

ST. THOMAS' QUEST - JULY 2010

VICAR'S CORNER

Final in a series on the parish goals.

Well, I'm back!

As many of you know, I went on a two-week tour of Rome and Venice in June. I have to tell you both cities were amazing! I like churches, of course, and so I went to all the major ones, including St. Peter's and St. Paul's-Outside-the-Walls. Turns out there are more churches in Rome than there are days in the year. I probably visited 30 of them, and you can see my over 1000 photos on my Facebook page. And I visited the Coliseum and the Roman Forum and several other of the major archeological sites as well. And, well, Venice was a dream come true for me, since I love boats and water, and so visiting a city built with boats and water was really exciting! The Basilica Church of San Marco (St. Mark's) in Venice was in its own way as beautiful as any of those in Rome.



Although I hadn't intended it, I found that visiting and praying at the memorials of St. Mark and St. Paul and St. Peter was quite moving. I felt a real sense of connection down through the centuries with our spiritual ancestors in the faith. Even though we are Episcopalian and Anglican and thus both catholic and reformed, it's easy to recognize our spiritual roots in the sites and buildings of Rome. We are - along with our Lutheran and Roman Catholic brothers and sisters - Western Christians, even though our visible unity is sometimes not as readily obvious as perhaps we'd like.

One of the things that struck me most about Rome in particular had to do with the churches. Not the quantity so much but what was inside. No matter what the décor - and mostly it was lots of marble and statues and paintings and mosaics - there was a lot of it. It was real and vibrant and *present*. There was immediacy and tangibility about the buildings and their interiors. So many churches were raised over important locations in Christian history, such as the site of Peter's grave or Paul's execution, and so from the very beginning there has been and remains a sense of presence and location. Faith is not simply an intellectual exercise in Rome; rather it's lived out in ways that one can see and hear and touch and smell. This *presence* was so noticeable in just about every church and religious site that at times it was overwhelming. And it's celebrated not just in space but also time. All of the major locations have various feast days associated with them, and the celebrations can be over the top. Go to St. Peter's on the Feast of SS Peter and Paul (June 29) and you'll see for yourself!

We do that too, right here in Vernon, although perhaps on not quite the same scale. Our parish just observed a special anniversary in our own life. On July 8, 2005, the Rev. Steve Steele died after a long illness. This year is the fifth anniversary of his death. I have suggested, and the Executive Committee has agreed, to authorize money from the Steele Memorial Fund to engage Ron Dupont, noted local historian and member of our parish, to compile a parish history and to of course pay special honor to Fr. Steve. After all, it's his vision and perseverance that gave us the parish complex we are now so blessed to enjoy and use. We honor his presence every time one of us sets foot on the grounds of the property. And so, since St. Thomas has the oldest church structure in the township with our own Chapel, our history is bound up in the very locale itself.

But more than that, it seems to me. We have a proud and deep history and we of course should celebrate it. But we also have a future. That's what God calls us to, after all. "Behold, I make all things new." The legacy of Fr. Steve is a legacy of *presence* - of immediacy and tangibility in the very buildings we so enjoy. That legacy roots us to a particular time and place, just as the grand and ordinary churches of Rome do so for believers in that city too. And so it's important to not only celebrate and revere the past, but to honor what our forebears have done by being truly present in our own time and place.

We have a great gift in our church and chapel and vicarage and parish hall. And it's time for us to decide what's next for us as we offer our ministry of presence to the community. How do we want to use our presence to proclaim the Good News? How do we want to "welcome one another, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God"? Our fourth parish goal is to "achieve parish status." Ostensibly that's a goal to move us from "mission status." But I believe that we achieve our true parish status when we become the Christian community *in this time and in this place* that God intends for us. We will have some opportunities to begin with a "Kitchen Table" dialog about our future hopes and dreams with representatives from Diocesan Council. Watch for an announcement about that soon. In the meantime, I invite you to think about how we can fulfill our ministry of presence here in Vernon in new or expanded ways. Please share your thoughts with me or any member of the Executive Committee.

The best way we can honor our past is by building on it for our future. I hope you will all choose to take part in this!

Summer blessings continue,

WARDENS' NOTES

So much has been happening around St. Thomas! Take a look around and you will see some property changes, and through the efforts of some pretty dedicated persons. Thank you to everyone who has given of their time and talent to make this possible.

There is a new curbing along the parking area by the Steve Steele Memorial Community Room. The old 2 x 4's have been removed, a ditch dug and with left over paving stone, a new curb has been installed. A generous donation was received from Baldwin Enterprises of the sand and stone needed for the cement.

There are plans to remove the forsythia bushes along side of the Chapel. This removal will help in diminishing any moisture damage to the building. Some forsythia along side our old parish house, which is now Foot Prints, will also be removed so our street signage can be visible.

Changes have been taking place within St. Thomas' as well; some quickly and some not so quickly. The women's room is equipped with a new toilet and a new one is ordered for the men's room.

