



# The Evangelist

February 2011

The Newsletter of St. John's Episcopal Church, Clearwater, Florida

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### The Mission of St. John's Episcopal Church

- To LOVE,
- To SERVE,
- To GROW in CHRIST.

## GLAD TIDINGS

Jesus said to his followers, "The person who trusts me will not only do what I'm doing but even greater things." (John 14:12) It's difficult to think about doing far greater things than Jesus. Then we read that he sent his disciples out in pairs to heal the sick and minister in his name. Enabled by Christ's Spirit we participate in his healing ministry in ways beyond comprehension by the human mind 2000 years ago or even a few years ago. I know that my life expectancy has been tremendously enhanced because of medical technology. Countless others say that about their lives. Healing prayer and technology, developed by people with God-given gifts and abilities, can work together in bringing people to greater health and wholeness.

In this internet age, knowledge becomes available at the touch of a keystroke. St. John's is able to email reminders to our congregation. Our web site provides those unfamiliar with St. John's a snapshot of this faith community. For the

visually impaired, computer and TV technology has been tremendous. Just recently I learned from Tom Ehrich about another opportunity that technology provides. And it's "free." Have you discovered internet radio? While there are several, I discovered Pandora ([www.pandora.com](http://www.pandora.com)). I can choose artists, songs, or type of music and with a click can listen to my choice.

Technology provides a venue for exploring a deeper relationship with God and one another. We got permission to post on our web site a weekly meditation by Tom Erich, a nationally syndicated writer and Episcopal priest. Its purpose is to provoke reflection on the upcoming weekend's gospel reading and consider ways that Scripture relates to our daily lives. Personally I subscribe to his meditations and others as well.

The potential downsides of technology are obvious—



when they aren't used for the well-being and benefit of God's creation.

Unfiltered communication can be damaging. Because emails generally miss the relational aspect of personal interchange, they can miscommunicate a message and cause division among people. Also, the internet, as an important social outlet, can be isolating.

In almost every field, technology has made numerous jobs obsolete. Skill sets may or may not be transportable to other jobs. Technology avails newly found power to many people. The question is, in 2011 and as in every year, how will we use that power? For God's purposes or not?

Love! Peace! Joy!

*Glad*

"Christianity is not a story for whose lives are all together.

It is the opposite of that.

Christianity is the story for people who can never get their lives together and a story of a great God that holds it all together."

– Louie Giglio

## ON BEING THE NEWCOMER

### Happy Birthday wishes in February to:

- 2 Jan Davis, Drew Liscinski
- 3 Phillip Jones
- 6 Beverly Nye, Mike Day
- 7 Trenton Nugent
- 8 Nancy Smith, Judy Genevie
- 9 Alex Swatzell
- 12 Mary Ellen Britts,  
Jim McCurtain, Rebecca  
McMorris, Arlene Bradstreet
- 15 Carol Manley, Henderson  
Griffith
- 16 Vicky Lomas
- 17 Shannon Caste, Rebekah  
McCurtain
- 18 Sally Gillmore, Phyllis Krest
- 19 Irmgard Hembree, David  
Lovell
- 20 Helen Wilsey
- 21 Martha Wharton
- 22 Joan Loeser
- 24 Beth Burton, Shannon  
Williams
- 25 Gaire Distler
- 28 Robert McClellan

### Happy Wedding Anniversary wishes in February to:

- 1 Amir and Mehr Khorzani
- 5 Robert and Imogene McLean
- 9 Hubert and Nellie Griffin
- 12 Richard and Beverly Brown
- 14 John and Phyllis Krest
- 20 Clyde and Nancy Smith

*If your birthday or anniversary is this month and it is not listed, please call the Church Office to give us the information.*

Hello Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

My husband and I are newcomers to St. John's. We are making this our home, and we feel we have been blessed to find such a warm and loving congregation.

My husband and I have attended many churches over the past thirty eight years. Some churches have family pews, and only the family members may sit in those pews. Some churches have pews which have been sat in by the same people for so long that they would never sit any place else. Some churches have people that

will only take their seat at the end of the pew next to the aisle. This seating arrangement can be confusing and unsettling for visitors and/or newcomers who do not know these unwritten rules. As a visitor it is hard to ask to pass in front of them on the isle or even ask that person to move in to permit you to sit down.

We have found that for us, in our travels to a new church, we try to arrive a few minutes early, which gives us time for prayer, and we sit in the middle of the pew. We have met so many new (to us) people. We have continued this here. At St. John's most

Sundays we have people sitting on either side of us. We have also tried to sit in a different pew each week. That helps us to meet other people.

