

St. Luke's Parish **Epistle** May 2008 Bladensburg, Maryland

A Message from the Rector

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE MY ARRIVAL, just over two years ago, we are experiencing financial difficulties; one could even argue that we are approaching a financial crisis. The vestry is being good stewards of the finances; in fact we have controlled our spending, spending less than our projected budget for this time of the year. Yet, there remains a short fall of funds.

The vestry and I have discussed several ways to reduce our spending even more, mostly this has to do with the parish becoming more "green." In other words, conserving energy where we can: lights, gas, electric, heat and air conditioning, etc. While the vestry is doing its part to ensure we are spending our money wisely, we are well aware of the fact that the shortfall of money is not and cannot be attributed to the spending side of our budget, but rather to the income side. We simply are not receiving enough in the offering plate each week to keep up with the basic needs of the parish.

Usually, there is a decline in giving during the summer months. This can be attributed to family vacations and, due to the sunny warm weather, people choosing to do other things rather than attend church. The summer months always present a bit of a financial "crunch" for the church, but May is far too early for us to be experiencing a short fall. In fact, if the current trend continues through the summer, with its traditional short fall of finances, this could pose an even greater problem. Hence, the vestry is addressing this issue now. But, ultimately the burden of this problem falls on every member of this parish. We all must give, not only give

but we must begin to move our giving toward a tithe, which is 10% of our income.

Though the summertime traditionally brings a drought in attendance and financial giving, it is not an acceptable Christian response to our Lord. Nowhere in scripture or in the historic tradition and teachings of the Church does it allow for "time off" or "time away" from worshipping our Lord. In fact, scripture demands our regular attendance and our financial support, which should be the Biblical principal for giving—a tithe—10%.



God has blessed us greatly here at St. Luke's, and He has given us a vision for the future. He has laid before us ministries to which we must attend. The vestry and I are excited about what we believe God is calling us to do. However, it will take all of us, each doing their part, to fulfill God's purpose and will for St. Luke's

I am confident of your response to the needs of our beloved parish. I ask each and every one of you to commit yourselves anew to the ministry of this parish, both with your active participation and with your financial support. Together, through our willingness and openness, God can and will do a mighty work at St. Luke's.

Please pray for our beloved parish.

May our Crucified, Risen and Ascended Lord Jesus Christ continue to bless you.

Mark⁺

IMPORTANT CHANGE OF SCHEDULE

Fr. Lewis is continuing to recover from his achilles tendon surgery. Weekday Masses have been postponed until further notice.

Upcoming Events

May 1 – Ascension Day

May 2–St Philip & St. James

May 10–Men’s fellowship 6:30 PM

May 11-Pentecost (Mother’s Day) There will be only Mass this Day. Mass will begin at 9:00AM. The annual Mother’s Day breakfast will be held in the undercroft immediately following the Mass.

May 22 – Corpus Christi

May 25 – Thanksgiving Sunday

May 31 – Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Men’s Fellowship Meeting

The Men’s Fellowship is scheduled to meet the 2nd Saturday of every month. The next meeting will be held on May 10th at 6:00PM in the undercroft. All men, young and old, are encouraged to attend. The goals of the Men’s Fellowship are:

- To become the spiritual heads of the parish and our families.
- To have fellowship.
- To support one another.
- To be in prayer for the needs of the parish.
- To grow in Christ.

Mark Your Calendars Now for the Festival of Faith

The Festival of Faith will be held **September 13th & 14th**. This is a huge event in the life of the parish. I want to encourage each of you to participate. Anglicanism is under attack by revisionist theology, and this theology is in danger of splitting our beloved communion. This is our opportunity to be informed about what is going on in the communion and what we can do to help keep the faith once delivered to the saints. Mark⁺

Bible Study

The weekly Thursday night Bible Study has resumed. Our Bible Studies are very interactive. If you are interested in learning the Bible, are interested in learning the faith, or desire to have fellowship, Thursday night Bible Study is the place for you. Come join us! Class begins at 7:30 PM.

Thanksgiving Offering Sunday

The last Sunday of every month is designated as Thanksgiving Sunday. Of course, every Sunday is a day of thanksgiving for our Lord’s Resurrection, but we have set aside the last Sunday of every month to express thanks for the many blessings God has bestowed upon us. Therefore, on the last Sunday of every month, after the Post-Communion prayer has been recited we will have a second collection, asking people to come forward to place a “thanksgiving offering” for what ever they wish to give thanks.

