

March 1, 2009

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The Quest

St. Thomas' Episcopal Church

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Episcopal Church
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Clergy

The Rt. Rev. Mark Beckwith,
Bishop
The Rev. Robert Solon,
Vicar

Executive Committee

Maryellen Garvey,
Sr. Warden
Nancy Hansen,
Jr. Warden
Diane Bryan, Treasurer
Ellen Shapiro, Clerk
Paulette Beer
Tom Brath
Michael Clouse
Keith Kleimisch
John Mohr
Carol Poplaski
Rita-Ann Schmick
Joe Sommese

Vicar's Appointments

Carol Poplaski,
Altar Guild Director
Nancy Hansen,
Sunday School Director
Émilie Dupont,
Hiker Hostel Coordinator
Butch Smiraldi,
Welcome Mat Ministry
Chairperson

Staff

David Christensen,
Music Director
Eleanor Bortnick,
Interim Music Director
Tammie Osborne,
Parish Assistant
Ginny Mohr,
Sexton

Thoughts from the Vicar...

"In the name of the Church, I invite you to a Holy Lent."

"Alleluia! Christ is Risen!"



Between those two phrases, uttered during the Ash Wednesday service and then at the Great Vigil of Easter, we encounter the most sacred time of the church year. The forty days of Lent, which includes Palm Sunday and Holy Week, are the time of the year when we look most strongly at our own faith and how we are living it out. We pray at the end of every Eucharist to "send us out to do the work you have given us to do." In the season of Lent we take time and energy to work on viewing, or re-viewing, what our work has been and how it can be more in line with the mind of Christ.

And the reason we do so is that our Easter feast will be ever so much more rich and satisfying if we do the work of preparation first. It's rather like the difference between a slow home-cooked meal and (my own personal foible) something from Burger King. The Whopper is fast and easy and sort of satisfying. But I find it tends to sit in my stomach and gives me gas. I think instead of a slow pot roast, with new potatoes and fresh bread, green beans with herbs and maybe cherry pie for dessert. The time to shop and prepare the ingredients, peel the vegetables, cut up the herbs, rub down the roast with spice, the time spent waiting for it all to cook, and smelling the fragrances as they build in the kitchen and fill the whole house – by the time dinner is ready we just know how good it's going to taste. And it does! And when we're finally finished, lingering at the table over coffee, we know that we've been

truly fed, far far better than anything coming from industrial and unfeeling kitchens of the fast-food chains.

Lent is like that. We all know what we celebrate at Easter. We actually do so every Sunday, since every Sunday is a mini Easter. Some believe that Lent is a depressing season. But this time in our own lives and in the life of the community doesn't have to be soul-killing. It's actually intended to be a time of building up, of encouraging, actually. Honest appraisal of self and community with the calm and courage comes from knowing that, as the Psalm appointed for Ash Wednesday has it, "farther than the East is from the West, has the Lord removed our sins from us" – that's actually wonderfully freeing if we let it. It can be hard, no question about it – true spiritual work rarely comes easy. It's the difference in waiting for the great dinner to come and running off to order a pizza or get a combo meal. Lent can be like all the loving preparation for the feast to come in our own kitchen, or it can be the drudgery of a limited diet, counting the days and hours until our fast ends. Both can be spiritually uplifting, but the more holy time, I'd suggest, is the time we spend in preparing our souls for the Great Feast of the Resurrection.

We'll be exploring different ways to have a more holy Lententide throughout this season. Elsewhere in this edition of *The Quest* are announcements of various Lenten activities you may wish to join in, both in the parish and around the town. Also enclosed with this edition is a Lenten poster with a suggestion for each of the days of Lent. You may wish to put it up in some prominent place – mine will be in right off the bathroom where I will see it every morning and mark off the days till Easter.

(continued on page 2)

Thoughts from the Vicar... (cont)

Whatever you do, I encourage you to think of Lent not as a fast – something to give up, to do without, to deprive oneself of. Rather, think of Lent as a time to begin to prepare your soul for the great Feast to come. There's much to do and whole courses of food and drink to begin to work on. We'll start on Ash Wednesday, and continue our journey together through the 40 days until that great moment when once again we proclaim to ourselves and the world, "Alleluia! He is Risen!"

