

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



A Message from the Rector

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

THE GATHERING OF BISHOPS at this year's Lambeth Conference did little to address the pressing issues, which are threatening to tear apart our beloved Anglican Communion. There is a very small, but vocal group of bishops, particularly those from churches in the Western world, who continue to push for a new understanding of human sexuality and who consistently resist to proclaim the uniqueness of the person of Jesus Christ as the only way for men to receive redemption and salvation.

I totally reject the theology of those bishops and the direction they wish to lead the church. I have addressed these issues many times in the past, now I just simply wish to offer what two men greater and holier than I have had to say about these issues. Oh, and by the way, their words were spoken long before the present crisis in the Church.

The first two quotes are taken from one of the greatest theologians in recent times, the One Hundredth Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael Ramsey.

"Sexual morality is in a mess. Some would say at once that the reason is the decline of religious belief and sanction, since it is with that belief and sanctions that morality is bound up. Others would say that, on the contrary, this belief and sanction has been the cause of false repression, neurosis and unhappiness, and that the contemporary revolt was freeing sex to be the happy, carefree, innocent delight it was meant to be, and was pointing a way to new moral insights.

Here the Christian has to make his response. It is not enough to point to a tradition, or to assert an authority. Christian morality is to be commended to reason and conscience. We need, while abhorring evil, to try to analyse where the evil lies, and what are the causes which make for it.

The debris of bad apologetics, false images and narrow moralism must be cleared away. The Christian ethic is not primarily a set of rules and prohibitions: 'thou shalt,' 'thou shalt not.' It is not an isolated concentration upon sex, as if fornication were the only grave sin, and chastity the paramount virtue. It is not, again, a hush-hush smugness which cannot talk of sex, and leaves it to be deemed unclean or smutty. Nor is it a thing called 'sexual ethics,' invoked to counteract 'sex licence,' for the essence of the Christian view is that sex is to be understood only in the context of the whole relation of man and woman.

...I incurred a lot of abuse from people for contending very strongly for the alteration in the law whereby homosexual acts between adults would not be criminal. But it is one thing to say that something is not criminal, but quite another thing to equate homosexuals' behaviour with marriage - an institution which the Church blesses. I would not agree to the equation of those things for a moment."



AUTUMN

The Archbishop further states:
"Good works are the urgent outcome of faith, and the lack of them may often be an occasion for divine judgment on the Church. There can be no true faith which does not overflow in actions of compassion and human reconciliation. But woe to the Church if it thinks it can justify itself to the world, and find its own security, in a successful programme of philanthropy. It was such a justification of his own mission which Our Lord decisively rejected as he moved towards the Cross for which he had been sent for the world's redemption.

The Church is called to serve without ceasing; but never to commend itself to the world by providing

continued on Page 2

Rector's Letter *Continued from page 1*

what the world would most like and approve on the world's own terms. When the Church tries to commend itself in this way it can do good, it can win admiration for a while, but it can lose the power to lead men to repentance, to divine forgiveness, and to the God of the Resurrection.”

The final quote is taken from St. Peter, as he spoke in defense of he and John's actions in healing a man and teaching in the name of Jesus (Acts 3:1-4,12). Peter ends his defense by saying:

“And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

This my brothers and sisters is the faith of our fathers; it is the faith of the Church. May we proclaim this message boldly, without shame, or fear, to the glory of God the Father in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Mark⁺

Upcoming Events

- Sept. 1 Labor Day**
- Sept. 2 No Mass
(Floors are being stripped and waxed)**
- Sept. 3 No Mass
(Floors are being stripped and waxed)**
- Sept. 13 8:30AM - 5:00PM The Festival of Faith**
- Sept. 14 10:00AM There will be one Mass only on this day. This is Thanksgiving Sunday**
- Sept. 18 7:00PM Vestry Meeting**
- Sept. 20 10:00AM Requiem Mass
6:00PM Men's Fellowship**
- Sept. 22 Fr. Lewis will be on Vacation.
-29 If you need a priest please contact our Sr. Warden, Patrick Delaney 240-988-0320. Patrick will get in touch with a priest who will be covering for me during my absence. All weekday Masses during this time will be cancelled.**
- Sept. 30 7:00PM Healing Mass**
- Oct. 4 Francis of Assisi,
7:00 PM The blessing of Animals**

Men's Fellowship Meeting

The next Men's Fellowship will be held on Sept. 20th, at 6:00PM in the undercroft. We will study an Anglican Classic, "The Rule and Exercises of Holy Living" written in 1650-51 by Jeremy Taylor. 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.

