

The Parish Church of St. Paul
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Magazine of
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Monroe, North Carolina

A Potpourri

February - March 2009



Church Office Hours

8:45 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.,
Monday - Friday

E-Mail: stpauls-episcopal@earthlink.net

Web Site: www.stpaulsmonroenc.com

Telephone: 704-289-8434

Fax: 704-225-1964

Diocese of North Carolina

The Rev. Gary Steber,
Interim Rector

The Rt. Rev. Michael B. Curry,
Bishop

The Rt. Rev. William O. Gregg,
Assistant Bishop

The Rt. Rev. Alfred C. Marble, Jr.,
Assisting Bishop

A Potpourri

Published six times per year, in
January, March, May, July,
September, and November

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*Please mail or e-mail any news or
articles for A Potpourri to
Charlotte as indicated above
no later than the 15th of each month
to appear in the following month's
magazine. Articles may be edited
for clarity and length.*

The Vestry

Henry Jenkins, Sr. Warden

Gary Noles, Jr. Warden

Lisa Hilbish, Clerk

Jim Becker

Ronnie Cutler

Kyle Dunn

Jan Lochary

Scott Rushing

Tara Steffen

Jimm Wetherbee, Treasurer

Sarah Palmer, Bookkeeper

Jim Becker, Webmaster

Organist/Music Director

Kathleen Prevost

Sunday Schedule of Services

8:00 a.m. (Spoken Service)

Holy Eucharist, Rite 1

10:30 a.m. (Choral Service)

1st Sunday, Holy Eucharist, Rite 1

2nd Sunday, Morning Prayer

3rd Sunday, Holy Eucharist, Rite 2

4th Sunday, Holy Eucharist, Rite 1

5th Sunday, Holy Eucharist, Rite 2

Weekday Service

12:00 Noon Every Wednesday,
Morning Prayer

PRAYER BOX

Family prayer time is a good habit.
Make it fun with this activity for all
family members. They can use this
special box whenever they have
a prayer request.

What you need:

- Shoebox
- Wrapping paper
- Scissors
- Tape
- Stickers, markers, etc.
(optional)
- Index cards
- Pencils or pens

What you do:

1. Wrap the shoebox like a present. Be sure to wrap the lid separately so it can be removed.
2. Let the whole family help decorate the box. You can write Bible verses about prayer, draw pictures, glue on pictures or add stickers. Be creative!
3. Put the box in a prominent location of your house. Keep a pile of index cards and pencils or pens near the box.
4. Whenever a family member has a prayer request, he or she can write or draw it on a card and put it inside the box.
5. Family members can share the cards in a prayer circle, or people can take turns praying for all the requests. Throughout the week, family members can check the box for new prayer needs.

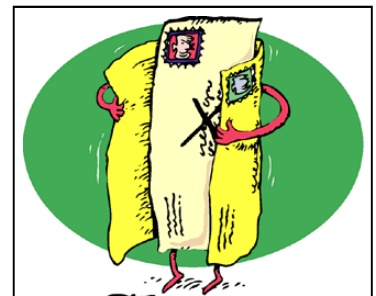
Looking
for



a date?

2009

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Feb. 21 | ECW Meeting |
| Feb. 21 | Chili Supper/Game Night |
| Feb. 24 | Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper |
| Feb. 25 | Ash Wednesday |
| Mar. 31 | Blood Drive |
| Apr. 12 | Easter |
| May 9 | Seniors Dinner |
| Oct. 16-18 | Family Weekend at Valle Crucis |



Change of Address

Moving?
Be sure to let us know
your new address!

The Results Are In!