Blessings to you and yours in this most holy season, Fr. Bob

A Message from the Wardens

By the time this edition of *The Quest* is in your hands, members of St. Thomas's Executive Committee will have participated in a special gathering at St. Marguerite's Retreat House within the Community of St. John the Baptist, located in Mendham, NJ.

The Convent of St. John the Baptist houses a religious order for women in the Episcopal Church who seek to center their own lives in prayer and worship in order to offer to others "a place where hearts may be open to receive God's love". St. Marguerite's provides dedicated indoor and outdoor space where seekers might find peace and spiritual refreshment.

Father Bob arranged an opportunity for Executive Committee members to retreat to St. Marguerite's on the 6th and 7th of February so that we might benefit from this environment as we prayerfully considered our role at St. Thomas and dialogued about how we might best fulfill our responsibilities to you, our fellow parishioners.

As you know, 2009 will be a pivotal year in our congregation's history. We are challenged with resolving our financial instability in the midst of a bleak economy while, at the same time, we seek to solidify our sense of ourselves as a sustaining spiritual community.

We commit to open communication and full collaboration with you as we make this journey together. Please attend upcoming Executive Committee meetings. A schedule of meeting dates and times for 2009 will be published in future editions of *The Quest*, displayed on St. Thomas's website, highlighted in Sunday Bulletins, and broadcast via our parish e-mail distribution list. Minutes of all of our meetings are posted in the lobby, as well as on-line. Please also feel invited to approach any Committee member with your concerns, questions, or suggestions.

On behalf of Executive Committee, we thank you sincerely for your support and we look forward to working with you to the benefit of our parish family,

~Maryellen Garvey and Nancy Hansen

2009 Vernon Clergy Ecumenical Lenten Service Schedule

DATE	LOCATION	MINISTER
Wednesday, March 4, 2009, 8 PM	St. Francis de Sales 614 State Route 517	Rev. Nicholas Fontana
Wednesday, March 11, 2009, 8 PM	Holy Counselor 68 Sandhill Road	Rev. Robert Solon
Wednesday, March 18, 2009, 8 PM	Our Lady of Fatima 184 Breakneck Road	Rev. Alec Park
Wednesday, March 25, 2009, 7:30 PM	United Methodist Church 303 Route 94	Rev. Robert Carroll
Wednesday, April 1, 2009, 8 PM	Glenwood Baptist 1863 Route 565	Rev. John Boland
Wednesday, April 8, 2009, 8 PM	McAfee Bible Church Corner of Routes 94 and 517	Rev. Edjir Jean
Friday, April 10, 2009, 2 PM	St. Thomas "Chapel" 307 Route 94	Rev. Roger Spence
Sunday, April 12, 2009, 6:30 AM	Town Cemetery, Rt 94 and Church Street	Rev. Ramilo Esplana

“Welcome Mat” Ministry Report

The Welcome Mat Committee remains 13 strong in its membership and held it's first official 2009 meeting on Thursday, January 22nd. It was hosted at the home of Dennis and Kathy Golden.

Going forward, the ministry is planning to continue to deliver 30 baskets per month to new residents as determined by Linda and Stan Lazicki, members of the committee and Real Estate Agents in the industry for many years.

We look forward to many more Meet and Greet parties in the spring. Our activities will also include fund raisers, e.g. Chapel tours which re-enact turn of the century life of the Vernon Chapel and church yard with scripted readings and song, tour and a period high tea to follow, picnics, fairs, bake sales, bazaars, clowns, balloons and (if we can get it approved) pony rides.

We are also hoping to introduce a "Hospitality Night" at the church which will feature a weekly coffee house with live acoustical music, open mic, poetry readings and a "younger themed" faith based event agenda - to attract teens and young adults in the community. We are also interested in organizing bus trips to local attractions.

The ministry (I am happy to report) is alive and well and ever growing in enthusiasm and community involvement. We are all very excited and look forward to a very vibrant and successful new year!

We encourage the involvement of the entire congregation in the merriment and fun to come this springtime! If you are interested in participating in the Welcome Mat Ministry or in planning for the next event, please contact me at rsmiraldi@yahoo.com.