Maybe this all sounds like I am a needy person and perhaps I am. However, I would not want to think that I would have missed meeting one person. Each has been a blessing and has enriched my life.

Yes, it is hard to come into a new church, but St. John's has made it easy for my husband and me to find our new home church.

God's Blessing  
Suzanne and Ed Roe

## UPDATE ON CONSTRUCTION AND REPAIRS

### Thelma's Place

As of writing of this article (1/20) renovation of Thelma's Place is well under way. In September a break in the main outdoor sprinkler line caused Thelma's Place to flood several times. The sprinkler system was repaired immediately. However, mold had gotten into the walls and air conditioning system. In uncovering the mold problem, asbestos was discovered in the mastic (glue under the floor tiles). Facilities Team (Jr. Warden Glenn Smith, Joyce Gibbs, John McCoy, and Bob Zimmerman) developed an action plan that led to our property

insurance through the Episcopal Church covering most of the remediation and rehab. Our insurance company contracted with a local company to handle both phases. Because of the building's age, rehab necessarily included electrical work bringing the building into line with local codes. The electrical and air conditioning work has been completed, the grid work for the ceiling is in place with ceiling tiles to be installed soon. Our parishioners are currently putting primer on the dark inside walls so that our congregation can paint the walls a lighter color. Floor tiles and kitchen cabinetry have been ordered.

Thelma's Place is scheduled to be ready for occupancy very soon. Through that community meeting space we will be able to minister in the world with a greater witness.

### Termite Feast in the Parish Hall

Termites were discovered in the southeast corner of the parish hall. The termite problem has been successfully treated. Currently we are obtaining bids from contractors for repair of that section of the building.

# ADULT CHRISTIAN FORMATION

## Sunday Morning

Breakfast with Jesus continues meeting at 9 am between services. What does the Gospel mean for each of us? Come join this group as they share their thoughts and beliefs while discussing the Gospel of the day. This is a great 'drop in group' as each week is a different discussion.

## Monday Evenings

EfM will continue on Monday evenings, alternating monthly between Good Shepherd and St. John's. It isn't too early to think about signing up for class beginning in the fall.

## Tuesday Evenings

January 11 through February 15 there is a course on healing prayer led by Deacon Linda Barley and Diana Tunnell. Evenings begin with a brown bag supper at 6:30 p.m., and class begins at 7 p.m. All are welcome. For more information on the six week healing series please contact the church office at 531-6020 or email at churchoffice@stjohnsclearwater.org

## Wednesday morning Bible Study.

The group is discussing the video series presented by Tom Wright called *Jesus the New Way*. It is a six-week program. The series takes us back to the 'real Jesus' of history and the Scriptures. Come join us for coffee and fellowship as we look at the 'real Jesus'.

## Thursday Evenings—Men of St. John's

Over the past two months, a group of men from St. John's has been meeting in order to roll out a program that they would like all men to consider.

Men of St. John's will meet on the first and third Thursdays of the month at 7 p.m. at the home of Reinhold Weber (during formative period). Their vision is to draw men together for fellowship, inspiration, direction, Bible-based study and time to create a person's godly vision for their lives.

The format of the evening will be: opening prayer, song or verse, the program, conversation, reflections and closing prayer.

For more information, contact Charles Gaudreau, 559-8016.

## Lent

During Lent, St. John's and Good Samaritan will offer a series by Tom Wright on *The Resurrection Then and Now* on Wednesday evenings Mar. 9 – April 16 concluding on Apr. 27. Tom Wright was Bishop of Durham from 2003 to 2010. He retired from the See of Durham last year to take up a new appointment as Research Professor of the New Testament and Early Christianity at the University of St. Andrew's in Scotland. He is a prolific author. *The Original Jesus*, *The Challenge of Jesus* and *The Meaning of Jesus* (which Marcus Borg co-authored) are but a few of his writings.

Joining Wright are Dr. Sarah Henrich, associate professor of New Testament at Luther Seminary in St. Paul and Rev. Joel Quie, pastor of Prairie Lutheran Church in suburban Minneapolis. The six 26-minute segments in the series come with study guides for viewers to use to continue the discussion.

**1. The Historical Jesus.** The study of Jesus has produced many Jesus figures, most of whom have been found wanting before the bar of history. Who was Jesus? Why was he killed? What are scholars today saying about Jesus?