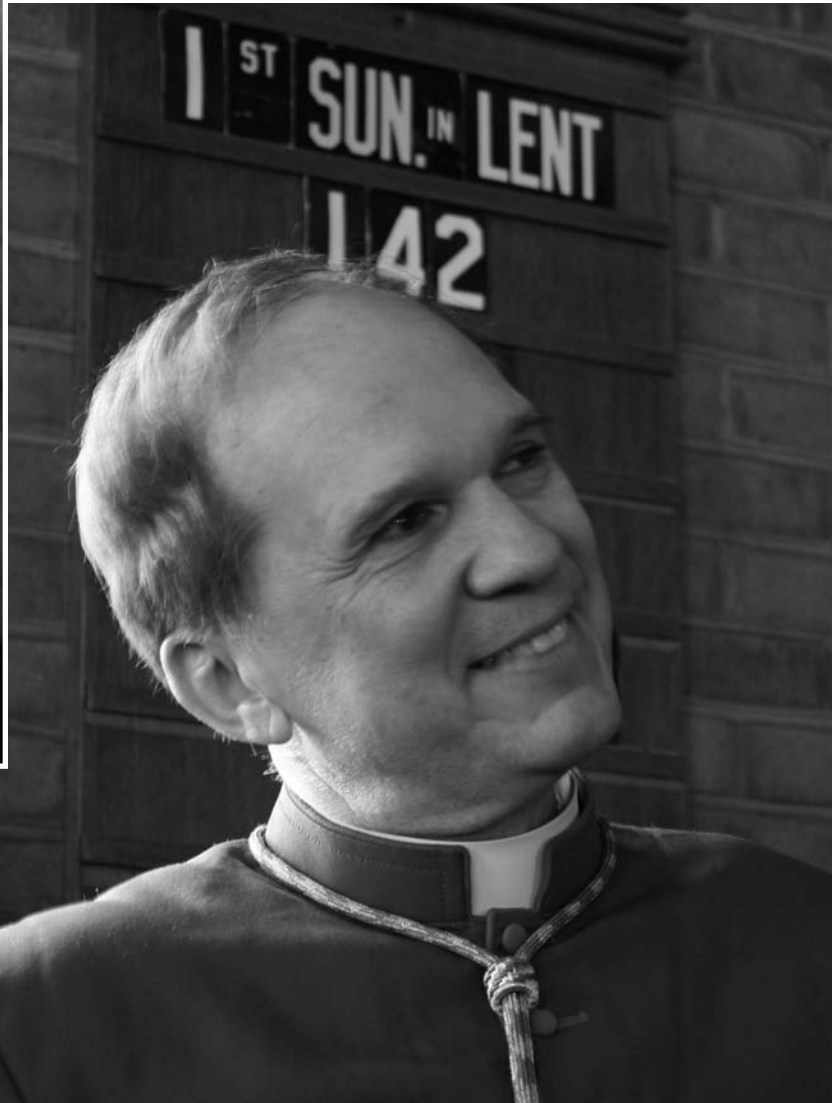
The notion of a thanksgiving offering comes to St. Luke’s from our brothers and sisters in the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion). Vickey and I have been privileged to witness the overwhelming joy of the Nigerian people coming forward to offer thanks to God for what blessings they have received. What makes this event that much more special is: they have already given their weekly giving, and for the most part, they are not as wealthy as we in the United States, but give they do. The people of the Church of Nigeria have a good understanding that all things, all possessions, come from God. I would not be surprised if this spirit manifests itself in other African Provinces as well. May St. Luke’s also be known as a church filled with praise and thanksgiving. The next Thanksgiving Sunday is May 25th.

Youth Group

Meetings will be held over the next month to establish a youth group at St. Luke’s. We are seeking guidance from our Lord as to the shape and form of this group. All we know at this time is we are excited that the Lord has raised up this ministry among us. More information will follow next month.

Continued on page 5

**Scenes from
Bishop Keith Ackerman's,
Bishop of Quincy,
Visit to our Parish**



Treasurer's Report March 2008

I have changed the format of this report to help me explain how our income and expenses work. Money given for Building Improvements, Furnace Fund, or our outreach programs (concerts, SHARE, etc.), is not available for general purposes like paying utilities and regular operating expenses. So, although it appears that we have extra money to date, the \$6,408 net income from designated offerings can only be used for the specified purposes. Regular operating bills cannot be paid with designated funds so we are actually at a \$4,093 loss as of the end of this month. The reality is that we have insufficient funds to pay our bills. Please review your giving to our church. We rely on your offerings and our church can not continue with our ministry and keep the doors open if we do not pay our bills.