The Discernment Committee—Chair Frank Gaertner,

Susan Norwood,
Susan Long, and
Vestry Liaisons Kyle
Dunn and Jim
Becker—tabulated all
discernment surveys
and presented the
results at the



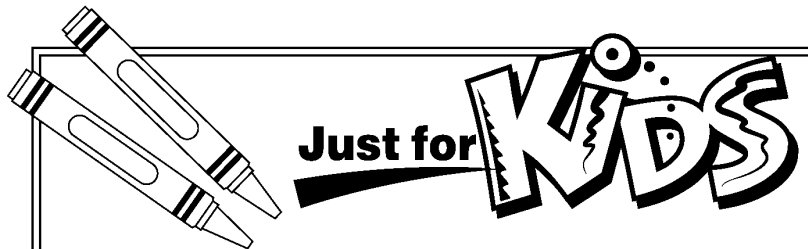
Spaghetti Dinner on Saturday, January 31. Some 65 people turned out to break bread together and find out what the parish as a whole thinks about a variety of rector-related issues.

Out of 111 respondents, 36% have attended St. Paul's for more than 20 years. The age group that returned the most surveys was the 46- to 65-year-old group, although the over-65s were close (37% to 36%); and 59% of respondents were female. Most (81%) attend the 10:30 service almost every week (60%). The vast majority pledge to the church each year. As expected, most respondents live in Monroe, although 43% live in other areas of Union, Mecklenburg, or Chesterfield (SC) County.

Most who replied want to maintain a traditional Episcopal service; and although it was clear that there is excitement about the calling of a new Rector, the majority of respondents have no preference as to that person's gender, age, marital status, or years ordained. The skill areas deemed most important for our new Rector are Preaching, Spiritual Guidance, Pastoral Care, and Youth Work; and the four goals most emphasized were the following:

- Increase financial stability
- Increase attendance at services by 25% by the year 1013
- Promote harmony and cohesiveness
- Establish and/or improve Christian education

On the following pages you will find a compilation of some of the survey responses and see information about the St. Paul's demographics...by the numbers.



A FAMILY OF PRAYER

The book of Acts tells about a man named Cornelius. He was a Roman centurion from Caesarea who worshiped God. Through his encounter with Cornelius, Peter learned that God accepts everyone who fears him and does what is right.

Use the code below to see the example set by Cornelius and his family. Solve the math problems by using the grid. Then use the key to find the letter that matches each answer. Write the letter on the blank.

GRID	
A	B
2	4
C	D
6	5

KEY: a=7 e=8 i=10 o=9 u=11 y=6

"He _____nd _____ll _____h _____s _____f _____m _____l _____
A+C A+D A+D B+C A+D B+C A+B

w _____r _____d _____v _____t _____nd
A+C A+C A+C B+D C+D A+D

G _____d-f _____r _____ng; h _____g _____v _____
B+D A+C A+D B+C A+C A+D A+C

g _____n _____r _____s _____l _____t _____th _____s _____n
A+C A+C B+D C+D A+B B+D B+D A+C B+C

n _____d _____nd _____pr _____d _____t _____G _____d
A+CA+C A+D A+D A+B A+C B+D B+D

r _____g _____l _____r _____l _____." _____cts 10:2, NIV
A+C C+D A+D A+B A+D

Answers:
"He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly." Acts 10:2, NIV

The Results Are In! (cont.)

Parish Goals

1. Increase Financial Stability

- Increase pledged income by 25% by 2013
- Develop an annual balanced budget that meets the needs of the Parish
- Prepare a 5-year capital improvement budget by December 2009



WHO ARE WE?

