011!



The 2010 Vestry includes: Top row from left, **Bob Beeler** (Junior Warden), **Ron Weil**, **John McCall**, **Father Gar**, **Jeff Rapp**, **Kim Palmer**, and **Emily Barnes**. Seated from left: **Karen Leftwich**, **Judy Dutra**, and **Holly Farkes**. Bottom row from left, **Brian Geary**, **Sue Elliott** (Senior Warden), **Jan Summers**, and **Deb McArthur**. Photo/Judy Dutra

Parish Notes

Births

Congratulations to
Robert and Leslie Baggenstoss
who became the proud parents of
ARON ROBERT BAGGENSTOSS
on December 21, 2010.

Baptisms

We welcomed into the household of God
the following:
DOMINIQUE SOFIA HARKINS,
daughter of
Jason and Evelyn Harkins
on December 26, 2010.

CHLOE RENEE HONAKER,
daughter of
Drew and Amanda Honaker,
and granddaughter of
Jack and Marcia Honaker.
Chloe was baptized on
January 16, 2011.

Deaths

The St. Thomas family extends its
deepest sympathy to:

the family and loved ones of
DAN FRACKOWIAK
who passed away on November 24, 2010;

the family and loved ones of
MARIE GLOVER
who passed away on December 8, 2010;

David Hodgson
on the death of his brother **PETER**;

the family and loved ones of
CAROL LAW
who died on January 19, 2011;

and to the family and loved ones of
JOYCE LEES
who passed away on January 23, 2011;

Marianne Rowland
on the death of her brother
CARL JONES.



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

Write this date down!
FEBRUARY 26, 2011
from 9:30 to noon

Cafe ST. Thomas is a "themed" breakfast and White Elephant exchange. This is one of the most entertaining activities we have at St. Thomas. Just ask Father Gar. Watch for sign up sheets on the bulletin board. And here's a hint: Start humming the lion sleeps tonight.....



THE APOSTLE
 St. Thomas the Apostle Church
 12251 Antioch Road
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**The next deadline for
 The Apostle
 is March 13, 2011**

CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

- 20: **Deadline for stories for 2011 LENTEN BOOKLET**
- 25 **Youth trip to Snow Creek -- an overnight**
- 26: *Cafe St. Thomas* -- a super fun themed breakfast, 9:30 AM

MARCH

- 5: Parents' Night Out sponsored by our Youth Group.
- 8: **SHROVE TUESDAY Pancake fest begins a 6 pm.**
- 9: **Ash Wednesday, beginning of Lent**
Services at 7 am, Noon, 7 pm
- 13: **Apostle deadline** for Easter issue
YOUTH Lenten Program series with supper begins at 5:30 pm.
This program continues each Sunday: March 20, 27, April 3, 10
- 23: **ADULT Lenten Program will feature guest speakers.**
Themes will be Prayer, Creativity, and the Meaningful Life.
This programs starts at 7 pm and ends at 8:30 pm.

APRIL

- 3: **Guild of Christ Child shower**
- 9: St. Paul's Food Pantry
- 17: **Holy Week begins.**
- 24: **EASTER SUNDAY**

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 1. Our email address is 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 rnurse71@kc.rr.com.