	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>
Operating Income	\$ 43,541	\$ 56,920
Operating Expenses	(47,634)	(53,899)
Net Operating Income (Loss)	\$ (4,093)	\$ 3,021
Furnace Funds	300	9,375
Improvement Funds	3,001	3,000
Outreach	<u>8,380</u>	<u>2,999</u>
Total Designated Income	\$ 11,681	\$ 15,374
Designated Expenses	<u>5,273</u>	<u>4,780</u>
Net Designated Income	6,408	10,594
Net Income (Loss)	\$ 2,315	\$ 13,615

Yours in Christ,
Karen King

What Stewardship Means to Me

I was born and raised in Lagos, Nigeria and attended St. Paul's Anglican Church in Shomolu, Lagos. My parents are devout Christians. I remember the morning devotion, going to church on Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays rain or shine. At the age of 8, I became an acolyte and was in the boy's brigade. My father was a deacon and my mother serves as a matron. The older I got, the stronger my faith in God grew. My family and I became members of St. Luke's Episcopal Church 16 years ago. St. Luke's has been our church home and we are proud to be part of the St. Luke's family. I became a vestry member a year ago and have been serving the parish for 12 years.

Stewardship to me means using every talent and gift, and repeatedly sacrificing personal desires to do the right thing. People must understand that Christians are called to be good stewards at all times. My prayer is that God shows me my talent so that I can serve him to the fullest. Scripture has taught me that, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the

Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning." (James 1:17).

God has been very wonderful to my family. Developing a hunger for the things of God, serving him, and teaching God's ways are part of my goals as a Christian. "Blessed are those who keep his testimonies, who seek him with the whole heart!" (Psalm 119: 2). And, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness for they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6). As a parent, instilling the desire to learn about God in our children is very important to me. "All your children shall be taught by the Lord and great shall be the peace of your children." (Isaiah 54:13). These are ways my stewardship comes into play. May the Lord continue to give me the will to serve Him. Amen.

Adeniyi Onakoya,
Vestry Member

Events *Continued from page 2*

Parents, in these difficult times it is important for your child to have Christian friends and to be grounded in the faith. This is your chance to help your child/children. Please be a part of this exciting new ministry.

Anglicans for Life

Anglicans for Life (AFL), Bladensburg Chapter, met at St. Luke's Church on April 22nd, 2008. Our guest speaker was Mrs Georgette Forney, the AFL president. Anglicans for Life promotes the right of the unborn. During our meeting we considered the possibility of working with the youth in our parish as part of our pro-life ministry. This is a worthy cause and deserves your membership. Please speak to Gary Schenk for more information about this worthy ministry. Gary's telephone number is 301-474-5721.

Congratulations

The Rev. James Fraser and his wife Katie welcomed their son into the world on April 23rd. Mother and baby are healthy and doing fine, and so is dad. Their Son, James Fraser V, weighed in at 8'6" and was 20 inches long. May they all grow in the love and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ



Honary Doctorate to be Given to the Most Reverend Drexel Gomez

On May 22nd, Nashotah House Theological Seminary, (The Anglo-Catholic Seminary of the Episcopal Church), and my alma mater, is presenting an Honorary Doctorate Degree to our friend The Most Rev. Drexel Wellington Gomez. The degree will be presented to him for his life long work in the ministry and in the upholding of Biblical, traditional Anglican orthodoxy in the midst of great challenge, and confusion from revisionist theologians.

Mark⁺

RIP

Mr. William Kendall died on April 16, 2008. He was surrounded by his loving family members as he passed from this life to the next; may he, and all the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace.

