
The Outrider

November 2005

The View from Above the Close

"If I was goin' there, I wouldn't
start from here...."—Irish directions

The story goes like this: someone stops and asks a farmer in Ireland for directions to a town. And the answer is the one above.

Sometimes I feel that way in my ministry..."if I was goin' there, I wouldn't start from here...."

As I'm writing this, I've been Rector of St. John's for 16 years, 3 months and 26 days. There is so much change and transformation we've seen together that I wouldn't know where to start to describe it to you. And, in spite of all that new life we've created—and it is profound and astonishing—I sometimes feel like we're walking in place. We need to lean more fully into the vision of ministry of the remarkable parish and come from that passion.

Here's what I've decided and promise you will be true for the rest of the time I am the Rector of St. John's—I'm going to give up the longing to "get somewhere" in my ministry and shift into the mode of "coming from" somewhere in my life in your midst.

And here's where I'm going to be coming from: God's hospitality and inclusion is absolute. God's love is what the Christian life is about—that and that only. And I'm going to "be coming" from a place of hospitality and inclusion and love. Just that and nothing more...and certainly, nothing less.

I'm going to quit worrying about where we "want to go" and how to get there. God, so far as I can see, can take care of that. But for me, I'm going to come from a place of light and life and hope and joy. And wherever we end up together, I can promise you the ride will be worth it! I want to get out of the boat and walk on water. I want to break down the walls and welcome all sorts and conditions of folks into our journey. I want to quit worrying about "results" and start focusing on "commitment". I want to let God be God and live into God's promise of Life and Life in Abundance....

I have no idea what that will look like—and I invite you to join me in the journey and the joy. Time's a wastin'—let's "come from" the place of wonder and love and possibility....That's my plan—come on along....Hold onto your hats....

Shalom, JLM

Holiday Worship



THE EVE OF THE INCARNATION

4:00 PM
7:30 PM
10:00 PM

The Family Service of Holy Eucharist and Carols
Santa Eucaristia en la Vispera de Navidad
Christ Mass with Choir, Instrumentalists and Eucharist



Christmas Morning Service

THE FEAST OF THE INCARNATION

10:00 AM
12 del día

Holy Eucharist Rite I and Carols
misa en Español



Judy Gray

Celebrations

Lorene Castle, Senior Warden

When I was young, I played the accordion in nursing homes in the rural Kansas community where I lived. Nursing homes were fine places to visit but it was never my goal to live there.

I'm much older now and I realize that I may not always be able to live by myself. I'll have a choice when that time comes. I can be upset with the circumstances of my life or I can count my blessings. I don't know which I will choose but I will try to remember how Judy Gray has adjusted to this transition in her life.

Thank you Judy. You are not just surviving. You are thriving. Thanks for modeling the way for me and for others.

"Plop Plop Fizz, Fizz - Oh What a Relief It Is"
by Judy Gray

That's what I felt when I got here (Health Center of Greater Waterbury). Until then I would never have dreamed that living in a convalescent home would be anything but the pits.

*On the bus going to the ordination service September 17, 2005, I was lucky enough to be sitting next to Lorene and when I told her my story, she asked me to write it down for *The Outrider*, because someday, however reluctantly, we might all face this.*

The other day I was talking to the Director of Nursing here. She is a registered nurse with twice the experience that I ever had, and where but in a nursing home would you even get a chance to talk to the Director of Nursing. We both agreed, that until recently, no self-respecting degree nurse would ever stoop so low as to work here. But times have changed and the scene is totally different. Here we have recreation all day every day and one evening a week, everything from coffee to music to games to creative writing to Bible study. There is a huge gym in the basement with tons of the appropriate equipment and skilled therapists.

We have an administrator who smiles and a social worker who really knows how to help. Of course, not everything is perfect. The food isn't the greatest and some of the nurses could do with a few more lessons, but live and learn. I'm sure that I wasn't always a perfect nurse. Some of my fellow residents are hard to cope with, but as the saying goes, "there but for the grace of God go I".

I know that this is long but I couldn't condense it, and life is long too, and in case you ever need to come here or to a similar place, I hope this can offer some reassurance.