Regards, Butch

Holy Week Schedule for Services

Palm Sunday	April 5	8 AM – Said 10 AM – Music	Great Vigil of Easter	April 11	8 PM
The Triduum:			Easter Sunday	April 12	6:30 AM - Ecumenical 8 AM - Said 10 AM - Festal Music
Maundy Thursday	April 9	7 PM			
Good Friday	April 10	2 PM - Chapel 7 PM - Church			
Holy Saturday	April 11	12 noon			

Around the Church and Town

✠ NJ Foreclosure Mediation Hotline * 1-888-989-5277 (Mon.-Fri., 8am-6pm) * Program that provides information to qualified homeowners facing foreclosure with free help from housing counselors, attorneys and a neutral mediator to help resolve their home loan delinquency. Homeowners must meet program criteria for assistance.

✠ If you are having difficulty paying your mortgage and may be facing foreclosure, please call Stan & Linda Lazicki at 973-702-1111 for a confidential chat that may help you save your credit rating. This is a complimentary service.

✠ The Community Choral Society will present their annual Spring Concert at St. Thomas on Sunday, June 6th at 3 PM. Please come to show your support for our local singers!

Announcements

✠ IHN week is almost upon us again! During the week of March 15 - 21, St. Thomas will be hosting folks under the direction of Emile Dupont. Please look for sign-up sheets in the lobby, as we need volunteers to help. If you have any questions, please contact Emilie, she would love to talk to you.

✠ The community room at St Thomas is available for rent most days and evenings for organizational meetings, tutoring, after school programs, family functions, group meetings etc. Full kitchen privileges are available. For pricing and dates available, please call Stan Lazicki at 973-903-9110 or call the church office.

✠ Because of some complaints the church has received, please remember to be kind and park only in the parking lot at St. Thomas' when you are here for events or activities. Please do not use any other parking lot besides our own.

A little bit about...Rita-Ann Schmick

Every newsletter we'll be focusing on either a member of the church or someone who works in the church.

Rita-Ann McCullough Schmick has a lot going on for her this year. Not only has she been voted Mrs. Sussex County for 2009, but in May, she is going to compete for Mrs. New Jersey, United States. Plus, between working at the salon and putting time in at SC-ARC as a program specialist, she's one busy woman.

Yet she still has time to be a wife to Jimmy and mother to Michael (20), Parker (12), Ben (10) and Ruby Tuesday, their 8 month old Shih Tzu. And, if that isn't enough, she and Jimmy became licensed foster and adoptive parents last year, so they are interested in helping children by opening their home to them.

She does take a break every now and again, and participates in her favorite activities to wind down. The list includes belly dancing, camping, cooking, cleaning and making crafts, which she loves to give as gifts to

people. Hiking and walking are also favorite ways to relax.

As a member of the Executive Committee of the church this year, she's very in tune with how the church runs since she's been active in it for 9 years. Up until last year, she led the Christmas Pageant and was the president of the ECW for 2 years. In the past she's been a Sunday School teacher and has loved to help over the years with the Pancake Supper. Currently, she's also scheduled regularly as a lay reader for Sunday services.

When she's not running around and doing all she does, Rita-Ann takes time off by going on vacations with her family in their camper. She says her favorite vacation spot is "...definitely Disney, hands down", but she'll take anywhere as long as it's with her boys. Yet you probably could sway her a bit if you offered her some beach time and threw in a week or two in Vermont...

Upcoming Birthdays:

March	April	May
1 Scott Frank Cassell Pete Dickerson	2 Butch Smiraldi Elaine Waddington	1 John Griffin
2 Alexandra Zimmerman Erich Mayer	3 Jonathan Cataldi Jason Chilenski	3 Jay Kelter
4 Jennifer Phillips	4 Edward Ihrig	5 Ginny Mohr Chris Key
11 Michael Wiedbrauk	4 Denise Zimmerman	6 Sophia Tremont
12 Lisa Cooper	5 Steven Fischer	7 Tom Malatesta Mike Chastain
13 George Mindos	6 Stephanie Clouse Hannah Marie Vince	8 Keith Kleimisch
14 Alexander Clouse	7 Rosemary Page	13 Susan Weiss Tom Immesberger
15 George Guttilla June Smiraldi Rachel Marie Lynch	9 Pam Schulien	15 Dan Kadish Scott Cassell
16 Joan Lodge	10 Katie Weiss	22 Sheri Solanka Tuite
19 Nancy Blanchard	11 Jesse Gabel	23 Ellen Shapiro
20 C.H. Coster Girard Pat DeCoste Ron Dupont, Sr.	12 Braden Bonser	26 Eric Meichsner
22 Patricia Cataldi	14 Paton Roth	28 Seth Moore
23 Millie Baker Melanie Stoltenborg	18 Michelle Fischer	30 Colin Mankiw Meghan Page
24 Tristan Krause	19 Sharon Krause	
27 Ann Fitzgerald Emilie Dupont	22 Sandy Engel Michele Edwards	
28 Glenn Key	24 Lauren Hanf Mary Ellen Garvey Justin Downs Timothy Moffitt	
	26 Mary Rose Jones	
	28 Chuck Griffin	
	29 Ann McKenna Dave Mertens	
	30 Kira Mayer	

