

**February 2008**

**The Grapevine**

The newsletter of St Albans Episcopal Church,  
Brandywine Hundred, DE



**Rector's thoughts** A Point of Focus

*I am the way, the truth and the life.*

I had gotten out of practice, so this morning I took the tennis balls out of the drawer where I keep them. I am by no means an accomplished juggler. I can, however, keep three balls in the air. One of the first things I learned is that you cannot look at an individual ball. If you do, the others go crashing to the ground. The trick is to stare straight ahead, watching all the balls with your peripheral vision. The point of focus is in the middle of the action.

Lots of us are very busy these days, juggling many commitments and activities. It is hard to keep them all in balance. We need a point of focus. Jesus can be that point for us. To focus on the one who gives us life may be a good way of keeping all of life in perspective. The traditional spiritual disciplines of Lent—repentance, fasting, prayer, and works of love—have been ways Christians have sharpened their faith focus. I invite you keep Lent by joining your brothers and sisters in Sunday morning worship and then choosing one or more items from the *From Ashes to Easter: Lenten Renewal at St. Albans Episcopal Church* listing in this issue of *The Grapevine*.

I better get back to practice. I lose my concentration too easily. The balls go flying. Juggling is like that. So is life. Are things flying all over the place these days? Maybe you need a focus point to get them back in order. God's peace, Jim+

**From Ashes to Easter**

**Lenten Renewal at St. Albans Episcopal Church**

*Shrove Tuesday, February 5:* Pancake Supper at 6:00 pm

*Ash Wednesday, February 6:* Holy Eucharist at 7:10 am, 12:10 pm, and 7:30 pm

*Sundays February 10—March 9:* Holy Eucharist at 8:30 am and 10:30 am

*Living the Questions* Adult Ed 9:30 to 10:15 am

*Monday to Friday, February 7—March 19:* Noonday Prayer at 12:10 to 12:25 pm

*Wednesdays in Lent:*

Holy Eucharist and Healing at 5:45 pm

Soup Supper at 6:30 pm

Adult education at 4:30 pm and again at 7:00 pm

February 13: *The Book of Revelation*

February 20: *The Diaconate* by Sister Sheila

February 27, March 5, 12: *The Book of Revelation* continued

**Holy Week Events**

*Palm/Passion Sunday, March 16:* Holy Eucharist at 8:30 am and 10:30 am,  
Procession of the Palms at 10:30

*Tuesday, March 18:* Holy Eucharist and Healing at 5:45 pm

*Wednesday, March 19:* Tenebrae (Service of Shadows) at 7:30 pm

*Maundy Thursday, March 20:* Holy Eucharist at 12:10 pm and  
Holy Eucharist & Stripping of the Altar at 7:30 pm  
*Good Friday, March 21:* Solemn Liturgy of the Passion and Death of Our Lord  
Jesus Christ at 12:10 pm  
Stations of the Cross at 7:30 pm  
*Saturday, March 22:* The Great Vigil of Easter at 7:30 pm  
*Easter Day, March 23:* Holy Eucharist with hymns at 8:30 am  
Festive Choral Eucharist at 10:30 am  
Light brunch and Easter egg hunt after the 10:30 service

### **Lenten Covenant of Group: Daily Scripture Reading and Prayer**

You are again invited to covenant with others to pray for one another and read the Bible each day of Lent (February 6 to March 22). Below is a description of this commitment. If you wish to make this part of your Lenten discipline, let Father Jim know by calling the church office, signing up on the bulletin board at church, or emailing him by February 1. He will provide you with the names of all who have joined the group.

#### *Covenant Description*

- Choose a time of the day that works for you and, when possible, read and pray at that time. It will help if you decide on a set length of time for you reading and prayer. Be realistic about how much time to set aside.
- Remember that if you miss a day, you have others who are praying for and with you. Renew your efforts the next day.
- Put your list of participants with your Bible so you can consult it daily.
- Use any translation of the Bible. If you want a suggestion, talk with Father Jim.
- Choose a book or two of the Bible from which to read and complete them before moving on to another. Another possibility is to read from the Daily Office lectionary found on page 953 of the Book of Common Prayer. It can also be found on the web at [www.satucket.com/lectionary](http://www.satucket.com/lectionary). If your reading time is limited or you want to read a passage slowly and meditate on it, just do the gospel reading for that day. If you want help deciding what your reading pattern will be, talk with Father Jim.
- Don't forget to pray for yourself too.

#### *Other Possible Spiritual Disciplines for Lent*

Jesus shared God's passion for justice. Pick up a copy of the Lenten Devotional Guide *Seeking to Serve*. They are in the church narthex. It will help you explore the Millennium Development Goals as opportunities for loving and serving our neighbors around the world.

- Once a day, pray for someone you dislike. Ask for help in understanding him or her.
- Fast one day a week, treat yourself to a meal of rice and tea one day a week, or in some way identify with the real majority: the world's poor.
- Time is a precious commodity. Take time to help another, listen to another, write a letter to an elected official, or in some way act out Christian discipleship.
- Learn about Episcopal Relief and Development at [www.er-d.org](http://www.er-d.org) and contribute to their work.
- Set aside ten (or five or fifteen or...) minutes each day for prayer and/or Scripture reading.
- Get into a pattern of regular exercise and become a good steward of your health.