2. Increase average attendance by 25% by 2013

3. Promote harmony and cohesiveness with the parish

- Ensure that each parishioner is encouraged to participate in parish activities
- Revise our committees to include more parishioners in their activities
- Increase communication to all parishioners

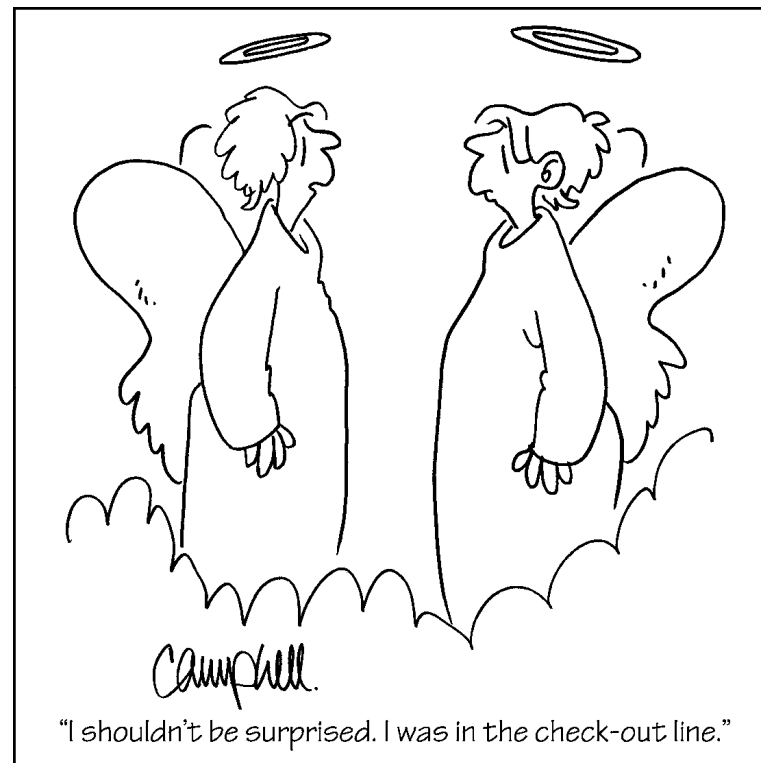
4. Establish and/or improve Christian Education Programs

- Provide Sunday School classes for all children
- Provide youth programs appropriate to age groups
- Create a junior Episcopal Youth Community (EYC)
- Provide Adult Sunday School and Adult Christian Education

How the Rector Can Support Parish Goals

1. Increase Financial Stability

The Rector should assist the Vestry to establish a realistic budget based on actual giving, with committees that report to the Vestry on a regular basis. He or she should



Happy Birthday!

February

1	Judith Prevost
6	Lydia Dunn
7	Megan Moore
10	Juliet Plue
12	Tiffany Ashcraft
21	Wyatt Brown

March

3	Owen Dunn
4	Anna Grace Hilbish
5	Thomas Ashcraft
6	Janis Swartz
14	JoAnne Long
20	Ian Dunn
21	McCain Kerr
26	Sarah Hope Cram
28	Jack Burroughs

Prayer for a Search Committee

Almighty God, giver of every good gift: Look graciously on your Church, and so guide the minds of those who shall choose a rector for this parish, that we may receive a faithful pastor, who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Sunday School NEWS

Nicole Dunn



As our outreach this semester, the Sunday School will collect pennies for the Food For The Poor ministry. Please bring your pennies in each Sunday. Let's see how many we can collect together!

Remember, Preschool Sunday School meets every Sunday, and Elementary Sunday School meets the second and fourth Sundays.

See you in Sunday School!



Episcopal Church Women

All women of the church are invited to join us for the next ECW Meeting at 10:30 a.m. on February 21. We'll enjoy coffee, tea, pastries, and wonderful fellowship...so you might even want to come early.

If anyone needs to bring their children to the meeting, please call me by February 16. We look forward to seeing many vibrant women of St. Paul's there.



~Doris Rushing

The Results Are In! (cont.)

help to establish a procedural manual that would define committees.

2. Increase Average Attendance



The Rector should be recognized locally as the head of St. Paul's by being

involved in the community and promoting a presence at the local university. He or she should examine existing programs, strengthen the ones deemed to meet the needs of our parish, and develop new programs where there is a deficit. By emphasizing family and providing family support, the Rector can help to increase membership.

