

The Witness



St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
East Haddam, Connecticut

December 2010 –
January 2011

In this issue

Calendar
From Rachel...
Lectionary & Vestry Notes
Rotation Schedule
St. Stephen's Children
Deacon's Corner
It's all about Relationships
Money *MATTERS*
LAS: Forum & Fun Night



CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

Eve of the Nativity

5:00 p.m. – Children's Pageant,
Angel & Youth Choirs,
& Holy Eucharist

10:30 p.m. – Carol Sing

11:00 p.m. – Sermon,
Senior Choir,
& Holy Eucharist

Christmas Day

9:00 a.m. – Sermon & Holy Eucharist

****Sunday, December 26th – 8 a.m. ONLY**

Advent Is All About Anticipation

"Scrooge and Marley residence, I believe?" asked one of the Stewardship guys referring to his list. "Have I the pleasure of addressing Mr. Scrooge or Ms. Marley?"

"Ms. Marley has been dead these seven years," Scrooge replied. "She died seven years ago, this very night."

"We have no doubt her liberality is well represented by her surviving partner," said the Stewardship guy. "At this festive season of the year, Mr. Scrooge, it is more than usually desirable that we should make provision for St. Stephen's budget for it suffers greatly at this time."

"Are there no endowments?" asked Scrooge.

"Somewhat," said the Stewardship guy.

"Are there still outstanding pledges?"

"There are, still" returned the Stewardship guy, "I wish I could say there are not."

"Oh! I was afraid that something had occurred to prevent St. Stephen's from meeting its budget—surely its endowments & pledges are sufficient?"

"Under the impression that these scarcely furnish enough funding to St. Stephen's, we choose at this time to seek a way to bring Christian cheer and hope to its people. It is a time of all others, when the deficit is keenly felt, and abundance rejoices. What shall I put you down for?"

"Nothing!" Scrooge replied.

"You wish to remain anonymous?"

"I wish to be left alone," said Scrooge.

As we remember the ending of Dickens', *A Christmas Carol*, Scrooge had a complete turn around and "knew how to keep Christmas well" the whole year through. The Stewardship Committee is asking that everyone keep Christmas well by using the enclosed envelope to lower this year's deficit.

God bless us everyone.
The Stewardship Committee

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|---|---|---|--|--|
| | | | 1 <u>8:00 pm</u> AA Meeting | 2 <u>7:00 pm</u> Choir Rehearsal | 3 | 4 <u>10 am-1 pm</u> Cookie Fair |
| <hr/> | | | | | | |
| 5 <i>Second Sunday of Advent</i> <u>8:00 am</u> Morning Prayer & Communion <u>9:00 am</u> Rob Bell, "Today" <u>9:45 am</u> Sunday School <u>10:00 am</u> Holy Eucharist <u>5:00 pm</u> Harvest House | 6 <u>6:00 pm</u> Yoga | 7 <u>7:30 pm</u> AA Meeting | 8 <u>8:00 pm</u> AA Meeting | 9 <u>7:00 pm</u> Choir Rehearsal | 10 | 11 |
| <hr/> | | | | | | |
| 12 <i>Third Sunday of Advent</i> <u>8:00 am</u> Morning Prayer & Communion <u>9:45 am</u> Sunday School <u>10:00 am</u> Holy Eucharist <u>5:00 pm</u> Harvest House | 13 <u>6:00 pm</u> Yoga <u>7:30pm</u> Vestry | 14 <u>7:30 pm</u> AA Meeting | 15 <u>8:00 pm</u> AA Meeting | 16 <u>7:00 pm</u> Choir Rehearsal | 17 | 18 Democratic Town Committee pancake breakfast |
| <hr/> | | | | | | |
| 19 <i>Fourth Sunday of Advent</i> <u>8:00 am</u> Morning Prayer & Communion <u>9:45 am</u> Sunday School <u>10:00 am</u> Holy Eucharist <u>5:00 pm</u> Harvest House | 20 <u>6:00 pm</u> Yoga | 21 <u>7:30 pm</u> AA Meeting | 22 <u>8:00 pm</u> AA Meeting | 23 <u>7:00 pm</u> Choir Rehearsal | 24 <i>Eve of the Nativity</i> <u>5:00 pm</u> Eucharist & Pageant <u>10:30 pm</u> Carol Sing <u>11:00 pm</u> Candlelight Eucharist | 25 <i>Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ</i> <u>9:00 am</u> Holy Eucharist |
| <hr/> | | | | | | |
| 26 <i>First Sunday After Christmas</i> <u>8:00am</u> Morning Prayer & Communion – ONLY ONE SERVICE <u>5:00 pm</u> Harvest House | 27 <u>6:00 pm</u> Yoga | 28 <u>7:30 pm</u> AA Meeting | 29 <u>8:00 pm</u> AA Meeting | 30 <u>7:00 pm</u> Choir Rehearsal | 31 | |

