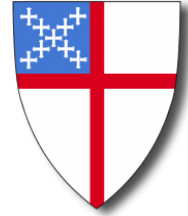


St. Thomas Episcopal Church



July 2011 Newsletter

A Message from Father Reid

“All I really need to know I learned in kindergarten. ALL I REALLY NEED TO KNOW about how to live and what to do and how to be I learned in kindergarten. Wisdom was not at the top of the graduate-school mountain, but there in the sandpile at Sunday School.”¹

Many of you have heard and possibly even read Robert Fulghum’s book, *All I Really Need To Know I Learned In Kindergarten*. In the beginning of this book, Fulghum lists a series of random thoughts about what he learned in kindergarten such as holding hands when crossing the street, playing fair and taking a nap every afternoon. I wondered what my list would have been like had I known to think about such things at that age.

Part of our challenge is that most of us don’t, if ever, make such a list until much later in life. And, if we attempted to compile this list, we come to realize that it is difficult to hearken back to simpler days when things seemed so clear and absolute. I would challenge you to think about the things you learned when you were in kindergarten and Sunday school. Here are a few things I think I learned:

**Say your prayers before you go to bed,
Sing with joy even if you sound funny,
Laugh as much as you can find things to laugh about,
Enjoy what God has made.**

Say your prayers before you go to bed. This may seem obvious; but it is amazing how many nights I forget to say my prayers at night. And I wonder why I should be surprised when I wake up in the middle of the night worrying and thinking about things that I can’t do anything about! Saying our prayers at night allows us to 1) thank God for the day that we had, 2) confess the things for which we are sorry we did and seek God’s forgiveness, 3) release the things to God that we cannot change or control, 4) ask for a peaceful night and 5) surrender ourselves to God’s mercy and guidance. I would encourage you to turn to page 127 in the Book of Common Prayer and follow An Order for Compline. Reading Compline before you go to bed is a wonderful way to ensure a peaceful and restful night.

Sing with joy even if you sound funny: One of my fond remembrances was singing in Church and Sunday school. I think about how I was unafraid of singing at the top of my lungs and smiling all the way. Singing brought a sense of joy that I don’t think I ever lost, except maybe

¹© Robert Fulghum, 1990.

Found in Robert Fulghum, *All I Really Need To Know I Learned In Kindergarten*, Villard Books: New York, 1990, page 6.

when my voice changed as a teenager. ☺ I think of how today many of us are often bashful when we think someone is listening to us sing, whether it be while we are in church or in the shower, so we don't do anything. If you don't want anyone to hear you sing, sing in the shower when you are home alone or sing in your car with the windows rolled up. If you don't want to sing in church, I would encourage you to read aloud the words of the great hymns that we sing on Sunday. At the least, hum the tune and read the words. I promise you it will provide you a new perspective during and after our time of worship. Many times, the music we sing on Sunday carries me through the week; sometimes I can't get them out of my head.

Laugh as much as you can find things to laugh about: There is scientific proof that people who laugh often live longer and enjoy healthier lifestyles. This should be proof enough for us to get on the **JOY** bandwagon; but for some odd reason we miss opportunity to take joy in where we find ourselves or what we are doing or with people who surround us. I tend to focus on more serious matters and often get so caught up in doing that I forget about being. For example, Jackie and I have an ongoing negotiation about the movies we choose to watch. I am more of a suspense/thriller/documentary kind of guy; Jackie likes to balance between those kinds of movies and the light-hearted and funny movies. No wonder she is more joyous than me. So, my point is to take the time to seek out joy in all that you do and wherever you find yourself. Try to find ways to laugh and if you have to, go see a kooky movie. And if all else fails recite the following prayer:

**“Lord, help me to not take myself so seriously
that I forget the presence of your angels whom you have sent to bring me joy.”**

Enjoy what God has made. I think most of you are aware that I am an outdoorsman. I love to hike, fish, hunt, garden, and watch wildlife. I am continually intrigued with the natural world and enjoy every opportunity to ponder God's creation. The more time we contemplate and understand our natural surroundings, the better stewards we become of God's creation. As Christians, it is our responsibility to be ongoing stewards of the bounty that God has provided. I was fortunate to have been part of a family who spent a lot of time in the outdoors. Spending time in the outdoors is a cornerstone of my spiritual life. If I don't get “outside” on a regular basis, my creative senses become dull and my energy levels begin to wane. So consider opportunities to remind yourself of God's blessed creation.

