

St. Francis Episcopal Church

Newsletter



December 2011

Church News and Announcements

NEWS FOR DECEMBER

November arrived with just gorgeous weather -- cool, clear, leaves turning color --- those late fall sunsets, We even saw a few white pelicans sitting on the shoals --- hope a lot of them follow -- I love those huge white birds! Also arriving was Anna Baker, looking just great and pitching right in there to help with gumbo! Then Maryanne and Peter Bunde arrived, followed by Linda and Dan Griswold! All of these winter visitors pitched right in as they usually do ---chopping chicken and helping with the fall bazaar! We've heard from Annie and Charles Ferguson and look forward to seeing them mid December!

Speaking of the fall bazaar, what a sight to see when you drove up to St. Francis on November 19th -- tents holding vendors, card tables with "yard sale items" -- all of this set out on a gorgeous Saturday morning.(the yard was full!) A slight overcast kept everyone cool. A great group of gals showed up to cook and make up the chicken salad on Thursday and Friday -- then again on Saturday to sell sandwiches and gumbo! Ann Warmack's baked good table was loaded with goodies that quickly disappeared as did all of those delicious seafood casseroles! Key Street had a lot going on as the Methodist were having their car wash, pancake breakfast and rummage sale -- so the two churches combined did a very brisk business and a good time was had by all! Not only do these activities produce a tidy income for the ECW, they also produce quality bonding time while all of that chopping and cooking is going on.

RETRACTION !: Sorry but I had Linda and John Percival totally enjoying themselves in Paris during the month of October

---they were NOT! BUT THEY WERE IN NOVEMBER! They left early November for a stay in Spain, from there to Paris and then back to Spain for Thanksgiving! By the way, things like this don't upset Linda-- you know, I had her and BILL enjoying family visits and trips together for months before Linda said JOHN wanted to know who this Bill guy was! Lots of laughs with those two!

Now the Percivals are not the only ones to enjoy time "over the pond" ---Christmas came early for Dana Fleming when Howard gave her a ticket to Germany! She totally enjoyed a visit with her daughter there and will return in early December. Mel and Lamona's cruise to Croatia, Italy, etc. was thoroughly enjoyable. Now on a more local scale, Stella loaded up her van -- this included many quarts of gumbo - and headed for daughter Evelyn's in Talladega, where the family will gather for the big "feed" and then on Friday, all will go to the lake cabin for leftovers! The Uithovens (Mark and Carroll) will be headed for their hunting camp in Columbus, Miss. John and Mary Porter will be off for Dadeville to celebrate with John's family. Lynn and Connie Johnson left for their daughter's in Arizona for a fun packed visit there. Talk about fun packed -- that is what the Warmack clan will enjoy! Mississippi kith and kin are here for an extended visit. Judy Bogar's house is fully packed with her family -- they always have fun and enjoy each other! Joan Rockstad celebrated Thanksgiving dinner at her grandson's house in Gulfport-- pretty nice having your grandson cook for

News and Announcements (Cont.)

you, huh? Julia was totally surprised the week before Thanksgiving when their son TR and his wife, Nancy, showed up for a visit and to share Julia's birthday! What better present!!!! Al and Jean Clark are absolutely beside themselves with Thanksgiving and happiness over the birth of their granddaughter! Mother, daddy and little baby are doing great -- that is if you don't count not sleeping for extended periods! Al and Jean are buying baby outfits and Al says he is ready to "get rocking!" So happy for them! Wimberly isn't going quite so far but will be in Mobile with grandchildren and such. ... good food there! Blanche will certainly be serving up good food as she hosts island friends at her place. By the way, Blanche takes some of the skin and bones from when we pick the chickens for the chicken salad and makes the VERY BEST chicken soup! Paul throws the rest of the bones etc to the sea gulls -- they love to see him coming! Don't know if the Russell crew will be picking bones -- do know that they'll be having fun and food for sure! Don't you just know that their house will be rocking and it seems that we will be having perfect beach

weather! So far, the weatherman says it will be crisp and cool for our island-on Thanksgiving -- perfect! Thank you God, for a blessed Thanksgiving!

Hey, did you see the picture of Walt and Marcia Hayes in the Sunday paper? They were shown on the steps of their home on Drury Lane, which was featured in the Living Arts section. The previous Sunday's paper offered a picture of Wimberly, yours truly and Nancy Boyers as being offered for sale -- along with Christmas ornaments at the Fall Bazaar -- a lot of laughs over that one!

Isn't Thanksgiving just the very best time of the year? I'm betting that most of us would readily say "YES! Aren't we thankful for our blessed families, for the warm and caring friendships at St. Francis, on our island? Aren't we thankful that we can laugh and joke together ---share secrets, divulge dreams, rise from failures -- all with the support of these cherished friends? GOD IS GOOD TO US -----let's all tell Him THANK YOU! Martha

Remember in Your Prayers

Jaylene Brooks Allen, Carolyn Allender, Sharon Beach,
Sue Beech, Jo
Charle Bromley,
Dodd, Eldon
Jerry Hocutt,
Kent, Michael
Martha Mayson,
& those in our
Eubanks, & Stanley Robinson.