**2. Jesus: The Resurrected Messiah.** Most messianic movements ended with the death of their founder. Why did the Jesus movement *survive* - not only survive, but flourish? Because Jesus' followers believed that he was raised from the dead.

**3. The Jewish Understanding of Resurrection.** What did first-century Jews

believe about resurrection? One thing most believed was that the righteous would be raised at the *end* of history, not, as Jesus was, in the *middle* of history.

**4. Paul's Understanding of Jesus' Resurrection.** For Paul, Jesus' resurrection was the *first fruits* of the new creation, and all who are "in Christ" will be raised like *him*, though their resurrection bodies will be different from their earthly bodies.

**5. The Gospel Writers' Understanding of Jesus' Resurrection.** The Gospels have different details regarding Jesus' post-resurrection physicality and appearances. Are the Gospels' witness to Jesus' resurrection *credible*?

**6. Jesus' Resurrection Today.** It is hard to account for the rise in Christianity if Jesus was not raised from the dead. And it is hard to account for the written testimonies if the writers were not struggling to come to terms with something that actually happened. What about us today? How are we to understand Jesus' resurrection?

Each congregation will host three classes.

## Upcoming this Spring

March is the tentative date for offering Diarmid MacCulloch's DVD series, *A History of Christianity*. Diarmid MacCulloch is an Oxford History Professor whose books about Cranmer and the Reformation have been proclaimed as Masterpieces. *A History of Christianity* will reveal the true origins of Christianity and delve into what it means to be a Christian.

Please join one of the classes offered here at St John's. We have something for everyone. In each group there is a sharing of fellowship and great learning for us all.

Ann Scally

## PENNIES FOR RCS FOOD BANK

We are pleased to report the January collection of pennies for the RCS Food Bank amounted to \$84.82, for a 3-month total of \$326.15.

Wendy Wooden has arranged to have Achieva Credit Union turn our coins into bills at no charge. It is so much easier than having to roll all those pennies.

We can use a few people to help with this project so it will continue year-round and not become a burden

to any one person. If you'd like to help, contact Wendy, Kenzie or the Church Office.

Keep that bottle in your kitchen or bedroom. If you don't have one, pick up on the next time you are at church, fill it and then bring the contents to church the first Sunday of each month. We are making a difference where the need is great.

Kenzie Jones  
Wendy Wooden

P.S. Below is an excerpt

from a thank you letter from the Food Bank

"Your gift to the RCS Food Bank has come at a time of rapidly increasing need....It means so much to us and the families we assist. We know during these economic times, it is not easy to make a monetary contribution to support our work; your gift indicates an extraordinary care for others. I cannot thank you enough.....

Duggan Cooley  
President/CEO of RCS"

*On the first weekend of the month, bring non-perishable foods and your bottle of pennies for the RCS Food Bank.*

## YOUTH IN ACTION

Epiphany has had us looking at what gift we have to offer the King. What is the most precious thing that we have to give? We each put our gift on a star and posted on the youth bulletin board. Check it out on your way into church.

Think about the fact that God gave us His most precious gift in our Lord Jesus Christ. He also created us each a perfect creation, each important for who we

are, each with a special purpose on this earth. So the most precious gift we have to offer a King...ourselves to the glory of His Name.

February will find our youth at DaySpring for two weekends of Spiritual development!

**February 4-6:** The Senior YIA will be attending Hapening a weekend to help youth grow into a greater relationship with Christ.

**February 25-26:** The Junior YIA will be attending New Beginnings a weekend that focuses on relationships with friends, siblings, parents and God. As a bonus we are very proud of John Stima who will be the Junior Weekend Advisor for New Beginnings!

Peace and Blessings  
Margaret Richcreek and  
Danene Rice

## MANY THANKS TO MY ST. JOHN'S ANGELS

When I had hand surgery in November and knew I couldn't drive to the lab and all the doctor's appointments I had, I was very upset. But thanks to Marlene Eichelberger who set up all my dates with these wonderful angels who drove me to all my appointments. So, my

thanks to Marlene, Ann Scally, Thelma Lipp, Norma McClellan, Marty White, Pat Peters, Ruth Hickman, Esther Johnson and Betty Kemink for getting me there, waiting for me, and driving me home. I have nothing but praise for these wonderful women.

Thanks, also, to Sandi Meriwether for taking over my duties with my homebound parishioners. Thanks to you who phoned and sent cards. I am so blessed to be a part of this truly loving church family. God bless all of you.