3. Promote Harmony and Cohesiveness

The Rector should help to develop a committee structure that is open to all parishioners, using established guidelines regarding tenure on each committee. Using quality communication skills, he or she should have an open-door policy and support any programs that nurture/heal a fractured parish. The Rector should avoid polarizing the parish on issues of the national church and help to bridge/repair differences within the congregation.

4. Establish and/or improve Christian Education

The Rector should initially be involved in all facets of Christian Education programs for all age groups. He or she should groom individuals to teach and lead Christian Education programs until the church desires or can afford to hire a director, establish Bible study for young and old, and develop adult forums or teaching series (which may include guest speakers, etc.). The Rector should also develop and participate in a youth group that extends its reach beyond the walls of St. Paul's while continuing to teach the traditions of the church.

The Results Are In! (cont.)

Rector's Skill Areas and Associated Tasks



1. Preaching
 - Deliver inspiring sermons based on the weekly Gospel lessons.
 - Use current events to make the Gospel lessons relevant and meaningful to parishioner's lives.
 - Make sermons challenging, yet clear, concise, and understandable.
 - Maintain a traditional service, yet touch on a diverse range of issues in sermons.

2. Spiritual Guidance

- Perpetuate a climate that communicates the value of a Christian life.
- Consider different points of view while serving as a spiritual advisor.
- Encourage outreach as a means for obtaining personal spiritual guidance.
- Establish and lead adult Christian education.

3. Pastoral Guidance

- Regularly take communion to the homebound and visit the sick, the elderly, and those who are in crisis.
- Improve notifications about sickness and death within the parish, and maintain current lists.
- Keep regular office hours, and be available and accessible for counseling and guidance.
- Shepherd the parish flock while showing genuine care and no favoritism.

Cotton for Cotton Street...Update

The first phase of the Cotton for Cotton Street project ended with fifty-eight packages being delivered to the residents of Cotton Street Commons on December



22. The brightly wrapped gifts filled the meeting room at the complex. Included were bath towels, hand towels, kitchen towels, and pillows—all new and donated by members of St. Paul's. Residents of the apartments are senior citizens or are disabled, and many have no families. Thanks to all who helped make this project a success.

The second phase of the project has begun, with the purchase of sheet sets for the twenty-four residents who requested them. These will be delivered in the next few weeks. The Outreach Committee is planning a Chili Supper to raise money for outreach projects such as this one (see details in this edition).

~Nancy Noles

Outreach Opportunity

Attention, Harris Teeter Shoppers with VIC cards: The grocery store is running a promotion for its VIC Card Customers for the next three months or so. Spend a minimum of \$40 per week for a number of weeks, and you will receive a gas card worth \$25. This card could really help families who are struggling to make ends meet. Crisis Assistance Ministry will distribute any cards we donate to their clients who need help. Please consider this option if you qualify for one of the gas cards. For more information, talk to Nancy Noles.

The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and a lightning bug.

~Mark Twain

The Ministry of Gift Planning

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.
~Genesis 1:1

This simple statement at the beginning of the Bible establishes once and for all the immutable relationship between ourselves and the world around us. All that we are, all that we have, comes from God and will one day return to God.

Jesus often talked about our relationship to the “things” we possess. In Luke 12:13-21, Jesus is asked about dividing a family inheritance. He replies with a story. A rich man decides to build new barns to hold his bumper crop, then to “eat, drink, and be merry.”

However, “God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul is required of you and the things you have prepared, where will they be?’ So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”

We are stewards of God’s bounty. Caretakers. For a brief period we are given time, energy and resources. What we do with these gifts ultimately defines the character of our life and the depth of our spiritual understanding.

Gift Planning is the one expression of the wise use of the personal resources God has entrusted to us. Understanding gift planning and making it available through your church is both a ministry to the donor (giving the donor a means of thoughtfully transferring resources to the next generation), and to the church (helping the church to gather the resources necessary for its mission and ministry).