Judy is living out Goal Number Three of our five-year plan which is "Serving the needs of our neighbors in Waterbury". Judy's positive attitude touches many lives in her new residence.

Plans for Broadway on the Green 2006

We are looking forward to the 12th Broadway on the Green production which will be held on March 24th and 25th. We have especially enjoyed having the folks that attend the Hispanic church services at St John's as part of our cast in 2005 and hope you will join us again for 2006. We encourage any and all of the rest of the congregation to join us as well.

You may have read my comments in the program book concerning why we do Broadway on the Green. As I state there we use the philosophy of the Suzuki Method to direct and teach both adult and children cast members. I do this as an extension of my work for over thirty years as a piano instructor and parent educator of the Suzuki Method.

It was Dr. Suzuki's belief that everyone has talent, and it is up to teachers and parents to teach in such a way as to develop that talent. Suzuki parents always attend their child's instrument lessons and practice every day with their child. Suzuki children progress at an amazing rate because their parents are trained to help them learn on a daily basis. While we have used several ideas of Suzuki's in learning our music for BOG, we have not to date actually spent much time talking to the parents of our BOG children about ways they can help their children learn and defining their role in their child's musical development.

It is now time to offer further insight into how parents can help their children excel in learning music, and we will do this at a meeting on Nov 12, 2005 from 10:00 a.m-1:00 p.m. at St. John's church. At that time I will speak to parents about ways they can help their children learn music the Suzuki way. We will also address other changes and improvements we are going to institute in BOG 2006 such as asking all parents to volunteer to work in some aspect of the show. At this meeting Kerri will discuss what you as a parent can do to help in next years show. In addition the stage directors will tell you what songs people will sing where to get music and recordings and will provide a rehearsal schedule. The session will be followed by lunch for everyone.

Because it is so important that parents know how to interact with their children and teach them their music at home, all parents of children who wish to participate in BOG 2006 are required to attend the November 12th meeting. If parents are not present, their child cannot participate in BOG 2006. We are giving considerable advance notice concerning the Nov 12th meeting so that everyone can make plans to be there. November 12th is also the cut-off date for signing up to participate in BOG 2006. So if you want to participate let Kerri Eannarino know by calling her at 203-775-1050 before November 12th or show up for the November 12th meeting.

Broadway on the Green is meant to be a learning experience for everyone. We relish the idea of having people who have never performed and who have not even thought it likely they ever would. This is what makes the Broadway on the Green experience so unique. It is hard to find an experience quite so accepting and encouraging as this one. BOG is a real opportunity for parents and children to learn together. We look forward to your being part of the Broadway on the Green family in 2006

-Jeanne Leudke

RECIPES FROM THE PARISH

My Mom's Chicken and Ham with Wine Sauce

I'm sure my mom got this recipe from a magazine or the soup can, but she's long since forgotten the source. We have enjoyed this recipe for years.

Serves 4

4 Boneless skinless chicken breast halves
4 thin slices of ham
1/2 stick butter or margarine
2 TBL bacon fat
1 Can Campbell's Cream of Chicken Soup
1/4 to 1/3 Cup wine

Pound the chicken breasts thin. Put a piece of ham on each breast and roll them up. Secure with toothpicks. Melt the butter and bacon fat in a sauce pot. Place the breasts in and brown on all sides. Meanwhile, add the wine to the chicken soup. Put the soup mixture into the pot with the browned chicken breasts. Cook over medium to medium low heat until the breasts are cooked through (30 minutes or so). Serve with rice.

Note: I know that most people don't have bacon fat in their refrigerator any more, it works without it, but the bacon fat adds a lot of flavor. Also, I have done this by microwaving the breasts instead of browning. It works but you don't get the great brown bits from the bottom of the pan, nor do you get the butter flavor in the sauce. It's much healthier, but it doesn't taste as good. Also, the wine sauce really needs to cook over the stove, I find the flavor much better when the raw wine taste is cooked out. This doesn't seem to happen too well in the microwave. The wine sauce works in other dishes. I frequently make 2 cans worth of the sauce and put some away. Try stuffed chicken breasts with this sauce. As far as the wine is concerned, I've used everything from Zinfandel to Champagne. I use dry wines because that's what I like. Use a wine you would drink, and have it with dinner!!!