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---|---|----------------------------|
| | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 <i>2nd Sunday After Christmas</i> | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 <i>Epiphany of Our Lord Jesus Christ</i> | 7 | 8 |
| 8:00 am Morning Prayer & Communion No Sunday School 10:00 am Holy Eucharist 5:00 pm Harvest House | 6:00 pm Yoga | 7:30 pm AA Meeting | 8:00 pm AA Meeting | 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal | | |
| 9 <i>1st Sunday After the Epiphany</i> | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 8:00 am Morning Prayer & Communion 9:45 am Sunday School 10:00 am Holy Eucharist 5:00 pm Harvest House | 6:00 pm Yoga 7:30 pm Vestry | 7:30 pm AA Meeting | 8:00 pm AA Meeting | 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal | | |
| 16 <i>2nd Sunday After the Epiphany</i> | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 8:00 am Morning Prayer & Communion 9:45 am Sunday School 10:00 am Holy Eucharist 5:00 pm Harvest House | 6:00 pm Yoga | 7:30 pm AA Meeting | 8:00 pm AA Meeting | 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal | 7:00 pm LAS Forum & Fun Night: "Meet the Prayer Shawl Ministry" | 4-8 pm Wedding Reception |
| 23 <i>3rd Sunday After the Epiphany</i> | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 8:00 am Morning Prayer & Communion 9:45 am Sunday School 10:00 am Holy Eucharist 5:00 pm Harvest House | 6:00 pm Yoga | 7:30 pm AA Meeting | 8:00 pm AA Meeting | 7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal | | 7-9 pm Middle School Dance |
| 30 <i>4th Sunday After the Epiphany</i> | 31 | | | | | |
| 8:00 am Morning Prayer & Communion 9:45 am Sunday School 10:00 am Holy Eucharist Annual Meeting & Potluck 5:00 pm Harvest House | 6:00 pm Yoga | | | | | |

From Rachel...

It would be so much easier to slink away under cover of darkness, wouldn't it? The grieving process runs the gamut of emotions. No wonder that corporations give little notice and have no time for grief when workers are let go. It's easier than having to say goodbye.

No wonder, too, that some workers come back to the workplace to express their anger or rage. We are creatures with feelings, and they have to be expressed in some way (even if it is the more accepted way of eating or drinking).

Yankees, and especially Episcopalians, are well trained at hiding emotions. As a Southerner, I learned to protect myself by not revealing what I was feeling. Though I have often been told I should never play poker, I know about Steel Magnolias.

Yet leave-takings done well require words: feelings expressed and thanks expressed and love expressed. How difficult to find words that do justice to my feelings and thoughts at this time! Each of you means something different to me; each of you has distinct gifts and personalities and a way of being as God's child. A blanket "goodbye" does not do justice to the depth of relationship we have shared.

But gee, it is exhausting to say goodbye, so I am back to wanting to slink away under cover of darkness. Maybe it would be easier for you as well, if I just disappeared. You and I are reminders to each other that we are going through transition, and as I've been told repeatedly in the last month, no one likes change.