March 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Said) 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Sung) 11:15 AM Community Hour	2	3 6:30 PM AA Meeting 8:00 PM Choral Society Practice	4 8:00 PM Ecumenical Serv (St. Francis de Sales)	5 4:30 PM Girl Scout Troop 956 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	6	7
8 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Said) 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Sung) 11:15 AM Community Hour 6:30 PM EC Meeting	9	10 9:30 AM Harvest House at 1st Baptist, Sussex 6:30 PM AA Meeting 8:00 PM Choral Society Practice	11 7:30 PM Episcopal Church Women 8:00 PM Ecumenical Serv (Holy Counselor)	12 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	13	14
15 IHN Week 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Said) 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Sung) 11:15 AM Community Hour	16 IHN Week	17 IHN Week St. Patrick's Day 6:30 PM AA Meeting 8:00 PM Choral Society Practice	18 IHN Week 8:00 PM Ecumenical Serv (Our Lady of Fatima)	19 IHN Week 4:30 PM Girl Scout Troop 956 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	20 IHN Week	21 IHN Week
22 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Said) 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Sung) 11:15 AM Community Hour	23	24 6:30 PM AA Meeting 8:00 PM Choral Society Practice	25 7:30 PM Ecumenical Serv (Vernon United Methodist)	26 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	27	28
29 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Said) 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Sung) 11:15 AM Community Hour	30	31 6:30 PM AA Meeting 8:00 PM Choral Society Practice				

Bulletin Bloopers:

- *Tuesday at 4:00 PM there will be an ice cream social. All ladies giving milk will please come early.
- *This being Easter Sunday, we will ask Mrs. Lewis to come forward and lay an egg on the altar.
- *The church is glad to have with us today as our guest minister the Rev. Green who has Mrs. Green with him. After the service we request that all remain in the sanctuary for the Hanging of the Greens.
- *Pastor is on vacation. Massages can be given to Church secretary.

Excerpted from <http://www.doyletics.com/tidbits/church.htm>

April 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 8:00 PM Ecumenical Serv (Glenwood Baptist)	2 4:30 PM Girl Scout Troop 956 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	3	4
5 Palm Sunday Holy Week 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Said) 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Sung) 11:15 AM Community Hour	6 Holy Week	7 Holy Week 6:30 PM AA Meeting 8:00 PM Choral Society Practice	8 Holy Week 7:30 PM Episcopal Church Women 8:00 PM Ecumenical Serv (McAfee Bible Church)	9 Holy Week 7:00 PM Maundy Thursday	10 Holy Week Good Friday 2 PM Ecumenical Serv (St. Thomas Chapel) 7:00 PM Good Friday Solemn Liturgy (Church)	11 Holy Week 12:00 PM Holy Saturday Service 8:00 PM Great Vigil of Easter
12 Easter 6:30 AM Ecumenical Serv (Town Cemetery) 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Said) 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Sung) 11:15 AM Community Hour	13 Easter Week	14 Easter Week 9:30 AM Harvest House at 1st Baptist, Sussex 6:30 PM AA Meeting 8:00 PM Choral Society Practice	15 Easter Week 10:00 AM Ecumenical Women Meeting 7:30 PM Mid-week Bible Study at Holy Counselor	16 Easter Week 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	17 Easter Week	18 Easter Week
19 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Said) 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Sung) 11:15 AM Community Hour	20	21 6:30 PM AA Meeting 8:00 PM Choral Society Practice	22 7:30 PM Mid-week Bible Study at St. Thomas	23 4:30 PM Girl Scout Troop 956 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	24	25
26 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Said) 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Sung) 11:15 AM Community Hour	27	28 6:30 PM AA Meeting 8:00 PM Choral Society Practice	29 7:30 PM Mid-week Bible Study at Holy Counselor	30 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal		

A Warm Thank you to our IHN Volunteers...