So as summer meets its halfway point, remember to say your prayers before you go to bed, to sing with joy even if you sound funny, to laugh as much as you can find things to laugh about, and to enjoy what God has made. And remind yourself, above all things, that it was your Sunday school or kindergarten teacher who most likely taught you these most important life lessons.

TCGB

Our Prayer for Children's Ministry:

Lord Jesus Christ, just as we were once children who were taught and nurtured by those
who were called to teach us about your love and life that you gave for us:

So clothe and convict us with your Holy Spirit that we may lead the children to whom
you have entrusted us with your care to the knowledge and love of you, and for your great glory. AMEN.

Announcements

Inaugural Holy Remnant 3rd of July Picnic a Huge Success!

Thanks to everyone who joined us for this wonderful event. As usual the side dishes and the desserts were phenomenal and a good time was had by all.

Youth and Young Adult Ministry

We are in the process of determining how we can best serve our youth and young adults in the ministry at St. Thomas. Be on the lookout for an announcement of a meeting for the parents of our young people in the next few weeks to discuss more details.

Food Basket

The Food Basket has been blessed with an abundance of food to redistribute, as a result of the Postal Carriers annual food drive. We are grateful to them for their trust in us to give this food to those in need in our area. This is over and above anything we have ever received. Therefore, we would like to step up food distributions to twice a month. Presently, we do this on the 4th Wednesday of each month. We want to increase our distribution to include the 2nd Wednesday. We need volunteers who will lend a hand for about an hour, packing the food on the Tuesday prior to each 2nd Wed. each month.

My thoughts are that we do this at 5pm, so as to include men, women and our young folks, and those who work. We will need a minimum of 6 workers for each of the Tuesdays. We can therefore provide for forty families each month, working with DHR, as we do now, with them picking the food up from the church basement the following morning.

Below is a proposed sign-up sheet for your convenience. Please study it carefully, and call me ASAP to volunteer your assistance for a specific time. (The youth need community service time, and this would certainly count toward that goal). A member of the regular FB crew will be there to assist and direct this project each time.

Thanks...Jan (382-8605) Upcoming Opportunities: July 12 @ 5pm August 9 @ 5pm

Vestry Meeting

Vestry Meeting at 5:30 pm on Monday, July 18, 2011. Unless otherwise noted, these meetings are open to members in good standing.

Prayer List

Pray daily for the Church,+ Katherine our Presiding Bishop, +Phillip, our Bishop, previous Bishop +Charles, our Priest Reid and Jackie, our vestry, our nation and city, our president, governor, mayor and other elected leaders, our military (Dent Neilson, Alabama National Guard, , law enforcement officers and firefighters, the sick, the needy and the bereaved. Olga Morton, Bonnie, Alcie Farnum, Betsey Vincent, Bill, Logan, Camille Fuller, Janice Lehman, Gerald, Buzzy, Martha Speir, Mary Ann, Jordan, Judy, Lynn, Ann Price, Ralph, Lee, Pauline, Evelyn, Sarah, Morrell, Trish, Fred Helmsing, Ernie Jones, Wayne Jones, Roberta B., Paggie, The Jail Ministry, Earthquake and Tsunami Victims and the victims of the Alabama tornadoes, the Midwest tornadoes and floods.

Our spiritual growth as individuals and as a community is predicated on our worship and fellowship experiences when together. If you are not already doing so, make regular attendance at gatherings and worship a part of your spiritual discipline. We also ask that you pray for the individuals and groups found on the prayer list. Please continue your financial stewardship to enable the ministry at St. Thomas to continue to grow. If you are behind in your financial commitment to St. Thomas, whether it be through a pledge or otherwise, please consider bringing your giving up to date. Whatever you give is greatly appreciated and received.

Thoughts and Announcements from Father Reid

House Blessings

As Jackie and I prepare to move into the rectory, I am reminded that one of the wonderful services that we “Episcopals” celebrate is the Blessing of a new Home. We will schedule the blessing of the rectory in the early fall but in the meantime, I wanted to invite any of you who are interested to have your home blessed. Whether you have lived in it for a brief or longer period of time, I am happy to schedule a Celebration service at your home. Celebrating a home blessing is a great way to invite your neighbors (especially those not involved in a church) to meet other members of St. Thomas and to share in the fellowship that we often look past. More importantly, the service is a reminder to keep Christ in our home, the place where we spend most of our time.