Copied from The Ministry of Gift Planning
published by Episcopal Church Foundation
~Nancy Noles

Save the Date

St. Paul’s will hold its annual Blood Drive on Tuesday, March 31, from 3:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Appointments will be available. This is an excellent Lenten activity. Please plan to participate.



The Results Are In! (cont.)

4. Youth Work

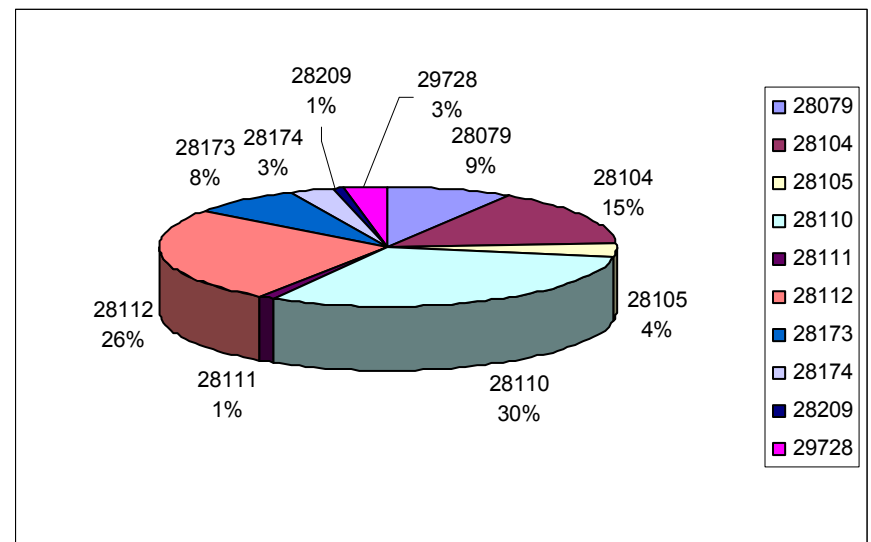
- Design and implement youth programs for children of all ages.
- Deliver Gospel-based children's chapel sermons and make the lessons relevant to the children's lives.
- Involve youth in church service and activities.
- Plan and encourage youth participation in diocesan activities and camps, such as Kanuga.

Leadership Style

The leadership style of our next Rector [should be] one that unifies and is governed by care and compassion....[We] are seeking a priest who leads by example, who will attract young people, who is charismatic, who will care for...young and old alike. [He or she] must possess a strong ability to bring people together, to be reconciliatory, to attract new members (particularly the young) while maintaining the traditional values and beliefs of St. Paul’s.



Where We Live, by Zip Code



St. Paul's by the Numbers

Of the 111 surveys returned, most—77%—were completed and submitted online; but 28 respondents preferred to make their submissions the old-fashioned way...by hand. In the following tables, the first column of numbers indicates how many respondents “voted” a certain way. The next column gives the corresponding percentage.

Total Surveys Completed				111	
		#		%	
Years Attending					
	<2	6		5	
	2-5	13		12	
	6-10	26		23	
	11-20	26		23	
	>20	40		36	
Services Regularly Attended					
	8:00 a.m.	33		30	
	10:30 a.m.	88		81	
	Wed. Noon	5		5	
Frequency of Attendance per Month					
	Most Sundays	67		60	
	2-3 times	24		22	
	1 time	16		14	
	Inactive	4		4	
Annual Pledge?					
	Yes	103		94	
	No	7		6	
Hours Volunteered/Month					
	<2	47		42	
	2-5	28		25	
	>5	36		32	

193rd Diocesan Convention Report

More than 700 clergy and lay delegates met at the 193rd Annual Convention of the Diocese of North Carolina in Winston-Salem on January 22 and 23. Four of those delegates were from St. Paul's: Gary and Nancy Noles and Henry and Charlotte Jenkins.