-Pam Toffey

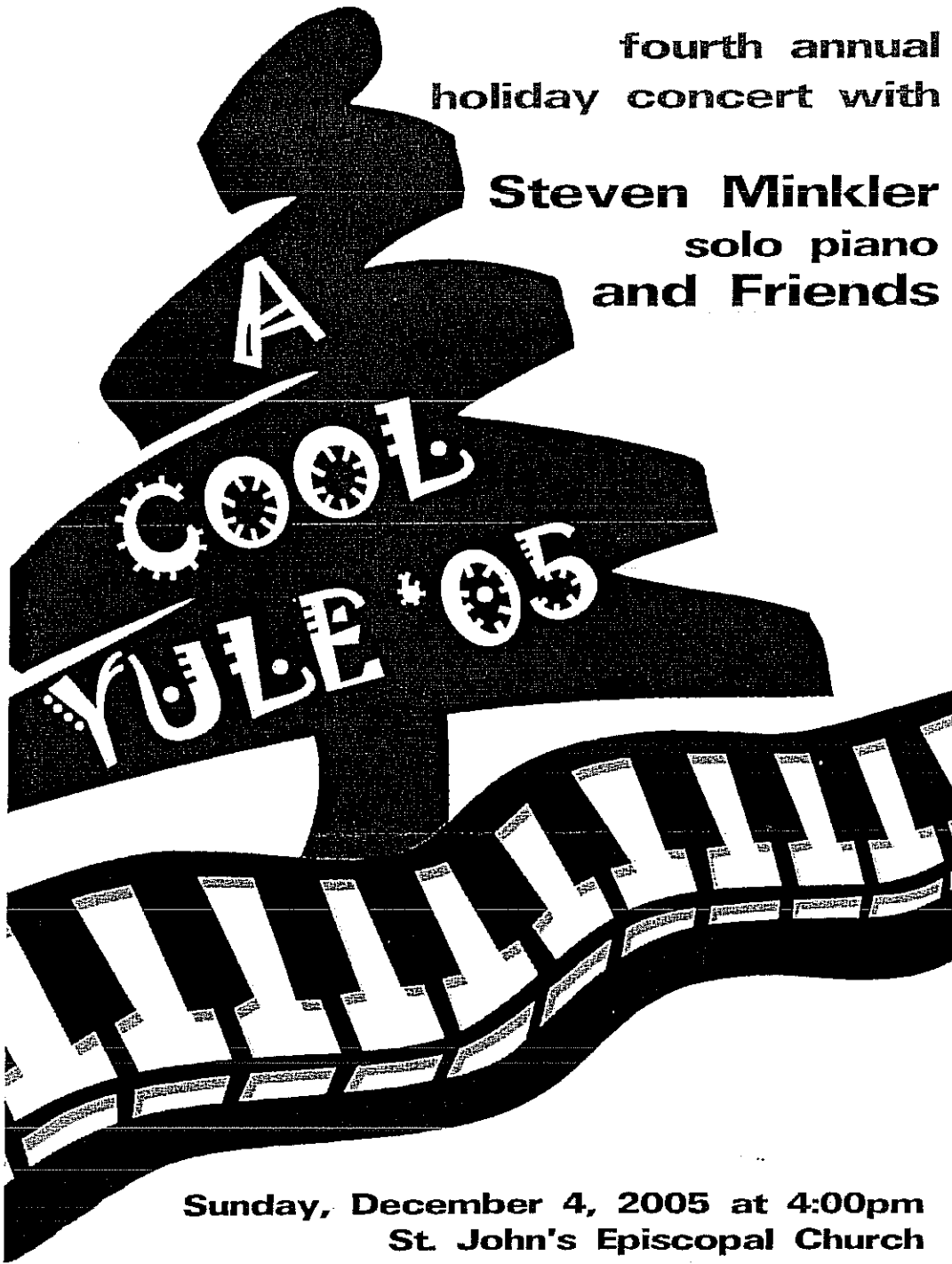
Advent Adult Forum: The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe

C.S. Lewis' children's classic will soon be released as a major motion picture this December. But Lewis' tale is more than just a children's story. It is informed by and reflective of his deep theological interest in Christianity. Join us for two consecutive Sundays, December 4 and December 11, when we will read and discuss The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe and CS Lewis' deeper theological reading. Bring your own copy of the book OR if you need one, please let the office know by 11/15 so that we may order you a copy.