For the last few years, I have found myself drawn to these words of Ghandi: "you must become the change to wish to see in the world." Before Ghandi said these words, God fleshed them out for us in the birth of Jesus. God became the embodiment of love and justice and healing and living in wholeness with God and neighbor—the change God wished and wishes to see in this world.

Instead of slinking away when the world was dark, God enters into it, in this child Jesus. God does not keep distant when in relationship, but comes close, in a messy birth to an impoverished couple. Ordinary words may fail; God sends God's word of love in the

person of an infant—a vulnerable infant who needs nurturing and tending.

God depended on both Mary and Joseph saying "yes" to this change. Though they were clearly afraid -- and Joseph wanted to slink away under cover of darkness -- they opened themselves up to what God would create through this birth. So they said "yes" to the change God wished to bring into the world: what an act of love it is to accept a child into our homes, especially a baby!

The change brought about by my leaving St. Stephen's pales in comparison to their willingness to engage God in creating this big change in the world, the birth of Jesus. But it shares, I trust, the same source and the same presence: the Spirit's desire to make the love of God flesh, to do something new that is beyond our imagining.

If we feel in the coming days and weeks and months that we are out of our comfort zone, remember Mary and Joseph making that trip to Bethlehem; remember them settling for a manure-laced cow stall as a delivery room; remember them enduring the chattering neighbors who might of said, "yeah, right, the Holy Spirit is the father."

Remember that no matter how poor or vulnerable Mary and Joseph were, they held in their hands a sign of God's unchanging love. No matter how poor or vulnerable we feel, we hold that same love in our hands, in our lives.

We hold it when we hold bread and wine; we hold it when we behold creation; we hold it when we hold each other; we hold it when we hold those who feel cut off from the love of God.

Thanks be to God for not slinking away in darkness, but choosing to come close, and so, bringing light. The change God brought in the world through that child Jesus lives on in us by God's Spirit.

I am thankful for the time we have had together. And now I wonder, what God will "birth" in us in the days to come?

"Therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain (1 Corinthians 15: 58)."

Rachel

THE WITNESS

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January 2011

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Ushers:
Glenn Brielmann
Church School:
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Diocesan Delegate:
Lynne Meyer
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Acolytes:
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Liz Garofalo
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Ladies Aid Society:
Kathy Faye
Altar Guild:
Nancy Giesey
Coffee Hour:
Kendall & Tanya
Knox

Vestry:
John Van Steenburgh
Madeline Fazzino
Tanya Knox
Cindy DiNino
Wynne Morgan-Brown
Andy Lavigne
Maggie Shepherd
Kathy Faye
Glenn Brielmann
Wardens:
Gordon Cobleigh
Gerry Piccola

