

ST. THOMAS' QUEST - JUNE 2010

VICAR'S CORNER

Next in a series on the parish goals.

As I write this, the countdown to the end of the school year has already started. If you were like me, this time of year, you simply couldn't wait for vacation to start. When I was younger, summer seemed impossibly long, and even when I got older, I very much appreciated the time off, even when I was still at the school every day working at my summer job. Perhaps some of your own most favorite memories are from your summers.



And even those of us who have long been out of school seem to organize our lives around the school year, it seems. Summer starts when school lets out and goes on until Labor Day. And when the temperature rises and our clothes get fewer and the days get longer, things start to get slower too. It seems like there's more time to simply relax, sit outside on the deck, take in a Mets game on the radio or TV, or go for an evening drive with the windows all rolled down and our favorite music on the CD player. The smells of summer sink into our pores and permeate our hearts and souls. And even though we still have to go to work each day, somehow it seems different – better.

And that's as it should be. We all need to rest a bit. We Americans are the most fast-paced, most driven, most scheduled of all the Western nations. We may be more successful, but in many cases we are wearing ourselves out doing it. And that's not God's intent for us. As far back as right after the Exodus, the need for rest was recognized in the Second Commandment: "Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy." And Jesus himself frequently took time from his ministry to go away and rest and pray, and told the disciples to do the same. We are His disciples of the 21st Century, and we need to rest too. I encourage you to take your vacation time this year. And take all of it too. If you aren't going to lose any money by taking your time off, then by all means do so. I will be doing so myself later this month as well in the autumn. None of us are at our best when we're stressed and overscheduled, and we can't serve others as Jesus asks us to, when we aren't taking care of our own selves and our families.

All good things eventually do come to a close. And summer is no exception. No need to fret about that though. We still have plenty of time! But just as school starts up in September, so too will our Christian education programs. We have a very successful Sunday school program for children up through 6th grade or so. Nancy Hansen and her team have been doing a superb job at helping to ground our children in the Christian life. And that's a great blessing indeed – do thank her when you get a moment.

Our third parish goal is to "enhance our existing Christian education programs." I'm personally very pleased that this is one of our stated goals. Our formation as Christians doesn't end when we are baptized or confirmed. It only begins then. We

heard in the Gospel recently that "The Holy Spirit will teach you all things." That means that we have to be open to listen and to learn! Whether it's something about the Bible or the Prayer Book, a new book in spirituality, how we live day to day as a Christian in a non-Christian world, or whatever, our formation in the mind of Christ need to be ongoing and regular. The more we participate in "working out our own salvation," as St. Paul reminds us, the more we will conform our hearts and lives to what Christ intends for each of us. Our encounters with the Lord in Word and Sacrament on Sunday mornings are the necessary foundation for our continual growth, but for the vast majority of us – including me – it's simply not enough. We get an hour or two of God on Sundays, and then we "go out into the world" and immediately get bombarded with 166 hours of sometimes very un-Christian messages the rest of the week.

And so I see two areas of particular need for the parish in the near future:

- Our older Sunday School children will soon be older and we need a viable Youth Group for the parish.
- We have only had sporadic success in a continuing program for Adult Education in the parish.

Each area has its own needs and focus:

- I'd like to invite anyone interested especially in Youth to let me know this summer of your interest. We can meet together and perhaps come up with some ideas for the fall.
- Also for the fall, I'd like to suggest a Sunday Supper Club. This could be a potluck supper, once a month initially, along with a discussion topic and hopefully a guest speaker. There are a lot of topics we could explore. For example, how about "Christian Responses to Terrorism," or "Harry Potter and Christianity" or even "What's in the Bible?" or "Now what's this Prayer Book thing we use?" The possibilities are limited only by our needs and interests. If you are interested in helping with this education ministry, or have other ideas you'd like to suggest, again please do let me know.

O God, in the course of this busy life, give us times of refreshment and peace; and grant that we may so use our leisure to rebuild our bodies and renew our minds, that our spirits may be opened to the goodness of your creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP p. 822).

May your summer be one of rest, refreshment, and joy!