-Michael Spencer

**fourth annual
holiday concert with**

**Steven Minkler
solo piano
and Friends**



**Sunday, December 4, 2005 at 4:00pm
St. John's Episcopal Church
Downtown Waterbury**

After my first piano recital in 2002, I was deeply touched by how many people told me it was a warm, relaxing moment that captured the holiday spirit for them within such a busy time of year. On December 4 at 4:00pm, I'm pleased to present, by popular request -- the fourth annual "Cool Yule" concert featuring a blend of piano solos and duets with my family and friends from St. John's. You're invited to take a break from the hectic holiday season to enjoy an afternoon of light, contemporary arrangements of popular Christmas songs and hymns. I look forward to seeing you then.

-Steve Minkler



Christmas Bazaar

HOLIDAY FAIR & TAG SALE

SAVE THE DATE SAT NOV 19 10AM-3PM

There will be a performance by our Chorister Academy 11:30am and music also by Sandy Totoritis our famous accordion player. Lots of homemade food at Gert's Tavern soups, sandwiches, pies, homemade bake sale, book sale, jewelry (costume & collectible), arts & crafts, terrific door prizes, silent auction, St Nicholas will be there to greet all.

We are looking for items for tag sale, books, jewelry, workers to help set up, work the fair & tag sale, and also clean up. We will appreciate any time you can give even if its only an hour. Please contact Donna Gervickas 203-574-2238.

-Donna Gervickas



COOKIE SWAP

We will be having a cookie swap at St. John's on December 10 at 10:00 am. It will be open to 12 people. Each person will need to bake 6 dozen cookies to swap plus 1/2 dozen to share the day of the swap. They should be packaged in 1/2 dozen packages and you will receive 1/2 dozen cookies from each of the participants. What a great way to spend a quiet Saturday during the busy

SNL - SATURDAY NIGHT LITURGY

During the past year, there have been occasional discussions regarding the creation of a "fourth service" for the Church to supplement the three major Sunday services and as a way of offering a Saturday evening alternate Eucharist. Many have been inquiring about the format and possibility of such a service. *The wait is over...*

On November 12 and every succeeding Saturday, we will offer a 5:00 pm service featuring jazz, acoustic music, and contemplative reflection. Local jazz musicians will perform instrumental pieces and jazz settings of common hymns. Candlelight, jazz and Jesus - 5:00 pm in the vesper light. Please join us for worship.

Live from Waterbury... *It's Saturday Night!!*

Alamanda Women's Choir

The Alamanda Women's Choir will be presenting its holiday concert on Wednesday, December 7th at 7:30 p.m. at South Britain Congregational Church, Southbury. Admission is \$10 for adults and \$8 for children under 12. Marian Carroll is a member of this choir and you can see her if you have any questions.

Ossobuco

I love the sound of the bone against the plate
and the fortress-like look of it
lying before me in a moat of risotto,
the meat soft as the leg of an angel
who has lived a purely airborne existence.
And best of all, the secret marrow,
the invaded privacy of the animal
prized out with a knife and swallowed down
with cold, exhilarating wine.

I am swaying now in the hour after dinner,
a citizen tilted back on his chair,
a creature with a full stomach--
something you don't hear much about in poetry,
that sanctuary of hunger and deprivation.
you know: the driving rain, the boots by the door,
small birds searching for berries in winter.

But tonight, the lion of contentment
has placed a warm heavy paw on my chest,
and I can only close my eyes and listen
to the drums of woe throbbing in the distance
and the sound of my wife's laughter
on the telephone in the next room,
the woman who cooked the savory ossobuco,
who pointed to show the butcher the ones she wanted.
She who talks to her faraway friend
while I linger here at the table
with a hot, companionable cup of tea,
feeling like one of the friendly natives,
a reliable guide, maybe even the chief's favorite son.