Rotation Schedule

December 2010-January 2011

| | Ushers | Lay Readers | Lectors | Acolytes | Chalice Bearers | Prayers of the People | Altar Guild | Coffee Hour | Nursery | After Service Prayer |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|--|---|--|-----------------|----------------------|
| 12/5 | Glenn Brielmann | Dianne Warley | Eric Thomas | Connor Johnson | Gordon Cobleigh | Bonnie Yackovetsky | Jane Burtis D. Duncan | Knox & DiFiglia | Amanda Lisitano | Cindy Holle |
| 12/12 | Liz Garofalo D. Corriveau | Jim Meyer | Peter Gilsenan | Brittany Yackovetsky | Ron Shepherd | Chick Grillo | Liz Garofalo | Garofalo, Drew & Homar | C & M Cavrell | Janet Whitty |
| 12/19 | Phil Piccola | Kathy Faye | Kerri Willis | Michael Homar | Dianne Warley | Gerry Piccola | Nancy Giesey | Johnson & Hoover | Marci Marciniac | Evelyn Morgen |
| 12/24 | For 5 p.m. & 11 p.m. Worship Services Please Refer to Sign-up Sheet | | | | | | | | | |
| 12/26 | Kendall Knox | Gordon Cobleigh | Matt Budzik | Stephanie Yackovetsky | Maggie Shepherd | Glenn Brielmann | N & L Iacovelli | Guptill, Iarusso, Dedman, Moore | Andrew Lavigne | Bonnie Yackovetsky |
| 1/2 | Glenn Brielmann | Dave Hass | Ann DiFiglia | Edwin Homar | Dennis Whitty | Barbara Hass | Jane Burtis D. Duncan | Brielmann, Marciniac & Lisitano | Amanda Lisitano | Liz Garofalo |
| 1/9 | Liz Garofalo D. Corriveau | Evelyn Morgen | Peter Gilsenan | Erin Holle | Dan Holle | Dave Hass | Liz Garofalo | Schott, Morgan-Brown | C & M Cavrell | Liz Johnson |
| 1/16 | Phil Piccola | Dianne Warley | Kerri Willis | Samantha Homar | Gordon Cobleigh | Ann DiFiglia | Nancy Giesey | Klinck & Faye | Marci Marciniac | Kathy Faye |
| 1/23 | Kendall Knox | Jim Meyer | Matt Budzik | Connor Johnson | Ron Shepherd | Dianne Warley | N & L Iacovelli | Johnson & Yackovetsky | Andrew Lavigne | Cindy Holle |
| 1/30 | Glenn Brielmann | Kathy Faye | Ann DiFiglia | Brittany Yackovetsky | Dianne Warley | Wendy Hummel | Terry Tovey | Knox & DiFiglia | Amanda Lisitano | Janet Whitty |
| Ushers | Bud Hall Glenn Brielmann Phil Piccola Kendall Knox Liz Garofalo Dennis Corriveau | Lectors Peter Gilsenan Kerri Willis Matt Budzik Ann DiFiglia | Acolytes Brittany Yackovetsky Michael Homar Stephanie Yackovetsky | Chalice Bearers Ron Shepherd Dianne Warley Maggie Shepherd Gordon Cobleigh Dennis Whitty Dan Holle | Prayers of the People Barbara Hass Dave Hass Ann DiFiglia Wendy Hummel Dianne Warley Liz Johnson Bonnie Yackovetsky Chick Grillo Gerry Piccola Glenn Brielmann | Altar Guild Nancy Giesey Jane Burtis Debby Duncan Liz Garofalo Nick Iacovelli Lynn Iacovelli Terry Tovey Bud Hall (alt) After 10am cleanup Maggie Shepherd Cindy DiNino Wynne Morgan-Brown Evelyn Morgen Nursery Carl & Melissa Cavrell Marc Marciniac Andrew Lavigne Amanda Lisitano | After Service Prayer Bonnie Yackovetsky Liz Garofalo Liz Johnson Kathy Faye Cindy Holle Janet Whitty Evelyn Morgen Coffee Hour Maureen Johnson Priscilla Hoover Anne Guptill & Ed Iarusso The Dedmans Ruth Moore | Marsha Brielmann Marc Marciniac Amanda Lisitano W. Morgan-Brown Rachel Schott Kathy Klinck The Fayes Liz Johnson The Yackovetskys The Knoxs Ann & Frank DiFiglia Liz Garofalo Jay Drew Lisa Homar | | |

LECTIONARY TEXTS**December 5—Second Sunday of Advent**

Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19
 Isaiah 11:1-10
 Romans 15:4-13
 Matthew 3:1-12

December 12—Third Sunday of Advent

Psalm 146:4-9 or Canticle 3 or 15
 Isaiah 35:1-10
 James 5:7-10
 Matthew 11:2-11

December 19—Fourth Sunday of Advent

Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18
 Isaiah 7:10-16
 Romans 1:1-7
 Matthew 1:18-25

December 26—First Sunday after Christmas Day

Psalm 147 or 147:13-21
 Isaiah 61:10—62:3
 Galatians 3: 23-25; 4:4-7
 John 1: 1-18