With much love,  
Rose Garafola

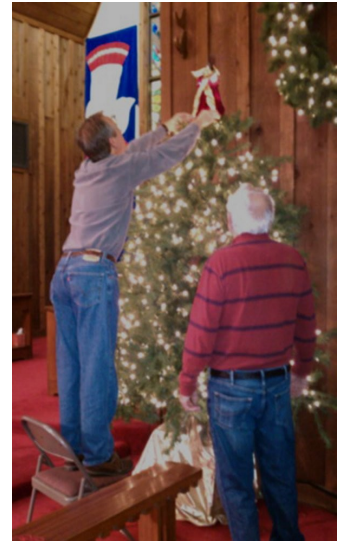
# Snapshots of Christmas at St. John's



Death by Chocolate



Gifts for the children of High Point



Glenn Smith and Clyde Smith put up the tree

Leona Weber fixing the flowers and greenery for Advent Wreath. Left: The finished product.



Christmas Caroling



Christmas Eve



## F.A.S.T.

*What does the Lord require? Do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with our God. (Micah 6:8)* For this reason, St. John's participates in the county-wide justice network FAST (Faith and Action for Strength Together). Each year the congregations in FAST decide upon justice issues they will address with local officials. Research groups from the congregations study the problems as the process for determining the specific aspects of an issue to address. Hundreds of hours are dedicated to each issue area. In the spring FAST asks commitments from local officials to resolve or begin to resolve a problem. In October 2010 FAST decided upon the following 3 issue to address in bringing about change, in bringing about greater justice for all the people of Pinellas County. (recent update from FAST staff)

### Education

Do you know that by the time our students get to the 10<sup>th</sup> grade 2/3 of them read below grade level!.

The FAST education committee is in the midst of a lot of research. So far we learned that there is a direct correlation between reading scores and graduations rates. We have also learned that we have special high schools for struggling students but most of the students sent to these high schools end up dropping out.

### Jobs

The city of St. Petersburg gave out 180 million dollars in contracts last year. Many of the companies who get these contracts are from out of town and bring in their own workers from out of town. Yet these are jobs that could be helping to put St. Petersburg residents who are unemployed back to work.

The jobs committee is working to get the city of St. Petersburg to adopt a priority hiring ordinance. This type of ordinance would give incentives to contractors to hire local people and even incentives to hire ex-offenders and others who have the most trouble finding work.

### Crime and Drugs

Drugs and Crime committee is continuing to strategize about how to fight to get the Smart Choices program back in the jail. Smart Choices was saving lives and had reduced recidivism in the jail from 70% to 40%. Recently we had two members of different FAST congregations whose kids were in jail. They both asked for help battling addiction but couldn't get any help cause there was no Smart Choices. No one is in prison. We are committed to ensuring that those in jail who want to turn their lives are given the help they need.

Currently the state has 19 million dollars which could be spent to divert people from prison to drug treatment. However, currently this money is not getting spent because there the rules on who can participate in the program are too restrictive. We will lose this money if we don't spend it by the end of this year. FAST is looking into the possibility of working with our sister DART organization throughout Florida to get the state legislature to change the program so that more people can make use of this money to get help for addictions.

### Upcoming FAST dates:

**Rally**, Monday, March 14 (preparation for Nehemiah Action) for network members.

**Nehemiah Action**, Monday, April 14, everyone comes and brings three people

*Bring in your palms  
from last Palm Sunday  
to be burned and used  
on Ash Wednesday  
(March 9)*

## Baptisms

Baptized with water and the Holy Spirit on January 9, 2011:

Trenton Michael Nugent

Hunter James Nugent

## GREEN TEAM IS FORMED

My name is Ed Roe and along with my wife, Suzanne, I would like to take this opportunity to say that we are so glad to be here - especially when considering the weather to the north.

I have been asked to say something about the formation of our new "green team". The bishop would like for each congregation in the diocese to have a recycling program aimed at becoming better stewards of our planet. Toward that end St John's is putting together a new "green team". At our first meeting a number of good sugges-

tions were proposed. We decided that the first order of business should be to assess what is already being done in order to "not reinvent the wheel". With that in mind, we concluded that one of our most important tasks will be to simply raise awareness and encourage those efforts to continue. An open invitation is extended to all who are interested in participating. Items of interest will be posted on a bulletin board for all to see as we become better organized.



On December 6, we met with Tom Roberts from Pinellas County's Solid Waste Operations Department. He explained the county's recycling effort and the services available. He also left us some brochures to be made available.