Pew Plaques

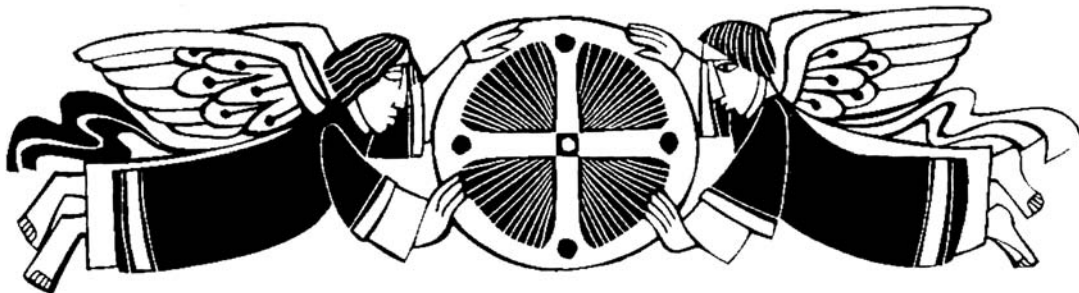
One way to memorialize loved ones is to have their name plaque affixed to church pews. This is a wonderful way to memorialize your loved ones in God's house. If you would like to have the names of your loved ones placed on a pew plaque at St. Luke's, you may now do so. The price per plaque is \$300, of course if you would like to donate more, it would be greatly appreciated. Please call the office at 301-927-6466 to place your order.





St. Luke's has a monthly Requiem Mass. A Requiem Mass is a Mass said in remembrance of those loved ones who have passed on into the nearer presence of Jesus. Usually one remembers a loved one in the month in which they were born, died or on their birthday. The Requiem Mass is held on the second Saturday of each month. Please give Fr.

Lewis a list of loved ones you wish to have remembered prior to the date of the Requiem in which you want them to be remembered.



Choir DVDs Now on Sale

If you could not attend last year's Christmas or Easter concerts, or if you did attend and enjoyed them so much you wish you could hear them again, there is good news. DVDs of last year's Christmas and Easter concerts can now be purchased for \$10 each, or at the special price of \$15 for both. These DVDs would make great gifts. Don't miss out; we have limited amounts to offer. You may purchase your DVD at the church office.

2008 Memorials

Candy Mitchell, the coordinator of memorials, reminds us that:

The Memorial Book at the back of the church is available for requests for flowers, candles & lights.

Ms. Mitchell can be contacted at 240-681-3307.

Memorial items are as follows:

Altar candles
per month \$20

Sanctuary lamp
per week \$3

Bread & wine
per week \$3

Torches
per week \$2

Votive
per week \$2

Flowers
per week \$20



May 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27	28	29	30	1 Ascension Day 7:30 PM Bible Study Undercroft	2 St. Philip & St. James Apostles (trans)	3
4 7th Sunday of Easter 8:00 AM Low Mass 10:30 AM Solemn High Mass 12:00 PM Hispanic Mass	5	6	7	8 Dame Julian 7:30 PM Bible Study Undercroft	9 Gregory of Nazianzus	10 6:00 PM Men's Fellowship, Undercroft
11 Pentecost, Whitsunday Mothers Day 9:00 AM Solemn High Mass & Mother's Day Brunch. 12:00 PM Hispanic Mass	12 The First Book of Common Prayer 7:30 PM Vestry Parish Hall	13	14 Ember Day	15	16 Ember Day	17 Ember Day 11:00 AM SHARE
18 Trinity Sunday 8:00 AM Low Mass 10:30 AM Solemn High Mass 12:00 PM Hispanic Mass	19 Dunston 7:30 PM Vestry Parish Hall	20 Alcuin 10:00 AM Mass with Unction June Epistle Deadline	21	22 Corpus Christi 7:30 PM Bible Study Undercroft	23	24 Jackson Kemper
25 2nd Sunday after Pentecost 10:30 AM Solemn High Mass 12:00 PM Hispanic Mass	26 Augustine of Canterbury (Memorial Day)	27	28	30 7:30 PM Bible Study Undercroft	31 Visitation of the BVM	1

Remember in Prayer

All readers of *The Epistle* are reminded to keep members of our parish family and friends in our prayers, especially remembering Pearl Edwards, Edwin Freeman Sr., Larry Maske, Charles and Therese added to this prayer list, please contact Gloria Deigh, 240-687-1647 or Sommerkamp, Chet and Espie Stewart, Sheila Taliaferro, Auburn email glo4christ@hotmail.com so that these people's names can be included in the next issue of *The Epistle*.

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St. Luke's is a traditional Anglican church in the Episcopal Diocese of Washington

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**Join us to honor the mothers of the Parish this Mother's Day -
The Day of Pentecost, Sunday May 11th at the 9AM Mass!
Breakfast immediately following the Mass.**

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Parish
Bladensburg, Maryland

**An Anglo-Catholic Parish
in the Diocese of Washington**