January 2—Second Sunday after Christmas Day

Psalm 84 or 84 1-8
 Jeremiah 31:7-14
 Ephesians 1:3-6, 15-19a
 Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23 or Matthew 2:1-12 or Luke 2:41-52

January 9—First Sunday after the Epiphany:**Baptism of Our Lord Jesus Christ**

Psalm 29
 Isaiah 42:1-9
 Acts 10:34-43
 Matthew 3:13-17

January 16—Second Sunday after the Epiphany

Psalm 40:1-12
 Isaiah 49:1-7
 1 Corinthians 1:1-9
 John 1:29-42

January 23—Third Sunday after the Epiphany

Psalm 27:1, 5-13
 Isaiah 9:1-4
 1 Corinthians 1:10-18
 Matthew 4:12-23

January 30—Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

Psalm 15
 Micah 6:1-8
 1 Corinthians 1:18-31
 Matthew 5:1-12

Vestry Highlights

November 8, 2010

Opening Reflection

Discussed Ch. 13 in Christianity for the Rest of Us: What makes churches practice reflection? Questions of faith. Questions about death. Does God really care about me? Some believe we appear on “God’s radar” What is to be done about these questions? Do we find our way through examples of persons in the Scripture?

Capital Campaign Report

Decision to move ahead with campaign. There is time to pause and re-group in the transition. We are in the Quiet Phase of the Campaign. Total pledges thus far are an inspiring number. Reception and Q&A at the Weissbach’s home.

Fred Weissbach: “This effect will be a testament to the Parish’s ability to step out in faith.”

Treasurer’s Report

Receipts are down (off-set by Fundraiser: Chicken Bar-B-Que). Made first payment on Diocesan Loan. We will have a projected deficit in 2011 of \$20,134. Motion: by Tanya Knox to accept Treasurer’s Report. Motion Seconded by Kathy Faye; carried unanimously.

Request from Treasurer Denny Tovey: that the money from the Morgan Stanley account be lodged with the checking account rather than UBS, due to need for future bill paying.

Stewardship Committee Update

The vestry will make calls to parish members. 33 pledge cards have been returned to date \$75,000 has been pledged to date for next year’s church budget.

Nominations for 2011

The following Vestry Terms will be up: John VanSteenburgh, Cindy DiNino, Wynne Morgan-Brown. Glenn will give some thought to this.

Interim Time/Report from Gordon and Gerry on meeting with Erik Larsen, Transition Officer for Diocese

Gordon will research how many people are needed for the Search Committee (9-18 mos.). 22 parishes in the Diocese are in some form of transition.

Motion to adjourn by Kathy Faye; motion seconded by Andy LaVigne.

Compline to be led by Andy LaVigne.

St. Stephen's Children



Greetings –

So what's going on with Church School??? I am very happy to say that our newly expanded church school program is doing great! We have added an additional classroom this fall to accommodate our 2nd & 3rd grade children and it is full every week! I would like to thank Meg Dedman for volunteering to teach this class for the first quarter. She has done a wonderful job & I am so very thankful to her for all of her support. We will be in need of someone to take over teaching this class for the winter. Please consider signing up to teach & help nurture our children's faith & love in God – It is quite a rewarding experience!

During the month of December, we will be focusing on teaching the children that it is more blessed to give than to receive. There are a few different ways that we will be doing this – the youth class will be shopping & buying gifts for the Angel Tree program, all the classes participated in an inter-age gathering to make Christmas decorations & crafts to give to the families of Harvest House. We will also be collecting gently used toys which will be brought to a consignment shop in return for money that will be donated to the East Haddam Fuel Bank. They are in great need of donations due to many families requiring assistance to heat their homes this winter. What a great way to teach our children to help others and to show them that they CAN help too!

Christmas Pageant – Our annual pageant will be held during the 5:30pm Christmas Eve service. If your child has not signed up for a part and would like to, please contact me ASAP. I will make sure that everyone who wants a part will have one. Rehearsals will begin on Sunday, November 28th and continue every Sunday following the service until Christmas Eve.