Fr. Bob

FROM THE TREASURER

Parish Finances as of May 30, 2010

	May	Since Jan.
Offerings Received	\$6,156	\$35,012
Offerings Promised	<u>\$5,788</u>	<u>\$28,942</u>
Difference	\$368	\$6,070
Total Income	\$15,114	\$61,222
Total Expenses	<u>\$12,349</u>	<u>\$63,548</u>
Difference	\$2,765	-\$2,326
Unrestricted Cash on hand:	\$33,153	

Our thanks to all the special Easter donations, including special contributions of \$1200, \$1000, and \$500 for the use of the parish. Your generosity is a blessing to us all!

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

NEED CASH??? The ECW is holding a **“Gold Exchange”** on Saturday, June 26 from 9:00 am to 3pm. Any gold, silver or platinum pieces whether broken or not can be turned into “cash on the spot”. Just bring in the jewelry you do not want anymore and turn it into your own pot of gold. New jewelry pieces will be on hand if you would like to purchase gifts or spend the money you receive from the old pieces on something new.

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.

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 28th 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!

COMMUNITY HOUR NEEDS YOU

Our Community Hour after each Sunday service is one of the great ministries of our church. Who doesn't like friendly conversation along with a good cup of coffee and an assortment of delicious food? This time of fellowship is a wonderful opportunity to catch up on news with friends and acquaintances from church that we don't see during the week. Help is needed though, to provide coffee hour each Sunday. It is easier than you think to provide this wonderful time for our church members. All you have to do is check the day before to see if there is enough milk and half and half for the coffee and purchase some if there is not enough. Then on Sunday morning, make the coffee and put out an assortment of goodies that are provided by the church. Lastly, when coffee hour is over you will need to clean up, put everything away that was used, and turn off the coffee maker. Sounds simple, right? It is and it is so appreciated by everyone too! If you think you need help in doing coffee hour, Paulette Beer (973-697-2264) or Karen Scott (973-579-5080) are willing to help you out. Please consider signing up for a coffee hour on the sign up sheet posted on the bulletin board in the Lobby. Thanks for your time and talent - Paulette Beer and Karen Scott

SUNDAY SCHOOL NOTES:

We counted the 50 days of Easter and continued with our special Easter treats right up to Pentecost! We talked about the number 50 and “penta” re-counting the days from Easter to Pentecost. The Sunday School groups drew pictures depicting the scripture of the Holy Spirit and the many tongues. In an effort to make a current correlation, we named the different types of languages with which we were familiar and how we really didn't think we would be able to speak or understand that language.

Trinity Sunday found us creating triangles with the word “God” in the center then each angle containing the words “Father”, “Son” and “Holy Spirit”.

It's the time of the year when Sunday School concludes along with public schools. June 13 is our last day of Sunday School and our Ice Cream Social will be Sunday, June 20.

During the summer months, I will be again asking parents along with their children to lead a Bible activity on Sundays. There is a volunteer sign-up sheet on the bulletin board. This is such a

fulfilling ministry. The children like helping in leading this activity. Vacation Bible School begins August 23!

It gives me a great deal of joy to see the children opening the Book of Common Prayer during church service and following along. They are able to read along and are anxious to be a participating part of worship even in the singing of hymns. It just takes a bit of practice and guidance.

Thank you for sharing your wonderful children! A great thank you to Gale MacPeck, Susan Moffitt and Nicole Belli. I am indebted for their dedication and commitment. - Nancy Hansen, Sunday School Director

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>

PARISH WORK DAYS

There is always a lot to do around a parish like ours that is blessed with a large complex and beautiful grounds, inside and out. The Executive Committee would like to invite all members to participate in Parish Work Days, every second Saturday from nine until noon, with lunch afterward. Men and women, children and retirees – all are welcome and needed! Next Parish Work Day: **Saturday July 10 and Saturday, August 14.**

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR 2010

In an effort to open the doors to each meeting to St. Thomas' entire congregation, all members are invited to attend regular open meetings of the Executive Committee. **The regular schedule for EC meetings for 2010 is the second Sunday of the month at noon in the Office/Loft.** Please join us – the next meetings are May 16 (note the date change) and June 13.