The St. Paul's delegation attended the optional special program on Thursday evening—“Communion is Do-Able: Possibilities for our Anglican Future,” a fascinating presentation by Bishop William Gregg, which included a look back at the 2008 Lambeth Conference. Friday and Saturday were filled with legislative sessions, during which diocesan officers were elected and resolutions were debated (and ultimately decided) and committee hearings, during which delegates could present their views on the resolutions.

The theme for the conference was “All Are Welcome,” emphasized in Bishop Michael Curry's address to the convention as well as in the keynote address given by Bishop Nedi Rivera of the Diocese of Olympia.

If you'd like to know more about any of the resolutions or other convention issues, just ask any of the St. Paul's delegation.



You Know It's Sunday When....

A woman called a newspaper office to complain that her Sunday paper hadn't arrived. Trying to calm her, the man at the office pointed out that the paper hadn't arrived because it was Saturday.

After a brief silence, the woman said meekly, “Well, that explains why there was no one in church today.”



Bell Curved



On a cold January morning in 2007, a man sat in a Washington, DC, metro station during rush hour and began to play his violin. After three minutes, a middle-aged man noticed the musician; he stopped to listen for a few seconds, but then hurried on. A minute later, a woman threw a dollar to tip the violinist as she continued to walk. In another few minutes, a man leaned against the wall to listen to the music; but after looking at his watch, he started walking again.

A three-year-old boy was the most attentive listener. His mother hurried him along, but he kept stopping to look at the violinist. Finally the mom pushed her son hard, and the boy resumed walking...but he kept turning his head to look. Several other children were as fascinated as the boy, but without exception their parents compelled them to keep moving.

The man played six Bach pieces in about 45 minutes. In that time, only six people stopped and stayed for a while. About 20 people gave him money...\$32 in all. When he finished playing, no one noticed. There was no applause, no recognition.

The violinist who played the mini-concert on his \$3.5 million Stradivarius was Joshua Bell, a virtuoso who had played to a full house at Boston's Symphony Hall just three days earlier. But on this cold morning, when he was passed by 1,097 travelers, only seven stopped to listen. At Symphony Hall, people had paid \$100 a ticket to hear him; but in the metro station, 27 people contributed a total of \$32.17.

Gene Weingarten of the *Washington Post* enlisted Bell as part of "an experiment in context, perception and priorities—as well as an unblinking assessment of public taste: In a banal setting at an inconvenient time, would beauty transcend?"

Weingarten went on to say in his Pulitzer Prize-winning feature about the experiment, "Do you stop and listen? Do you hurry past with a blend of guilt and irritation...Do you have time for beauty? Shouldn't you? What's the moral mathematics of the moment?"

St. Paul's by the Numbers

Total Surveys Completed		111	
	#	%	
Age of Respondents			
	19-25	3	3
	26-35	7	6
	36-45	19	17
	46-65	41	37
	>65	40	36
Gender of Respondents			
	Male	45	41
	Female	65	59
Marital Status of Respondents			
	Single	8	7
	Married	93	84
	Divorced	4	4
	Widowed	6	5
Education			
	High School	30	27
	College	81	72
	Post-Graduate	30	27
Children at St. Paul's			
	Sunday School Enrollment	40	
	Vacation Bible School 2008	44	
Style of Worship Preferred			
	Most Traditional-1	53	49
	-2	34	31
	-3	20	18
	-4		
	Most Contemporary-5	2	2
		0	0

You Might Be Episcopalian....Encore

...if someone says, "Let us pray" and you automatically hit your knees.

...if the word "Sewanee" puts a lump in your throat.

...if your choir director suggests discussing something over a beer after choir rehearsal.

...if your covered dish for the potluck dinner is escargot in puff shells.

...if you ever find yourself saying, "Oh, but we've never done it that way before."

...if you don't think Agnus Dei is a woman.

...if you know that the nave is not a playing card.

...if you know that the Senior Warden and the Junior Warden are not positions in the local prison.