Somewhere, a man is crawling up a rocky hillside
on bleeding knees and palms, an Irish penitent
carrying the stone of the world in his stomach;
and elsewhere people of all nations stare
at one another across a long, empty table.

But here, the candles give off their warm glow,
the same light that Shakespeare and Izaak Walton wrote by,
the light that lit and shadowed the faces of history.
Only now it plays on the blue plates,
the crumpled napkins, the crossed knife and fork.

In a while, one of us will go up to bed
and the other will follow.
Then we will slip below the surface of the night

into miles of water, drifting down and down
to the dark, soundless bottom
until the weight of dreams pulls us lower still,
below the shale and layered rock,
beneath the strata of hunger and pleasure,
into the broken bones of the earth itself,
into the marrow of the only place we know.

from *The Art of Drowning* by Billy Collins, copyright ©1995 by Billy Collins

"...the lion of contentment has placed a warm heavy paw on my chest..." I love that line. It is so expressive of home and hearth, love and family. The author is aware of the hunger and pain of the world, yet, for a moment, he lives in the moment, thankful for what he has. May you all spend time in the company of the lion of contentment this Thanksgiving.

-Harriet Fotter

Scenes from an Ordination





Happy Birthday!

11/1	Gilbert Kirby	11/20	Florence Normand
11/2	Tom Butcher	11/20	David Smith
11/2	William Carrillo	11/20	James Smith
11/2	Beverly Guevin	11/22	Megan Foell
11/2	Robert McIntosh	11/23	Christopher Grandpre
11/3	Allene Daniels	11/23	Charles Kellogg
11/4	Akuabe Imudia	11/23	Ariana Lance
11/4	Carol Parker	11/23	Kaitlyn Scott
11/5	Lori Accuosti	11/24	Lillian Brown
11/7	Melvin Bullock	11/24	Katherine Haines
11/7	Patricia Klein	11/24	David Smith
11/8	John Torrance	11/25	Dennis Blyth
11/9	Susan Aubrie	11/25	Kayla Morandi
11/9	Krystal Dover	11/25	Sarah Morandi
11/9	Robin Koskey	11/25	Christopher Noonan
11/11	Martha Coulson	11/25	Joshua Smith
11/11	Reis Muccino	11/26	Charlene Knighton
11/11	Jennifer Spinella	11/26	Mildred Morrone
11/12	Karyn DiTomaso	11/27	Alexander Loomis
11/12	Maria Forrester	11/28	Kimberly Greenier
11/13	Jan Figlia	11/28	John Mantzaris
11/14	Sophie Rundhaug	11/28	Steven Minkler
11/15	Justin Banisaied	11/28	Charlotte Vanasse
11/15	Virginia Cole	11/29	Kay Bergin
11/15	Thomas Flanagan	11/30	Nina Hallock
11/15	Andrew Skipp	11/30	Alexandria Markowich
11/18	Donna Sevas	11/30	Mabel Schuster
11/19	Andrew Beaudoin	11/30	Mark Szantyr
11/19	William Galanti		
11/19	Malakai Pinto		



11/3	St. Claire & Gertrude Benjamin
11/6	Scott & Patty Daniels
11/8	Bryan & Stacy Petrosky
11/10	Howard & Jane Woods
11/10	Michael & Antonia O'Connell
11/23	Kenneth & Lisa Aubrie
11/24	Peter & Bertha Anne Lenart
11/24	Mark & Ann Tabaka
11/26	John & Jane Yuhás
11/28	John & Roseanne Sabol
11/28	Joseph & Nancy Kinsella
11/30	Tony & Jennifer Marques

Parish Prayer List for November

November 6

John & Elsie Champagne, The Chernesky/Banisaied Family, Pinski Chillemi, Shirley Chouinard, Maria Cinquegrana, S. Cinquegrana & R. Knapp, Joe & Rebecca Cipriano, Jennifer Clarkson & Family, Vincent Clement, Maria Coffin and Family, Mrs. Dorothy O. Cole & Family, Virginia Cole

November 13

Susan Coleman, Lisa & Richard Collins, Lisa Commo and Family, William Conda, Mary Conklin, Norma Connor, Jamie Conway & Michael Mrazik, Janet Conway & Earl Riley, Robert Cook, Tom Cook & Family, Cristin Cook, Joseph & Barbara Corbin