**Jim+**

***Living the Questions: An Exploration of Faith*** For some folks faith means having arrived and having all the answers. For others, faith is a journey and a wresting with questions that have no simple answers. I am in the latter group. If you are too, I invite you to join me on Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. in the Vestry room. We will watch and discuss video presentations by contemporary Christian thinkers. A few of the topics covered are: compassion: The heart of Jesus' ministry; evil, suffering and a God of love; and creativity and the stories of creation. **Jim+**

**Annual Meeting Notice** The annual congregational meeting of St. Albans Episcopal Church will be held on Sunday, February 3, 2008 following the 10:30 a.m. worship service.



**Vestry Notes** Approved 2008 \$100/ month support for the Claymont Food Closet. Donations will be accepted at the Pancake Supper for ERD. \$2500 donation approved from Barnabas to the Interfaith Resource Center. Search consultant Rae Booth submitted a proposal and it was approved. Web – site is closer to completion and it looks awesome! **Jenny**

**Book Group** The St. Albans book group is about to complete our study of "The Heart of Christianity". We have had 5 to 7 people turn out on Tuesday mornings for a rewarding hour of conversation. There was not sufficient interest to continue evening meetings, so for now the meetings will be every Tues. morning from 10:30 to 11:30. Since we will be making a new book selection, this is a good time to join the group and have a say in the choice. Our time together would be even better with additional points of view. Joan Lynch



**The Food Closet** is well stocked with canned goods as a result of holiday food drives in schools, churches, and other community agencies in Brandywine Hundred. Other items they distribute are purchased from the Delaware Food Bank and choices are limited to items in the current inventory. This month the Food Closet is lacking two of its standard items: **Peanut Butter, creamy 18 oz. Jars and Jelly, grape or strawberry 10-18 oz jars** Volunteers are always welcome. St. Albans works at the Food Closet on Tuesday afternoons from 2:00 – 4:00 pm, but help at other times is also welcome. Please sign up on the yellow sheet on the bulletin board in the narthex. **Sister Sheila Brigid**



**Candlemas – The Presentation.** Dress up in your best clothes and come sing songs of praise at the best candle party of the year. Incidentally, for those of you who like to keep the Christmas decorations up as long as possible, Candlemas is the very last day to keep the tree and greens indoors. Take them outside and add them to the mulch pile!) We hope to see you all on February 2, at 7:30 PM. **Don**

**Special Offering for Episcopal Relief and Development** Presiding Bishop Katherine Jefferts Schorri has urged each parish to take a special offering for ERD at the beginning of Lent. She writes that: *All gifts received will be designated for the Millennium Development Goals Inspiration Fund, which focuses on fighting deadly diseases like malaria and HIV/AIDS and providing basic health care that saves lives every day. For more information on the MDG Inspiration Fund, please see [www.er-d.org/mdgif...](http://www.er-d.org/mdgif...) Almsgiving is one of the traditional disciplines of Lenten season and one of the ways in which we participate with Christ in walking to the foot of the cross and into the light of the resurrection. "If you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted," writes Isaiah, "your light will rise in the darkness and your gloom will be like the noonday."*

All donations at the Shrove Tuesday pancake supper will go to this appeal. Envelopes will be available in the narthex that you can use throughout the Lenten season. Please use an envelope if you wish to receive credit for your donation for tax purposes. If you write a check, make it payable to "St. Albans" and note it for "ERD Appeal"



### **February Birthdays**

Bruce Gwaltney  
Enie Cuprak  
Alex Fletcher  
Joe Fletcher  
Jim Vest  
Sr. Sheila Brigid Sharpe  
George F. Kelly III  
Barbara Krieger

Gloria Gail  
Charles Yeagle III  
Curtis Bell  
Pam Norman  
Jennifer Watson  
Brother Steven Brendan Davis  
Jeff Olmstead  
Charles Knott

Stephen Yeagle  
Molly Hartman  
Harry Weed  
Justin Gail  
Karen Olmstead

### **February Anniversaries**

Woody & Phyllis Evans 2/13  
Jim & Joan Hicks 2/25

**Flower Chart** The new 2008 flower chart is on the bulletin board in the hall. Please write in your names beside the dates you wish to make a donation to pay for our church flowers.

**Remember to pray for** Jimmy McKeon, Thomas Kerr, Erin Brennan, Doris Wissler, Nancy Norman, Roger Goldyn, George Wood, Mary Kelly, Barbara Covell, Jane Weber, Hazel Yeagle, and Bob Lenhart.

---

**Church Services:** Sunday, Holy Eucharist Services: 8:30 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. – Wed. Eucharist & Healing Service: 5:45 p.m.

Office Hours: Mon.-Wed. 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.; Thur. 9:00 to 1:00 p.m.; Fridays - Closed

**Contact Information:** St. Albans contact information: Phone: 478-7778; Fax: 478-7762;  
Interim Rector: The Rev. Jim Wolford; Phone: 443-553-9172;  
Organist/Choir Director: Donald McFarland;  
Website: [www.stalbansde.org](http://www.stalbansde.org)

St. Albans Episcopal Church  
913 Wilson Road  
Wilmington, DE 19803