January – We will be having a double-feature movie night during the month of January. I will keep you posted with the exact date & time. The purpose of the double-feature is to be able to have a movie for the younger children earlier in the evening and then another for the older children/youth. I hope to have all the families of St. Stephen's attend!

January will be an interesting month for our parish as we will be without Mother Rachel. She will be dearly missed by all and I would like to wish her all the best for what God has planned for her. It will be a journey for our parish and I would like to reassure the families of St. Stephen's that this will not change anything pertaining to our Church School Program – We are a very warm and caring parish and I have faith that God will also be with all of us as we go through this transition. If you have any concerns please always feel free to contact me. Through Him many things are possible! Keep the faith! I would love to see St. Stephen's Church continue to grow and thrive.

God bless –

Lynda Hickey

(860) 267-2494 or st.stephenchildren@att.net



ALBERTINELLI, Mariotto; Birth of Christ; 1503; oil on wood

St. Stephen's Annual Meeting will take place on January 30, 2011 after the 10am time of worship. This will include at a minimum the election of officers and Vestry members...more details will be made public as they are known to the Wardens & staff. Deadline for annual reports is January 12th: please submit to Jennica at st.stephenschurch@att.net. Thank you!

Remember to turn to channel 3 or log onto www.wfsb.com for any storm cancellations over the winter.

Deacon's Corner: Christmas Day

It's hard to believe that it is almost Christmas! Where did the year go? The old saying that "time flies when you are having fun" must fit in here somewhere but in these last few weeks it seems more appropriate to say that time has come to a screeching halt, at least in terms of our life together at St. Stephen's. With Mother Rachel's announcement that she will be leaving us Christmas Day we all have been trying to work through life without Mother Rachel, and it is not easy. There are so many emotions swirling around and through us not the least of which is grief of the loss of our beloved priest. My first reaction was, "Life without Rachel? Ohhh!!" I have been here only a year and have greatly enjoyed working with Rachel and being part of St. Stephen's, getting to know you all as you allow me to be part of your lives. There will be a large void for me also.

Our lives are filled with endings and beginnings. Some are minor and some, like this, are very large and affect us to our core.

I was thinking about Christmas Day, how God in one action created an ending and a beginning on so many levels—how like Him. The coming of Jesus would be the end of our estrangement from our Creator because of sin. It would also be the beginning of new life and forgiveness in the work Jesus would do for us.

Where there is a beginning, there too will be an ending. Where there is an ending, there too will be a beginning. And so it is for Mother Rachel and for us. How right it is that she chose Christmas Day!

I have known Rachel long enough to know that she listens to the Lord and is obedient to His call. We are aware that obedience to the Lord is at once joyful and painful. When God says, "I want you to do this and not that," He is calling us to an ending and a beginning. It is a time to cling to our faith and trust in the knowledge that God has it all in His able hands.

I think it is important to remember this for Mother Rachel and for us as time passes and the ending and the beginning approach. God is in this. It is important for us to model Mother Rachel's faith and trust. We do walk, as the scripture says, by faith and not by sight.

And so, by faith, let us allow God's love to hold us and focus us. With that in mind I encourage you to

recall the wonderful memories you have of Mother Rachel and tell her what she has meant to you in your walk with God. If you have trouble speaking it the words, write it down on paper and send it or hand it to her. We are all blessed to be a blessing!

The Diocese and Vestry are already doing the work they must do even in the midst of our grief and the Bishop has told me that I may remain here during the transition time and I am grateful for that grace.

We thank God for Rachel and for her ministry among us. May she go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In His love,
Dianne

It's All About Relationships

I heard on the radio the other day that life is all about relationships, i.e. family and friends, co-workers, doctors, and, very importantly, with God.

My relationship with Rachel is the closest I have ever had with a member of the clergy, as I'm sure it is with so many of you.

Anyway, we at St. Stephen's were very comfortable in that relationship but, all of sudden, God stepped in and said "Rachel, I have something very important for your next adventure." God also said "St. Stephen's, because you have such a loving church family, I have something very important for your spiritual growth, as well."