The Vicar's Remarks

Dear People of God,

There is a little booklet put out by Dr. Albert Day called, "The Healing Ministry." In that booklet, he says there is a kind of poverty today about which we need to be concerned, and that is the poverty of expectation on the part of so many Christians. They just don't expect God to do much in and through their lives. But if we had faith, he says, and if we would let Him, God could do so much for us and through us. "Our chronic weakness is not that we expect too much from God, but that we trust Him far too little."

That reminds me of a little boy I heard about. Seeking to emphasize the Christmas story of the Star in the East compared to other stars in the sky, his Sunday School teacher asked the class to count the number of stars they could see at night. Reporting answers the next Sunday as varied as 149 to "too many to count," the pupils were fairly much in agreement. That is all except Bobby who answered positively, "Three!"

"But, Bobby," asked the teacher, "how is it that you saw so few stars when the other children found so many?" Bobby thought a minute. Finally he answered, "Well, our backyard is awfully small."

That is our problem, isn't it? Our backyard is too small. Our faith is too puny. There is not that sense of expectancy, of excited anticipation that fired those early disciples. It is that poverty of expectation that keeps us from gaining great victories.

Dr. William James once wrote: "The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering the attitude of their mind... If you only care enough for a result you will certainly obtain it. Yes, the mold of man's future, the shape of his life and destiny and the sum total of his accomplished achievements are in his own hands that hold the invisible brush that paints the pictures on the walls of his mind.

"It is these pictures of the mind that are the key."

Joseph Powell, a Loyola University professor, expressed it well in his excellent book, *Fully Human, Fully Alive*: "Fully alive people find enjoyment in what others regard as drudgery or duty. They don't have to; they want to. They are aware of the thorns but concentrate on the roses. Each day has a newness about it; it is never a carbon copy of yesterday. Fully alive people eagerly await new insights. These insights will renew them and their visions of reality."

Robert Southey tells of a certain Spaniard who "always put on his spectacles when he was about to eat strawberries, so they might look bigger and more tempting."

That is to say that life is so often a matter of perspective. The person who "expects the worst out of life" usually gets it. There is an old German proverb: "If you paint the Devil on the wall, he will come." Originally, the Devil was painted on walls of homes out of primitive superstition that he would NOT come. However, by painting his visage where it could not be missed, a fixation upon his reality often took place. In short, what people expect is what they get.

Psychologists call it the "self-fulfilling prophecy." Not only do our past experiences affect our expectations of the present and future but our expectations in turn affect our experiences. We can look for thorns or we can look for roses. Either way, we will probably find that for which we are searching.

A certain wife always tried to give her husband a cheerful welcome home from a trying day at the office. There was one day when she really had to strain: "Guess what, dear," she said as he entered the door. "Of our five children, four of them did not break an arm today."

A man lived on the border between Wisconsin and Minnesota. He assumed he lived in Minnesota, but a new survey showed that he lived in Wisconsin. "Thank goodness," he exclaimed. "I never could bear those cold Minnesota winters."

There is a revealing story about a family gathered in the library of their home enjoying a magnificent thunderstorm when the mother thought of Jill alone in the nursery. Fearing lest the little girl should be awakened and feel afraid, her mother slipped away to quiet her. Pausing at the door, however, in a vivid flash of lightening that illuminated the whole room, she saw the little girl sitting up in bed clapping her hands in excitement and shouting, "Bang it again, God! Band it again!"

We have to learn cynicism and despair. The young abound with enthusiasm and the conviction that nothing is impossible. Maybe that is why Jesus told Nicodemus that in order to enter the Kingdom of God he would need to be born all over again. "Lest ye enter the kingdom as a little child ..." Jesus said to his disciples.

Is not a child's enthusiasm and joy primarily the product of a complete sense of trust? A child has to be taught to fear and to hate. Tell a child that there is a loving God who watches over him day and night and he will not doubt it. If we could trust God half as much, we would be bubbling over with enthusiasm and joy every day of our life.

Pax !

Roy †

Report from The Vestry

Dear Friends:

This year has been an eventful one! With the hard work of an extremely dedicated Vestry and a strong ECW, we have kept St. Francis viable in spite of the bad economy and the loss of some of our valuable members. We represented St. Francis at the Diocesan Convention in January and found the Diocese as well as several of the parishes facing budget shortfalls. Thanks to Gail's excellent handling of our funds and the accurate and timely information she gives the Vestry, we have stayed on track. So far we have not had to cut services but we certainly are having to be frugal.