There is a promise of a Warden's Dinner Dance in December, so dust off your dancing shoes and get ready. Until then, and always, if you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me, Nancy Hansen, Sr. Warden 862-268-6536 OR Dan Kadish, Jr. Warden 973-764-6400.

Enjoy these summer months, remember to keep St. Thomas' in your prayers and we look forward to seeing you in church !

FROM THE TREASURER

Parish Finances as of June 30, 2010

	June	Since Jan.
Offerings Received	\$4,779	\$41,448
Offerings Promised	<u>\$5,788</u>	<u>\$34,731</u>
Difference	\$-1,009	\$12,717
Total Income	\$9,177	\$67,968
Total Expenses	<u>\$8,626</u>	<u>\$76,466</u>
Difference	\$550	-\$8,498

Unrestricted Cash on hand: \$26,940

Our thanks go to the Sumner Gerard Foundation for their special grant for use by the parish (will be reflected in the July report).

The Executive Committee is asking the congregation to help supply our church office. Items that can be donated include:

- white copier paper by the ream 8 1/2 by 11 inch
- white copier paper by the ream 8 1/2 by 14 inch
- standard size staples
- Postage stamps (forever stamps by the book) or rolls of 100.
- Donations for printer ink

Please arrange to leave your donations in the office, with thanks!

"FUN RAISERS" AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

We are holding a **cell phone-raiser** on a continuous basis all year long. Any kind of cell phone with the batteries plus any brand of inkjet or laser cartridges can be recycled. Help protect the environment and also help St Thomas in its fundraising efforts. Ask for donations from your employers, neighbors & friends. Please help!

Wells Fargo will pay St Thomas \$ 300.00 for any refinance or new mortgage that is obtained through Bob Goldwick, Mortgage Representative. Please pass the word on to friends and family. Last year we received \$600.00 for 2 referrals that mentioned St Thomas. Bob can be reached directly on his cell phone at 973-713-1416 or ask Linda Lazicki for more information. Remember you must mention St Thomas for us to get the check!

A trip to the Skyhawks baseball game will be on Saturday July 25. We will leave the church parking lot at noon for a 2pm game. Look for the sign up sheet in the lobby.

The church picnic will be on Sunday August 29th at The Childrens School. Services will begin at 11:00 am with the picnic starting right afterwards. Swimming & fun for all. Details to follow.

The **annual flea market and vendor/craft fair** will be held on Saturday Sept 18th. Mark your calendar! Please start looking around the house for items you no longer need to donate for the sale! I will be placing a sign up sheet for 2010 committee members. Please try to join the committee. Our goal is to make more money than last year which was \$1,750.00!

Have ideas for fundraisers or social events? Please email Linda at c21lazicki@aol.com. All ideas will be considered.

Do we have any DJ's in our group or musicians? Anyone with special talents? Photographer? Artists? Singers? Lets have some fun together!!

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS:

Sunday school is in recess until the beginning of September. During the summer weeks, I have organized a Children's Bible Study; story and craft. All that is needed are some willing hands to assist the children with this activity. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the vestibule.

This is an excellent opportunity for a parent (mom or dad) or grandparent to join with their child and sign up!

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

High Seas Expedition, Vacation Bible School, is beginning the last week of August; August 23 ~ 27 culminating with the Parish Picnic on Sunday, August 29! SO put on your best sailing gear and jump aboard for thrills and chills! LOOK for more info which will be soon! - Nancy Hansen

Holy Counselor Lutheran Church's VBS is **Sunday, July 25th through Thursday July 29**, in the evenings from 5:30 PM - 8:30 PM. A light supper will be served each evening. For more information please call Holy Counselor at 973-827-5251 for more information.

ADDRESS UPDATE

It's time to update the parish directory! Please review your entry in the directory and let us know what changes we should make. We particularly want to update the birthday list and begin an anniversary list. Please update your listing on the parish website at: <http://www.st-thomas-vernon.org/form2/form2.html>. **We hope to issue a revised directory by the end of July, so please give us your updates soon!**

CROSS ROADS CAMPERSHIP BENEFIT CONCERT

Gretchen Bruesehoff, a native of Ocean City, NJ and Will Kelley, a native of Burlington, NC, will give a concert of classical voice and piano repertoire as well as songs from the Broadway stage. Gretchen is a voice student of Stephen Swanson and Will a piano student of Victor Recondo. Among the composers featured will include Mozart, Chopin, Puccini, and Rachmaninov. The Concert will be given on **July 28, 2010 at 8pm** at Holy Counselor

Lutheran Church in Vernon, NJ. A free will offering will be taken in order to support the campership fund at Cross Roads Outdoor Ministries. Cross Roads is a joint ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Newark and the New Jersey Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Cross Roads is located in Port Murray, NJ.