Remember to "Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle". It's our responsibility to be good stewards of this planet. Thank you. God's peace to all.

### The Staff of St. John's Episcopal Church

The Rev. Glad R. McCurtain,  
Rector  
The Rev. Hugh Bell,  
Assisting Priest  
The Rev. Lorraine Runza, Deacon  
John Wirth, Music Director  
Marlene Eichelberger,  
Parish Administrator  
Thelma Lipp, Sexton  
Danene Rice, Youth Leader  
Margaret Richcreek,  
Youth Leader  
Mary Anders, Children's Ministry

### The Vestry\*

Mary Anders  
Mary Ellen Britts  
Jan Davis  
Sallie Devine  
Charles Gaudreau  
Glenn Smith  
Amanda Smith, Treasurer  
*\*Additional Vestry members were elected at Annual Meeting on January 23 and will be listed in next newsletter.*

### Service Schedule

#### Sunday

8 and 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist  
9 a.m. Christian Formation  
Children and adult  
11:15 a.m. Teen Spirituality  
and Youth Group

#### Wednesday

12 p.m. Holy Eucharist and  
Healing

#### Saturday

4:45 p.m. Holy Eucharist

### Church Office Hours

Mon.-Thurs. 8:30 a.m.—5 p.m.  
Friday 8:30 a.m.—2 p.m.

### The Evangelist of

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month—whichever comes

**We reserve the right to edit  
articles submitted for content  
and length.**

Marlene Eichelberger, Editor

## IF I ONLY HAD A RIDE!

There are angels who cannot drive themselves to services or fellowship events. Are you an angel with a ride to spare? Can you swing by a pick up a

fellow parishioner. We are trying to match rides with those who need them. There is a pressing need for you to raise your hand and say, "I have space and

can give someone a ride to church." Contact the Church Office or Charles Gaudreau, 559-8016

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Safeguarding God's Children Class, Sat., Feb. 19, 9:30 a.m.

This class is taught by a diocesan trainer Deacon Linda Barley and designed for people who minister among the most vulnerable—particularly the sick, the elderly and children. The Diocese requires the workshop, which is quite informative, for those in these ministry areas. It is also mandated for Vestry

members. There are several DVDs and group discussion.

### Quickstart Class for all Newcomers Sunday, Feb. 13, following the 10 a.m. service

Join us for a short video about the church, discussion about the Episcopal church and St. John's, in particular and tour of facilities

### Children's Ministry Largo Train Ride and Picnic, Sunday, Mar. 6

Calling all children, toddlers and their families to ride the train at Largo Central Park, Sunday, March 6, after church! The group will meet at the park's train station by noon. They will ride (at least several times) and have a picnic lunch. The middle school youth group will assist.



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[www.stjohnsclearwater.org](http://www.stjohnsclearwater.org)



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## EPIPHANY

### What is the Epiphany Season?

During Epiphany the church celebrates the manifestation of Jesus as Savior. The magi represent people from afar and of non-Jewish heritage, recognizing that God's love extends throughout the entire world. It begins with an "epiphany moment," the magi (tradition numbers them at three) on bended-knee offering gifts to the Messiah-King, who came into the world as vulnerable and humble child born in the lowliness of a stable. It ends on a glorious mountain top, with God's light burning so brightly through Jesus that he and his followers are transfigured by the revelation of Emmanuel: God with us. Sundays in between focus on Jesus' Baptism, calling of disciples, and his ministry—teachings, miracles, healings, development of leaders, building of community. The season offers the church the opportunity to reflect on what God's presence in Jesus Christ means for the world. Epiphany is not only about God's action; it is also about the human reception of God's grace in Jesus Christ and the beginning of our lives as faithful witnesses to Jesus Christ as the Light of the World.

### How is the length of Epiphany determined?

The later in the year that Easter is scheduled, the longer is the season of Epiphany, which falls between Christ's birth (Christmas—a season lasting 12 days) and the season that prepares for his suffering death (Lent). Easter falls on the first Sunday after the first Full Moon on or after the Vernal Equinox. An equinox occurs twice a year, when the tilt of the Earth's axis is inclined neither away from nor towards the Sun, the center of the Sun being in the same plane as the Earth's equator. In 2011, Easter is April 24. Therefore, Epiphany 2011 has nine weekends with the last Sunday of Epiphany March 6. Our Book of Common Prayer lists a Table for the dates of Easter from the years 1900-2089 (p. 882-3).