Sunday School to Resume

Sunday school for all ages will begin on Sept. 21st. The development of one's faith is not an option. Please bring you child/children to the class in the undercroft, and then come to the nave for adult education.

Thursday Night Bible Study to Resume

Our Thursday evening Bible study class will resume on Oct. 9th. This is a very interactive class where scripture is discussed in connection with learning the faith. We share a light dinner, and have great fellowship.

Memorials

If you would like to have the names of your loved ones placed on a brass plaque, which will be affixed to the pews in the church, you may now do so. This is a wonderful way to memorialize loved ones in the House of God. 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.

Thanksgiving Sunday

The last Sunday of every month is designated as Thanksgiving Sunday. After the Post-Communion prayer we will have a second collection, asking people to come forward to place a "thanksgiving offering."

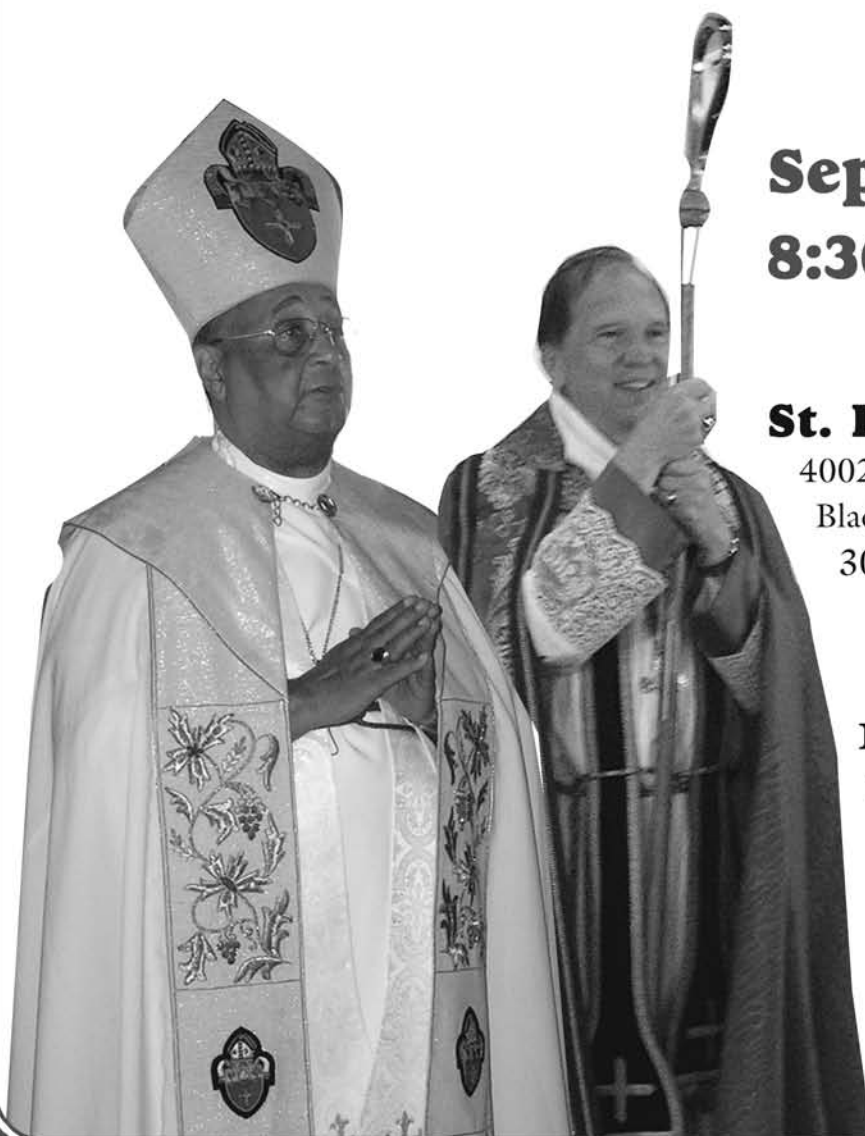
This month, our thanksgiving offerings will be collected on the second Sunday, September 14th, to coincide with Archbishop Gomez' visit.