PARISH WORK DAY

On Saturday, August 14, the Property Committee will be powerwashing the exterior of the church in preparation for painting, which will be done in September. We will begin at 8 AM, and volunteers of all kinds will be needed. Please see any member of the property committee for more information. Men and women, children and retirees - all are welcome and needed! Next Parish Work Day: **Saturday August 14 and Saturday, September 11.**

PARISHIONER TO PARISHIONER - *By Parishioners, for Parishioners. To add an item, please call or email the office!*

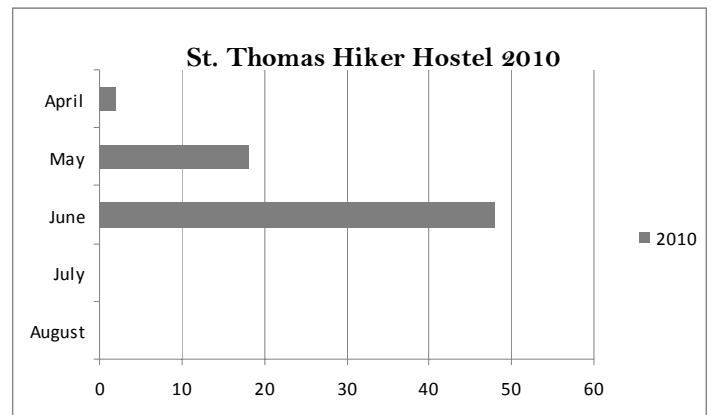
Items Wanted and Items Offered:

Wanted to Sell or Donate:

Help Offered, Help Wanted:

Computer Help Needed! If you can help get my computer back on the Internet, please call me - Dave Mertens 973-209-4320.

HIKER HOSTEL UPDATE



We continue to need volunteers to drop by in the evenings and give our hikers a good St. Thomas welcome. Please sign up in the Lobby.

ST. THOMAS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Welcome one another, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God - Romans 15:7

The Rev. Robert F. Solon, Jr., Vicar
Mrs. Nancy Hansen, Sr. Warden Mr. Dan Kadish, Jr. Warden
Mrs. Kathy Moore, Treasurer Mrs. Paulette Beer, Clerk

307 State Route 94, Vernon NJ 07462
973-764-7506 (O) 973-974-7509 (F)
<http://www.st-thomas-vernon.org/> (web)
stthomas@warwick.net (email)

OUR VISION

We are a growing church family that reaches into and beyond the community. We have a relaxed and supportive environment, steeped in Christian tradition. We value new opportunities to enrich the minds and souls of all who come here.

GOALS

1. Inspire and energize our church community for growth.
2. Continue to develop our inreach and outreach ministries.
3. Enhance our existing Christian education programs.
4. Achieve parish status.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The year next to each name indicates the last full year of elected ministry.

<u>Ministry</u>	<u>Primary Leadership</u>
Chairperson	Fr. Bob
Education	Fr. Bob
	Nancy Hansen (2010)
Fundraising	Linda Lazicki (2012)
Financial/Administration	Kathy Moore (2012)
Hospitality, Social Events	Karen Scott (2011)
	Paulette Beer (2012)
	Linda Lazicki (2012)
Inreach	Debbie Belli (2012)
Outreach	Paulette Beer (2011)
	Emilie Dupont (2010)
Property	Dan Kadish (2011),
	John Mohr (2010),
	Bob Winter (2010)
Stewardship	Nancy Hansen (2010)
	Tom Brath (2010)
Worship, Pastoral Care, Communications	Fr. Bob

DIOCESAN CONVENTION DELEGATES

Ginny Mohr (2011), Kathy Moore (2012), Francine Vince (2013)

STAFF AND APPOINTMENTS

Music Director	David Christensen
Sexton	Ginny Mohr
Parish Accountant	Diane Bryan
Pledge Accountant	Rich Poplaski
Sunday School	Nancy Hansen

From The Book of Common Prayer

Daily Devotion At Noon (BCP p. 138)

From Psalm 113

Give praise, you servants of the LORD; *
praise the Name of the LORD.
Let the Name of the LORD be blessed, *
from this time forth for evermore.
From the rising of the sun to its going down *
let the Name of the LORD be praised.
The LORD is high above all nations, *
and his glory above the heavens.

A Reading

O God, you will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are fixed on you; for in returning and rest we shall be saved; in quietness and trust shall be our strength. *Isaiah 26:3; 30:15*

Prayers may be offered for ourselves and others.

The Lord's Prayer

The Collect

Blessed Savior, at this hour you hung upon the cross, stretching out your loving arms: Grant that all the peoples of the earth may look to you and be saved; for your mercies' sake. *Amen.*

or this

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles, "Peace I give to you; my own peace I leave with you." Regard not our sins, but the faith of your Church, and give to us the peace and unity of that heavenly City, where with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Grace at Meals (BCP. 832)

Grace at Meals

Give us grateful hearts, our Father, for all *thy* mercies, and make us mindful of the needs of others; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

or this

Bless, O Lord, *thy* gifts to our use and us to *thy* service; for Christ's sake. *Amen.*

or this

Blessed are you, O Lord God, King of the Universe, for you give us food to sustain our lives and make our hearts glad; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

or this

For these and all his mercies, God's holy Name be blessed and praised; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*