November 20

Jim Costello, George & Martha Coulson, Cathy Coviello & Frank McCusker, Philip Coyle, Terry Crawford, Eleanor Crean, Rebecca Crispi & Stanley Mickett, The Culkin Family, Barbara Curry, Raymond J Curry, Frank Daddona, Joseph & Monica Daniel

November 27

Scott & Patty Daniels, Glenn & Anna Decarolis, Audrey Dehayos and Family, Donna Deitch, Geraldine Del-Buono, Pat & Vincent Desouza, Eugene DiCorpo, Joseph & Karyn DiTomaso, The DiZinno Family, Florence Docchio, Maria & Aramis Dominguez

Bread and Wine

November 20 in thanksgiving for the lives of Willard S. and Katherine H. Martin

Coffee Hour

Starting in September, various groups and ministries within the Parish have begun to host the coffee hours after the first and second services. Each group is encouraged to bring photos or displays to educate folks about their various ministries. Members of each ministry are encouraged to be available to both serve at the coffee hour table and talk about their ministry within the parish.

This is a chance for all of us to be involved in the radical ministry that defines St. John's as a parish. And, beyond that, it will, week by week, give the congregation insight into the work and ministry of St. John's.

Here is the schedule through the end of the year:

November 6—ALL SAINT'S SUNDAY—FESTIVE COFFEE HOUR
November 13—Staff
November 20—Staff
November 27—Choir
December 4—Choir
December 11—Chorister Academy
December 18—Chorister Academy
December 25—Christmas Day

In the new year, other groups within the parish will have the opportunity to host coffee hours.

Choristers Sing

If you stand at the bottom of the Choir Room stairs on a Tuesday or Thursday afternoon, you could hear something like this: "support", "sing through the eyes", "shoulders back", "Rib cage up". If all of these instructions have been followed, you might hear a lovely clear tone floating around the Choir Room. This is the kind of serious work that goes on in Chorister Academy rehearsals, and we hope that the result will be beautiful singing that you will hear from children anywhere.

Also, if you listen at the Library door or again at the bottom of the Choir Room stairs on a Tuesday afternoon at 4 o'clock, you will hear young people working on music theory, sight-singing, hymn study, all subjects which support their singing of church music and participation in the liturgy. Successful passing of tests on these subjects results in the awarding of the blue ribbon.

So far, the light blue ribbon (the first) has been earned by Michelle Torres, Maria Luna, Tracy Sookall, Ana Torres, Soribel Ogando, Krystal Dover, Raven Walker, Emperatriz Mayi, Clancy Healy, Ricardo Hernandez, Michelle Japs, Emily Sanchez, Jerry Sookall, Ashlee Gurtowski, Hannah Bellows, Rory Healy and Ofelia Torres.

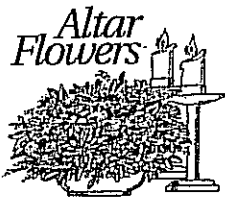
-Maria Coffin

Altar Flowers

St. John's Flower Ministry has modified the way altar flowers are dedicated on each Sunday. Altar flower offerings of nature's beauty are acts of worship that enhance the liturgical seasons, provide beauty to God's altar, and express our love of God's creation in all seasons.

The Flower Ministry has issued an "open call", if you will, for anyone to have altar flowers donated in memory of a loved one, regardless of the amount donated.

Attached to this Outrider are two forms to fill out: one form if you just want to make a general donation to the altar flower fund and a second form for those who wish their loved one(s) to be remembered in the Prayers of the People.



I wish to make a donation to the flower fund:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Please Note: Names submitted for the Prayers of the People will remain on the prayer list for 4 Sundays. If you wish for a name to remain on the list for longer, please call the church office to let us know.