Funeral Planning

I want to encourage you to consider meeting with me to discuss making your funeral arrangements in advance. For some of you this probably sounds a bit odd, but I must tell you that putting off planning our funeral does not necessarily postpone our death. It is natural that we might think we can control all aspects of the future but we know that is not realistic. Planning our funeral service does not mean planning its date; doing so provides an opportunity for spiritual growth in unimaginable ways. Besides one of the greatest gifts we can provide our loved ones is to plan our own funerals, especially if it is an untimely one. If we take this important step, our family members and loved ones will not have to deal with such important details during their time of grief; it can be burdensome and confusing. Planning your funeral will remove any guessing as to “what you really wanted” in your service.

I am developing a set of guidelines that are close to being completed. They will assist you by asking some important questions. It will cover aspects including end of life issues, power of attorney, living wills, funeral home instructions, embalming or cremation, cemetery plots, service rites, music, prayers and any other special instructions. The document you develop will be placed on file at the church and can be amended at any time. So please, consider beginning this process. You won't regret it.

Pastoral Care

Please call me if you are aware of anyone in our church family (including yourself) who is experiencing a concerning illness, bereavement, hospitalization and/or possible surgery. Please do not assume that we are aware of every instance that occurs in this community.

Discretionary Fund

We are continually involved with individuals and families who are in need of financial assistance for issues such as medicine, travel food, utilities and gasoline for travel to doctors. Please consider making a contribution to continue our ministry to the needy.

July 2011 Worship Assistants

Sunday July 03, 2011

Greeter: Mamie Brown
Acolytes: Team 3
Lay Readers: Jim and Julian
Ushers: Bob and Sumpter
Altar Guild: Ramona, Mary
Flower Guild: Mary Dearing

Sunday July 10, 2011

Greeter: Priscilla Davis
Acolytes: Team 1
Lay Readers: Dent and Bill
Ushers: Garry and Mints
Altar Guild: Susan, Claudia and Cemira
Flower Guild: Mary Richardson

Sunday July 17, 2011

Greeter: Jan Ackerman
Acolytes: Team 2
Lay Readers: Mack and Morgan
Ushers: Everett and Mike
Altar Guild: Susan, Claudia and Cemira
Flower Guild: Mary Richardson

Sunday July 24, 2011

Greeter: Marion Norman
Acolytes: Team 3
Lay Readers: Steve and Cleve
Ushers: Herbert and Don
Altar Guild: Ceil, Fleta, Jill and Marion
Flower Guild: Frances Frakes

Sunday July 31, 2011

Greeter: Rosa McGowin
Acolytes: Team 1
Lay Readers: Bill and Julian
Ushers: Bob and Harry
Altar Guild: Ceil, Fleta, Jill and Marion
Flower Guild: Frances Frakes

July Birthdays

Kathleen Stabler-----6
Frances Ann Watts-----6
Coleman Wise-----8
Cemira Powell-----12
Judy Gettys-----13
Amy Waloszyk-----16
Liza Berry-----19
Steve Stallworth-----19
Van Speir-----21
Marge Conway-----23
Don Jones-----23
Charlie Kennedy-----23
John Wise-----24
Jennie Hamilton-----27
Terry Mullins-----29

July Anniversaries

Mr. and Mrs. Bryan Reynolds-----14
Mr. and Mrs. John Ackerman-----15
Mr. and Mrs. Terry Mullins-----15

July

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

Third Sunday
after Pentecost
Worship 10:00
Picnic 10:30

Independence
Day

Choir Rehearsal
(If needed)
6:15pm

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

Fourth Sunday
after Pentecost
Worship 10:00

Food Basket
5:00pm

Choir Rehearsal
(If needed)
6:15pm

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

Fifth Sunday
after Pentecost
Worship 10:00

Vestry Meets
5:30 pm

Choir Rehearsal
(If needed)
6:15pm

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

Sixth Sunday
after Pentecost
Worship 10:00

Choir Rehearsal
(If needed)
6:15pm

31

Seventh Sunday
after Pentecost
Worship 10:00

2011