Continued on page 6



*The Hope and Future of Orthodoxy
in the Anglican Communion*

The Most Rev. Drexel Wellington Gomez
and the
Rt. Rev. Keith L. Ackerman, SSC
will be our Keynote Speakers



September 13th
8:30 AM-5:00 PM

St. Luke's Parish

4002 53rd Street,
Bladensburg, Maryland 20710
301.927.6466

**Please visit our website
for information and
registration:**

www.stlukesparishbladensburg.org/parish.htm

Treasurer's Report July 2008

	<i><u>YTD Actual</u></i>	<i><u>YTD Budget</u></i>
Operating Income	\$ 102,706	\$ 129,913
Operating Expenses	<u>(102,672)</u>	<u>(128,452)</u>
Net Operating Income (Loss)	\$ 34	1,461
Furnace Funds	400	21,875
Improvement Funds	7,150	7,000
Outreach/Designated	<u>13,692</u>	<u>7,331</u>
Total Designated Income	\$ 21,242	\$ 36,206
Designated Expenses	<u>(12,997)</u>	<u>(13,400)</u>
Net Designated Income	8,245	22,806
Net Income (Loss)	\$ 8,279	\$ 24,267

As of 7-31-08 there was \$12,455.46 in accounts payable that could not be paid in July. These bills are not reflected in the totals above. Our church runs on a "Cash Basis" which means the summary above reflects actual cash received and paid out through 7-31-2008.

Yours in Christ,
Karen King



Giving

What Stewardship Means to Me

I laughed out loud when I pondered the answer to the questions: "What do I have that hasn't been given to me by God?" "What do I have that I don't need to thank God for?" The answer wasn't very complicated at all. I had just come from church after hearing a sermon on how to pray. Oddly enough, after hearing the sermon, I felt as though a weight had been lifted from my shoulders. That same sermon also offered a meaningful and logical means for beginning a quality prayer of gratitude to God. It suggested that one could begin their prayer of gratitude by thanking God for the rising of the sun or thanking God for fresh air and being in your right mind. But more importantly, it suggested that we pray for God to forgive our sins and to let His will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Hadn't I heard this prayer all of my life. Wasn't it the prayer that we were taught to pray by Jesus,

himself? For some reason it really got my attention this time. I suddenly realized that I need to be thanking God for just "being" and "is-ness". I don't know if that is a word but I think you get the point. All of us have been given everything we have and everything we are. God has seen fit, in His infinite wisdom, to provide for all of our needs and wants. We can look at all we have, including that familiar rectangle called money and see it all as a gift from God. When you look at everything with a realistic perspective then, is it so difficult to respond to God's request that we give of our time, talent and treasure to his storehouse? Remember, God doesn't want your money. He is the giver of your money. God wants you to give!

Carmen Balthrop Delaney,
Vestry Member

Another Perspective on Stewardship

I became a member of the Anglican Church forty two years ago in my hometown Berbice, Guyana, South America. Since then, I have strived to mould my Christian life as an example to my friends, building an extended Christian family.

I can remember being an active member in nearly every group/club in the community. At one of these meetings, my then priest, at the end of a meeting quietly remarked to me, "Joy you are in every activity now, I think, I can hear the Lord seriously calling you to work more assiduously for him." I agreed, and began more seriously my Christian journey as a disciple, hence fulfilling my perspective of stewardship, and my daily aspirations as an Anglican for Christ.

This journey led me to be ordained as a Lay-Reader of the Anglican Church of Guyana and to serve as a Warden and leader of nearly all church activities. I was an advocate in debates/discussions for the admission of women into the Priesthood. I would have answered that call. However, in 2003 after migrating to the USA I was led by God to where he felt that my unflinching Christ-like interaction would be faith filling as a Christian steward.

Let me pause to define stewardship. It is the sharing of a Christian's:

Use of Time,

Use of Talent, and

Use of Money for enhancement of the Church's activities and for fulfillment of Christ's teaching.

•**TIME** As a Christian, I am expected to plan daily activities to include time for worship (church), for fellowship, and for sharing the word, and most of all, for personal reading of the Bible. How can I forget deeds of love and charity that Christ has taught us? Sometimes, I feel guilty of not using my time to benefit God. But, as I write this article I am motivated to develop strategies for success.