The lights are on, the air conditioning is working, and all our services continue. The buildings are clean and in good repair. The grounds are impeccable, thanks to Paul. John has kept our family informed through his excellent Newsletter. Julia has simply been here and done it all! Stella, Dana, and Mack have been unwavering in their support and their good ideas and advice.

The ladies are due a big thank you for all their constant work. They cooperated with the Vestry in every way to make sure St. Francis continues to be visible and active in serving the community.

Yes, our financial situation has become critical with contributions shrinking and expenses continuing to rise. But I have absolute faith that we will all work together to keep St. Francis strong.

Serving as your Senior Warden has been a privilege and I will always be here when I am needed.

Yours in Christ,

Mel Lucas,

Senior Warden

Report from the Episcopal Church Women

The ECW monthly meeting was November 10, 2011 with eight ladies present. We were all so happy to have Anna Baker (from Mansfield, Ohio) back with us for the winter season. After prayers and reports, we thoroughly discussed all the final details for the Fall Bazaar! The gumbo was ready as were the casseroles but chicken salad has to be made at the last minute! The time and effort that goes into these events cannot be over emphasized – it consists of love, devotion and sheer hard work. Martha did a beautiful job of describing the day of the bazaar and Joy Russell skillfully documented the day with her superb photography abilities. It was a gorgeous day and it was very successful. We even had a write up in the Mobile paper after the event! Heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped or participated in our Fall Festival, 2011!

We are now in the middle of Advent Season – a time of waiting and expectations – a time of quiet contemplation in the midst of all the frenzied activities that are a part of Christmas. When the Sisters of St. Francis studied Saint Benedict we learned of a form of prayer called lectio divina. Simply put, it allows a person to hear God's word through repetitive reading of scripture. It creates an environment of quiet listening and reflection – just the thing to help us separate our minds from the presents we need to wrap, the cakes we need to bake, etc.! May your Advent Season be full of peace, love and joy. I would like to again share a favorite poem of mine.

A Christmas Prayer

“We thank you for this place in which we dwell,
for the love that unites us,
for the peace accorded us this day,
for the hope with which we expect the morrow,
for the work, the health, the food
and bright skies which make our lives
delightful for our friends in all parts of the earth.”

Robert Lewis Stevenson

Our next ECW meeting is Monday, December 12, 10:00, Wilkins Hall. Please join us.

Mary Porter
ECW President

Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. Show hospitality to one another without grumbling

1Peter 4:8-9

Annual Meeting



Lots of good food at the Annual Church Meeting



St. Francis Episcopal Church
Fall Bazaar

"BRING YOUR OWN"
WHITE ELEPHANT SALE

\$10 Per Table

(bring your own table, chair & items to sell)



*Also stock your pantry or freezer
with
Delicious Foods*

Gumbo! Baked Goods, Casseroles, Pickles and More!

401 Key St. 861-2120

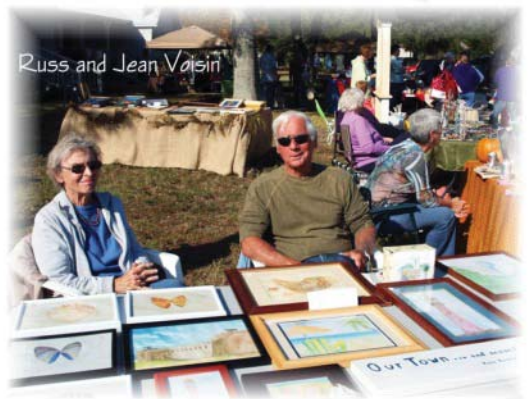
Fall Bazaar



More Fall Bazaar



A few of the many tasty goodies for sale



Calendar for December 2011

Holy Eucharist Rite I @ 10:30 am

	December 4 2rd Sunday of Advent	December 11 3rd Sunday of Advent	December 18 4th Sunday of Advent	December 24 Christmas Eve 6:00 PM	December 25 Christmas Day
Reader	Jean Clark	Julia Willis	John Porter	Diane Hall	John Porter
Chalice	Blanche Emerson	Linda Percival	Lamona Lucas	Mary Porter	Julia Willis
Ushers	Walt & Marcia Hayes	Al Clark & Stella Anderson	Mel Lucas & Jo McPhearson	Mack & Joy Russell	John & Mary Porter
Refreshments	Mary Porter	Julia Willis	St. Francis Anniversary	N/A	Anne Elam

Wednesday Evening Prayer Service @ 5:00 pm

December 7	December 14	December 21	December 28
Linda Percival	Lamona Lucas	Mary Porter	Blanche Emerson

Sunday School

Adult @ 9:30 am Except last Sunday of the month

Children @ 9:30

Choir Practice Sunday @ 9:45 am

Dates to Remember

Vestry Meeting	December 11@ 11:00am
ECW Meeting	December 12@ 10:00am
St. Francis 25th Anniversary Celebration	December 18 @ 11:00am