Communion Bread and Wine Offering

If you would like to have Communion Bread and Wine offered in memory of a loved one or in thanksgiving for someone or something, please fill out this form and drop it in the collection plate or mail into the Church Office (Donation is \$10):

Name: _____

Address: _____

In Memory Of: _____

In Thanksgiving For: _____

Sunday you wish Bread & Wine celebrated for: _____

I/We wish to have:

Name(s): _____

Remembered in the Prayers of the People

on Sunday, _____

Name _____

Address _____

RUNNING FOR CHOCOLATE MILK

Five girls from Peace Corps Benin, eight hours in a cramped taxi, four passport stamps and a day of searching for registration points in one of Africa's most developed capitals and the five of us found ourselves weaving through the crowd of participants lined up for the 20th edition of the Nestle sponsored Accra Milo Marathon.

The starting area was packed with young, very muscular Ghanaian men, but very few women and very few foreigners. The atmosphere was electric. So electric in fact that instead of walking to the start gate in an orderly fashion, the crowd stampeded the start area fence and we were off.

Now, no streets are blocked off, which adds two interesting dimensions-one is dodging cars- especially at rotaries- and the other dimension is the ever tempting option to jump on one of the thousands of taxis and minibuses prowling the city. Despite the presence of rubber band checkpoints, many chose to cut some work out of the 26.2 mile journey in this way.

We were lucky to be supplied with water stops- complete with so called "pure water" in plastic sachets, chocolate Milo energy drink and bananas. So in true cartoon fashion we did have to dodge banana peels. If that doesn't suffice, since you are running through markets and noon-day traffic anyway-it is easy to buy water or juice or anything else you need to refuel along the way.

I won't bore you with the details of the grueling 42 km race, but I will say how soon we forget. I remember midway through thinking. What? That's it? Only halfway? NEVER AGAIN! Even the cheery painted messages on the back of the minibuses weren't enough to improve my mood. "Just one day." Yeah, I know, but one long, long day! "Pray to God." What kind of God makes people do dumb things like run marathons anyway? And even if such a merciless being exists, can he or she at least give me the good sense never to participate again! Despite these thoughts I know that I am not the only one who has forgotten the pain and has now contracted the marathon bug- already scheming up what the next one will be.

So we all walked more than we would have liked and finished between five and six hours. We don't know our times or places because unlike in the states, there is no respect for the "losers" here. Ghana being an English speaking country, we were greeted with such support as "run faster." Listen, this is a marathon and not the hundred meter dash. Or "you are last." I don't see you out here running, so you are last!

Despite the challenges, our token boy representative, Brian made us proud to be the first foreigner to finish in a time of 3 hours 21 mins, placing 139, but still far away from the winner, an 18 year old student named Adukpoh GODWIN in 2 hours 29 mins and an Armed Forces member, Victor ASHIAGBOR following in 2 hours 36 mins. Millicent BOADI placed first for the women in 2 hours 44 mins. She is 23 years old and works for the CEPS, Custom Exercise and Preventative Service.

It was an experience- one that I am glad to have had- especially since knee trouble and tummy troubles took at least five weeks out of my training. I think we all wonder if we could have done better. I know I was a little timid because of the knee trouble and we all agree that we were not as well prepared for the mostly uphill course as we would have liked to have been, but just to finish is something and we did. My old cross country running coach used to tell us about the best race he had ever seen. Granted it was only a 5 km, but the two runners were the best in their class- neck and neck throughout the race, tied at the end, promptly vomited from the sheer effort, collapsed and shook hands. He calls it the most beautiful race he had ever seen. I don't know about the driving yourself until you become physically ill, but it is the

worst feeling to know that you could have given a little more- on the field, with family, at work or in life in general. So don't forget to give it all you've got when you can so you can finish in style.

Katherine Haines
PCV Benin, West Africa

Could you get me the Advent Dossal and Frontal, I think they're in the Sacristy?

OK, sure. Hmm, now what am I looking for?

The dossal (or dossals) are the long piece or pieces of fabric hung behind the altar. Dossal is derived from the latin word for back.

The frontal is the patterned or tapestry cloth that hangs in front of the altar. In some churches it is hung on all four sides of the altar and hangs to the floor. The altar cloth is laid on top of the frontal.

Advent is the first season of the Liturgical calendar and begins four Sundays before Christmas and ends with the first Eucharist of Christmas. It is one of two penitential seasons on the calendar (the other being Lent) but is more appropriately considered as a season of preparation for the celebration of the birth of Christ. The colors for Advent are either purple or deep blue. At St. John's we use deep blue. During Advent, we light the candles of the Advent Wreath, which stands on the Altar. There are four candles on the Advent wreath. On the third Sunday, a rose or pink candle can be used, the meaning of which has been debated but which many believe signifies the fact that the readings on that Sunday are not penitential, but celebratory.