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

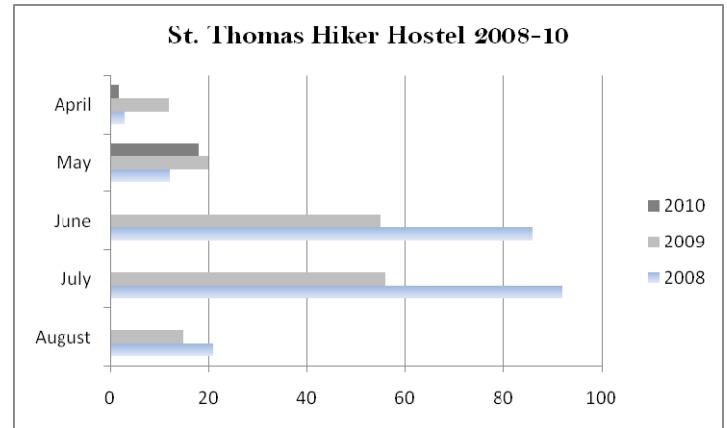
Items Wanted and Items Offered:

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.

FROM THE BISHOP:



This article is written by the Right Rev. Mark M. Beckwith, bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Newark; Rabbi Matthew D. Gewirtz of Temple B'Nai Jeshurun in Short Hills and Imam W. Deen Shareef Masjid Waarith ud Deen in Irvington. They represent the executive team of the Newark Interfaith Coalition for Hope and Peace. It appeared in the Star-Ledger on Monday, May 31.

Messages matter. They bombard us all the time — from TV, magazines and billboards. They shape minds in more ways than we can imagine. Messages can reframe the way we think, how we believe and the way we live.

For three years we have dedicated ourselves to helping reduce violence and bring peace to the streets of Newark. We have been engaged in building relationships and fostering partnerships, and we have been inspired by the many life-giving messages that individuals and groups have been providing the greater Newark community through an unwavering commitment to a deeper hope for the city and its people.

Unfortunately, these heroic efforts and positive messages are often drowned out by distracting messages that suggest our hair needs to be a different color or our bodies need to be a different shape; by distorted messages, which seek to define a community by its violence rather than its good works; and by demeaning messages, such as a jeans ad on a billboard above Market Street a few months back, which depicted a young man and woman in a provocative, if not pornographic, pose. After a public outcry, the billboard was taken down.

The Newark Interfaith Coalition for Hope and Peace represents three major faith traditions — Christian, Jewish and Muslim. As religious leaders, we are in the message business. We want to create messages for the city of Newark — messages of hope and

peace, resonant of our different faith traditions. Messages that we can all embrace, that are easily remembered:

*Support and protect our children.
Our community, our responsibility.*

In the next month you will be seeing these messages on lawn signs and T-shirts. With some additional funding, these life-saving messages will be on billboards across the city. Kids in the Newark schools will be engaged in a poster and essay contest to promote these two messages.

We have an opportunity to create a community-wide message that holds up our children as our most precious assets — and that invites a commitment from the rest of us to offer our own unique gifts to the civic fabric and spiritual soul of the city. Events are scheduled this week to build solidarity and to promote the message, beginning tomorrow with a fast day for clergy of all religious traditions at the Sheraton Hotel in Newark. The Mayor’s Interfaith Prayer Breakfast will be held on Thursday at NJIT from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. A worship weekend is planned June 4-6 honoring the congregational prayer services of the three major faith traditions: Friday (Muslim), Saturday (Jewish) and Sunday (Christian).

If we can learn to appreciate and embrace these messages, there is no telling what positive impact we can generate together.

From The Book of Common Prayer – Daily Devotion In the Morning (BCP p. 137)

From Psalm 51

Open my lips, O Lord, *
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.
Create in me a clean heart, O God, *
and renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from your presence *
and take not your holy Spirit from me.
Give me the joy of your saving help again *
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

A Reading

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!
By his great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope
through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

1 Peter 1:3

A period of silence may follow.

*A hymn or canticle may be used; the Apostles’ Creed may be said.
Prayers may be offered for ourselves and others.*

The Lord’s Prayer

The Collect

Lord God, almighty and everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day: Preserve us with your mighty power, that we may not fall into sin, nor be overcome by adversity; and in all we do, direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

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
Fundraising	Nancy Hansen (2010)
Financial/Administration	Linda Lazicki (2012)
Hospitality, Social Events	Kathy Moore (2012)
	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