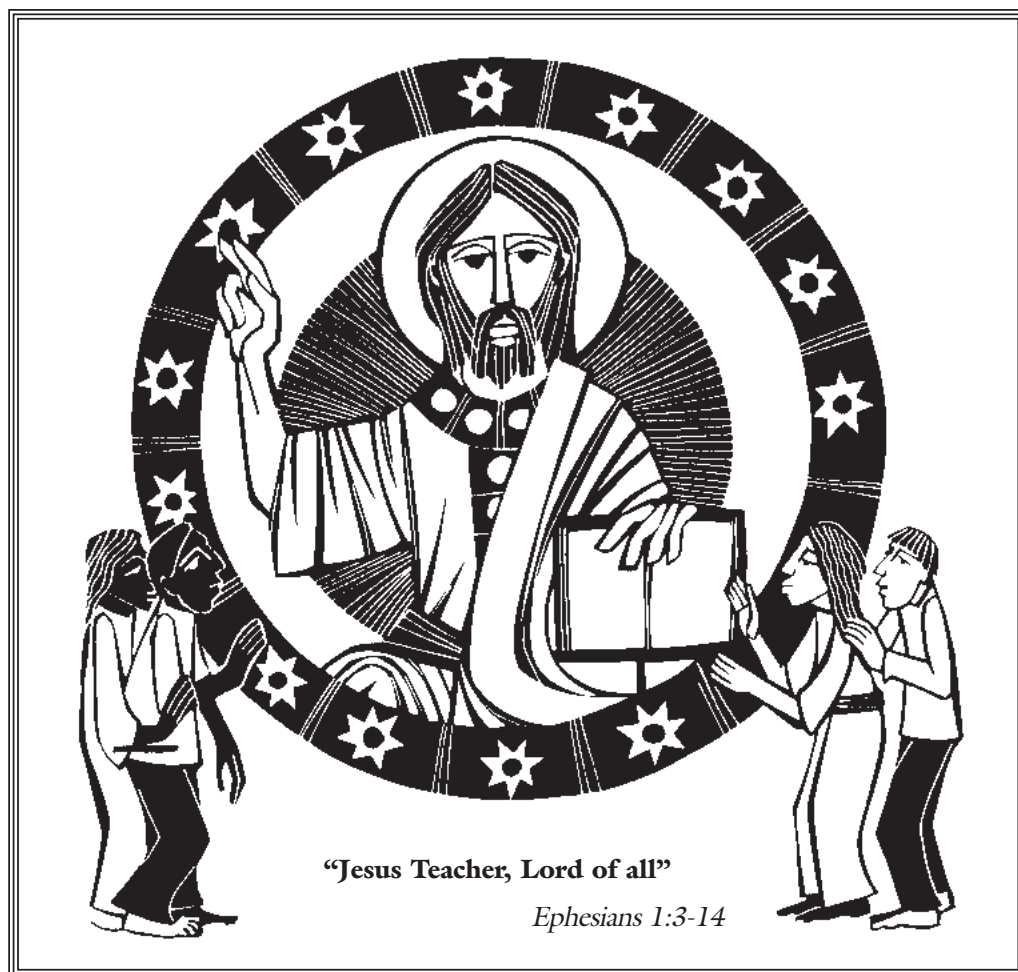
•**TALENT** As a Christian, I have pledged to use my talent in every way to encourage children and youth, especially those from under-privileged homes. I wish I had the talent to sing, but God gave me the talent of speech, thus combining all the talents in praising God and winning souls as stewards.

•**MONEY** (Tithes/Offerings) Guilty feelings, exist in my heart, as I try to extend mine to as many as I can reach, sometimes leaving much needed pledges unfulfilled. God knows that it is done with Christian Love. The love of sharing is embedded in me as the scripture reads, "God loves a cheerful giver." I even share the widow's mite.

Permit me to add the Stewardship of Love, unceasing Christ-like Love. God has endowed us with the blessings of the love of our St. Luke's family led by a humble and sincere steward.

I believe that as I strive to enhance my stewardship commitment through giving my Time, Talent and Money, my reward would be great, not only here on earth, but also in heaven. Would you not join us, in stewardship so that with one accord we will continue to praise our God?

Joy Beaton,
Vestry Member



The Festival of Faith

The annual Festival of Faith is scheduled for September 13th, 2008. We are very pleased and honored to have The Most Rev. Drexel Wellington Gomez, and The Rt. Rev. Keith L. Ackerman, SSC as leaders of this year's event. Please mark your calendars! The cost is \$50 per person. This amount includes your registration, continental breakfast and lunch. Please visit our website for registration and information:

<http://www.stlukesparish-bladensburg.org/parish.htm>

Youth Group

Parents, in these difficult times it is important for your children to have Christian friends and to be grounded in the faith. This is your chance to help your children. Please contact Fr. Lewis if you or your children are interested: 301-395 8982.

The youth group met on August 31st, immediately following the 10:00AM Mass. They had a picnic, then they were off to the "Go Cart Track." This is the place to be. Come join the fun. The next youth group meeting will be held on Sept. 28th, immediately following the 10:00AM Mass.