Okay, so I'm looking for deep blue hangings in the Sacristy, but where is the Sacristy? The sacristy is the small room to the right of the altar as you are facing it. It is the room where the items used in communion are washed and stored. This is the room the Altar Guild uses on Sunday mornings as it prepares the altar for our Eucharist. In churches where there is a person in charge of the Sacristy, that person is called a Sacristan.

- Pam Toffey



DECEMBER OUTRIDER

The deadline for submitting articles for the December Outrider is November 11, 2005. Please submit all announcements and articles via e-mail to OUTRIDER@stjohnsonthegreen.org or mail them or deliver them to the church office, attention OUTRIDER. You can also give them to Pam Toffey.

I'd like to continue the "Recipes from the Parish" column, so if you have a recipe you'd like to share, please submit it. I'd like to put in one recipe every month.

I'm also looking for pattern submissions for knitting and crocheting hats, mittens, gloves, scarves, ponchos and shawls.

HOLY CROSS MONASTERY RETREAT 2006

We have the opportunity to journey to the Holy Cross Monastery on the Hudson River each year the first weekend in October. I just got back from my fifth visit to Holy Cross. I did not start attending St. John's in time to go the first year I attend St. John's. I put this event on my calendar each year. It is on my calendar for next year. October 6, 7, and 8, 2006.

This year nine of us enjoyed the experience together. We want to increase our attendance next year. We have currently saved 15 spots for next year. I think we can double that but we do not want to tell Holy Cross we are coming if we do not really intend to come

There are as many reasons to go to Holy Cross for a retreat, as there are sands on the seashore. I went originally because I wanted to experience a bit of the Benedictine experience I had read about in Brother Cadfael novels. I went to every service. That was my experience the first year. I loved it!

I went to some amazing classes. I love Psalm 139 because Brother Bede taught a class on discovering the many levels of meaning behind this particular Psalm. I was delighted when the monks chanted Psalm 139 at the first service I attended at Holy Cross this year.

Through the years, my time at Holy Cross has changed. It has become a more personalized experience. The last couple of years my experience has included attending the Rhinebeck Craft Fair. It just happens that women have gone on this junket. I felt like I discovered sisters I did not have in my biological family. Somehow, I think God is smiling about this. We talked to the crafters. They talked to us. They told us in some cases it took years to learn to do what they do. We told them we did not have their gifts. They said, "You may not have this gift but you have a gift. You just need to find it." Not a bad theological message to find at a craft fair.

Can you imagine a weekend where you can do exactly what you need to do for yourself?

. You can go to every service if you want. There are several services during the day, which include the Eucharist and Compline.

. You can eat with people you know without having to plan the meal, shop for the food or cook the meal. Holy Cross has just hired a gourmet cook. We loved the food.

. You can read the books you have wanted to read.

. You can listen to music

. You can walk down the bank to the Hudson River. The Hudson River flows both ways in front of Holy Cross because of the natural direction of the river and the pull of the ocean. The river is deep in front of Holy Cross - 200 feet. We see large boats, barges, seaplanes as we sit on the chairs reading and enjoying the setting. One year I explored the riverbank with Ricky Clark. We found an abandoned shack. We found paths and a rock wall. I love remembering Rick this way. Rick also shared how important God was in his life in the classes and with me. Rick has died since that time. I treasure the memories.

. We go to the Holy Cross Book Store.

. Some of us go and sleep. Do you have a schedule most days. How wonderful would it be to let your body tell you what you needed to do for food or slumber? You can have that experience at Holy Cross.

. There are unexpected learning opportunities when we gather. This year Judy McMannis brought her book of liturgical works she has created and talked to most of us about her works. She told us why she chose the colors, the Biblical significance of what her hangings were portraying, and gave us a preview of something she is creating for St. John's. You will find out what Judy is creating for us at Christmas.

This is a peak experience. Don't miss it.

Lorene Castle
Senior Warden