Over the next few weeks we'll be very busy in our own lives, preparing for the holidays, baking cookies, getting the Christmas pageant together, learning new Christmas music... It will be a little quieter than normal, however, because Frank DiFiglia won't be able to speak for four weeks!!!! (Thank you, Jesus).

So here we are—Rachel and parish—heading into unknown waters. But we have to keep looking forward through our sadness to the next gift that God gives us. God brought us all to this place for a reason. He wants us to continue his good works and continue the love that grows here. Don't lose heart. I know I want to continue seeing all of you here on Sunday mornings. It's important to my relationship with all of you.

We can do this. We're really good at living by faith. Amen.

Sincerely with love,
Gerry Piccola

Money Matter\$

Dear fellow St. Stephen's church goers, as we all know by now, Mother Rachel is leaving us Christmas Day, 2010. Among other things, we do not now have a clear understanding of what our next year's budget will look like.

The important thing to remember is that just because Mother Rachel is leaving is no excuse on forgetting your pledge for next year, or cutting back on it. The Wardens have been in contact with the Diocesan transitions officer over what type of new pastor we are to get. A large part of this decision will be based on what St. Stephen's pledging looks like. The responsibility as to what we will have as a new pastor in the future is now in our collective hands and pledges.

Please remember that there still is a successful Christian Education program, a multi-generational music program, a sexton (do you want to volunteer to help clean the church? I didn't think so), a secretary, and continued maintenance to fund.

Yes, we need to challenge ourselves financially if we are to continue our wonderful programs and to meet our mission statement. It is not unusual for St. Stephen's to set a goal first, and then rise to the occasion to accomplish that goal.

Through all this, we still have each other and God's boundless grace. We believe we have the capability to support God's mission through St. Stephen's.

The Stewardship Committee

Helping & being helped locally:

Gift cards for youth and teens are being collected through December 14th. In previous years, Janet Whitty has created a lovely bulletin board as a reminder of this; in the spirit of “going green,” this year’s appeal will be simpler, but the need is still present: please purchase a gift card that you think a teen would enjoy using, and place it in the “bag” in the narthex.

For younger children: “Stuff the Cruiser” is December 11th at the Nathan Hale Plaza in Moodus from 9am to 4pm.

If you know children in need, contact Youth & Family Services: they get gifts to people in need, based on donations from groups like us. They can be reached at (860) 873-3296

The LAS Announces the 3rd Forum & Fun Night:

...Ever wonder about those prayer shawls that are blessed during the service? Where do they come from? Can anyone make them? How do I get one to give to someone in need?

“Meet the Prayer Shawl Ministry” with Priscilla Hoover, prayer shawl guru, on Friday, January 21st, at 7:00 p.m. (note change of date).

Come learn about these beautiful handmade hugs and how they have made a difference in so many people’s lives. Stay for a demonstration on how to make one yourself! All ages are welcome. No prior knitting or crocheting experience is necessary! We will provide instructions and guidance for those interested in becoming a part of this important mission. If you are interested, please sign up on the sheet in the Narthex.

Coming soon:

Mar 17, 2011—7pm—Praying in Color

Join Lynne Meyer, a passionate parishioner who has embraced this beautiful art of prayer, watch a workshop DVD on "Praying in Color" by Sybil MacBeth and learn how to pray in color.

May 19, 2011—7pm—Women and Church

Join Bishop Laura Aherns for a discussion on "Women and Church." How has the place of women in the church changed since women's ordination? Has it? Bishop Aherns is an enthusiastic, wise woman of God who will listen and speak from her experience as a woman, priest, and now bishop in the Episcopal Church.



Author Unknown. Ethiopian Nativity Scene, from The Four Gospels, 1664-1665

Dec. 2010—Jan. 2011

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
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*Nevertheless,
there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress...*

*The people walking in darkness have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has
dawned...*

*For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*