Do You Need Healing?

On September 30th, St. Luke's will hold its first Healing Mass. Presently we offer Mass with the Sacrament of Holy Unction every Tuesday, but this Healing Mass will be different. Our readings and homily will focus on God's healing love. The liturgy will be a little less formal, with a little more singing; but we expect God to be powerfully present among us. Mark your calendars! We will start sharply at 7:30PM.

Wish List

We are in desperate need of:

- 1. Altar linens \$250.00
- 2. Altar Frontal \$500.00

These would make wonderful memorial gifts. If you would like to purchase one of these items, please contact Fr. Lewis.

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.

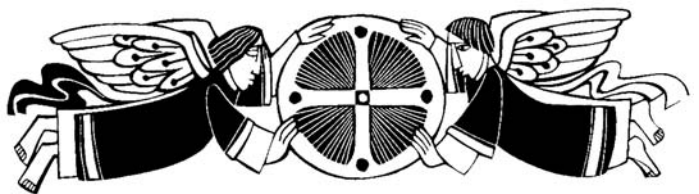
Ms. Mitchell can be contacted at 240-681-3307.

Memorial items are as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| <i>Altar candles</i> | <i>Torches</i> |
| per month \$20 | per week \$2 |
| <i>Sanctuary lamp</i> | <i>Votive</i> |
| per week \$3 | per week \$2 |
| <i>Bread & wine</i> | <i>Flowers</i> |
| per week \$3 | per week \$20 |



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 to 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 2nd 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.



September 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31	1 David Oakerhater	2 Martyrs of New Guinea	3	4 Paul Jonesr	5 12:00 PM Mass	6
7 17th Sunday after Pentecost 8:00 AM Low Mass 10:00 AM Solemn High Mass 12:30 PM Hispanic Mass	8	9 Constance & Companion 10:00 AM Mass with Unction	10 Alexander Crummell 7:00 AM Mass	11 6:30 PM Mass	12 John Henry Holbart 12:00 PM Mass	13 Cyprian Festival of Faith 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM
14 18th Sunday after Pentecost 8:00 AM Low Mass 10:00 AM Solemn High Mass 12:30 PM Hispanic Mass	15 Holy Cross (Trans.)	16 Ninian 10:00 AM Mass with Unction	17 Hildegard 7:00 AM Mass	18 Edward Bouverie Pusey 6:30 PM Mass 7:30 PM Vestry Undercroft	19 Theodore of Tarsus 12:00 PM Mass	20 John Coleridge Patteson Men's Fellowship 6:00 PM 11:00 AM Share Oct. Epistle Deadline
21 19th Sunday after Pentecost 8:00 AM Low Mass 10:00 AM Solemn High Mass 12:30 PM Hispanic Mass	22 St. Matthew Apostle and Evangelist (Trans.)	23 10:00 AM Mass with Unction	24 7:00 AM Mass	25 Sergius 6:30 PM Mass	26 12:00 PM Mass	27 11:00 AM Women's Bible Study Undercroft
28 20th Sunday after Pentecost 8:00 AM Low Mass 10:00 AM Solemn High Mass 12:30 PM Hispanic Mass	29 St. Michael and All Angels	30 Jerome 10:00 AM Mass with Unction 7:00 PM Healing Mass	1	2	3	4

Please remember to pray for our sick

All readers of The Epistle are reminded to keep members of our parish family and friends in our prayers, especially remembering Pearl Edwards, Larry Maske, Charles and Therese Sommerkamp, Chet and Espie Stewart, Sheila Taliaferro, Auburn Traycik, Doris Johnson, Alliet Jones, Vivian Murphy, Russ Maske Jr, Bishop Ackerman and

Archbishop Gomez and all others who are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness or any other adversity. If you learn of any person whom you would like added to this prayer list, please contact Gloria Deigh, tel: 240-687-1647 or email glo4christ@hotmail.com so that these people's names can be included in the next issue of The Epistle.

St. Luke's Epistle email address:

epistle@stlukesparish-bladensburg.org.

Editor, Ada Okafor, **Graphic Designer, Pre-press,** Espie Stewart • **website:** www.stlukesparish-bladensburg.org/htm
St. Luke's is a traditional Anglican church in the Episcopal Diocese of Washington
4002 53rd Street, Bladensburg, MD 20710 • 301.927.6466

**Be Sure to be a Part of Our Festival of Faith!
Saturday, September 13th**

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ST. LUKE'S
Parish
Bladensburg, Maryland

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