Though names were not available at press time, St. Thomas would like to thank all those who helped with IHN in December. Your dedication and graciousness were well received! Kudos!

May 2009						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Said) 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Sung) 11:15 AM Community Hour	4	5 6:30 PM AA Meeting 8:00 PM Choral Society Practice	6 7:30 PM Mid-week Bible Study at Holy Counselor	7 4:30 PM Girl Scout Troop 956 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	1 8	2 9
10 Mother's Day 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Said) 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Sung) 11:15 AM Community Hour	11	12 9:30 AM Harvest House at 1st Baptist, Sussex 6:30 PM AA Meeting 8:00 PM Choral Society Practice	13 7:30 PM Episcopal Church Women 7:30 PM Mid-week Bible Study at St. Thomas	14 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	15	16
17 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Said) 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Sung) 11:15 AM Community Hour	18	19 6:30 PM AA Meeting 8:00 PM Choral Society Practice	20 7:30 PM Mid-week Bible Study at Holy Counselor	21 4:30 PM Girl Scout Troop 956 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal Ascension Day	22	23
24 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Said) 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Sung) 11:15 AM Community Hour	25 Memorial Day	26 6:30 PM AA Meeting 8:00 PM Choral Society Practice	27 7:30 PM Mid-week Bible Study at St. Thomas	28 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal	29	30
31 Week 23 Pentecost 8:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Said) 10:00 AM Holy Eucharist (Sung) 11:15 AM Community Hour						

"All May, Some Should, None Must."

The practice of private confession is an ancient one that is commended by our own Book of Common Prayer (see page 447). Particularly during the season of Lent, it may be helpful to unburden yourself of acts or feelings that have been holding you back spiritually. It can be as formal or informal as you wish, and is always confidential. "The content of a confession is not normally a matter of subsequent discussion. The secrecy of a confession is morally absolute for the confessor, and must under no circumstances be broken." (BCP p. 446) If you'd like to schedule a time to meet with Fr. Bob privately, feel free to call 973-764-7317 or mention it directly.

Adult Education

The services of Holy Week – Palm Sunday through the Easter Vigil – are the most profound, and also the most ancient, connecting us directly to our ancestors in faith down through the ages. Come explore the riches of these services so that your personal and communal experience of them will be deepened and enriched:

- March 1 – Palm Sunday
- March 8 – Maundy Thursday
- March 15 – Good Friday
- March 22 – Holy Saturday
- March 29 – The Great Vigil of Easter

Join Fr. Bob from 9 AM to about 9:30 AM (between services) at the front of the church to discover more about these most sacred of the church’s public services. Bring your coffee if you’d like!

A Special Thank you to those who helped...

At the Art Auction on Friday, February 20th.

Auctionable donations were made by:

Marita Bankhead, Jill Dickerson, Rob Lesch, Harold MacPeek, Ruth Mueller-Maerki, Parker & Ben Schmick, Rita Ann Schmick, Karen Scott, Bill Shapiro, Butch Smiraldi, Fr. Bob Solon, Francine Vince, Agatha Wyman

Other donations were made by:

Elaine Brath, Doreen Edwards, Kathy & Dennis Golden, Mary Ellen Garvey & Tom Malatesta, Linda & Stan Lazicki, Gaye Murphy, Pam Schulien, June Smiraldi, Dawn Sommese, Terry Taylor, Francine Vince, Janice & Craig Wallace, Emilie Dupont

Organizers and ticket sellers:

Evelyn Hanf, Elaine Brath, Debbie Belli, Linda & Stan Lazicki, Mike Wiedbrauk, Doreen Edwards, Rita Ann Schmick, Pam Schulien, Bob Winters, Bob Williams, Glen Key, Keith Kliemisch, Paulette Beer, Ellen Shapiro, Gale MacPeek, George Mindos.

And special thanks go out to our Publicity Coordinator, Chris Wyman.

And to anyone who’s name we didn’t have by press time, thank you!

My heartfelt appreciation goes out to each and every one of my brothers and sisters in Christ for their encouragement and support in this effort with a special thank you to my co-chair, Gale MacPeek. Thank you to the forerunner of this event, Ginny Mohr for her guidance.

In Christ, Nancy Hansen

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.*

ST. THOMAS’ EPISCOPAL CHURCH
307 ROUTE 94
VERNON NJ 07462



LABEL