...if your friend says, "I'm truly sorry..." and you reply, "and you humbly repent?"

...if you hear something really funny during the sermon and smile as loudly as you can.

...if you know the best way to quiet a room full of Episcopalians is to say, "The Lord be with you!"

...if you know that "humble access" has nothing to do with a security clearance.

... if you consider a sticker on your car to be an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.

... if you know that a primate isn't just a monkey.

Christmas Pageant

2008



Who Was That?

Who was that person pictured on the front page of the February 4 *Charlotte Observer*? Why, our own Mary Roberts, of course, looking ever so knowledgeable as she tended the red oak-leaf lettuce in one of her greenhouses at Windcrest Farm.

Mary and other area farmers were featured for selling shares of their harvests in subscriptions called Community Supported Agriculture. To read the article online, visit <http://www.charlotteobserver.com/408/story/514712.html>.

Have You Seen Our Website...Lately?



Yes, it's been a long time coming—but our own Information Technology guru, Jim Becker, is now on board and personally making sure that the St. Paul's website stays up to date.

To check it out, go to <http://www.stpaulsmonroenc.com>. Here you can find the current church calendar, see who is scheduled to serve on a particular day, read *A Potpourri*, and find out about upcoming events. There is even a special Children's Page under construction.



Does anyone recognize this old church, with its wooden siding, high steeple, and picket fence?

The photograph was found in the church office; it actually is a photograph of the first St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Monroe.



Chili Supper and Game Night

(Silent Auction, Too)

Saturday, February 21, 2009
6:30 pm in the Parish Hall

To Benefit Outreach Programs

Donations Accepted

Nursery Available

Reservations a Must
Call the Church Office
704.289.8434

Welcome to Our Interim Rector

This is just in—we have an Interim Rector!

The Rev. Gary Steber, who for several months has so ably and generously come to hold regular services, baptisms, and funerals at St. Paul's, became our half-time Interim Rector as of February 15.

Fr. Gary will be in Monroe from Saturday night or Sunday morning through Tuesday or Wednesday of each week as he helps us to search and prepare for a new Rector and shepherds us through the necessary transitions.

Look for more information about Fr. Gary in the next edition of *A Potpourri*.



to Our
Interim
Rector

Buckle on the Straps

A cowboy once offered this sensible notion of living the Christian faith:

“Lotsa folks who’d really like to do right think that servin’ the Lord just means shoutin’ themselves hoarse praisin’ his name.

“Well, I’ll tell ya how I look at that. I’m workin’ here fer Jim. Now, if I’d sit around the house here tellin’ what a good fella Jim is, and singin’ songs to him, and gettin’ up in the night to serenade him, I’d be doin’ just like a lot of Christians do. But I wouldn’t suit Jim, and I’d get fired mighty quick.

“But when I buckle on my straps and hustle among the hills and see that Jim’s herd is all right and not sufferin’ fer water and feed, or bein’ off the range and branded by cattle thieves, well then, I’m servin’ Jim the way he wants to be served.”



Coffee on Sundays

I have been asked to assist with the Sunday Coffee Host scheduling and hope that it will relieve other hard-working people at a very busy time in this church.

We greatly appreciate all the help of the present Coffee Hosts, and we are indebted especially to Marie Demarest as well as her family for their contributions on Sundays.

As we begin a new chapter at St. Paul's, we are also looking for a few more people to volunteer a little time after the 10.30 a.m. service, once every few months or

so, to assist with coffee. It could be a couple, a family, or even several individuals getting together to help. While we are extremely grateful for the delicious cookies, cakes, and snacks provided by hosts, it is not an obligation or expectation, especially at the moment. If you would like to provide any refreshments in addition to help with the coffee, certainly this would be very welcome.

We will try to accommodate your Sunday preferences while scheduling. However, if you are unable to manage the assigned day(s), please try to change with someone else on the list. It would be helpful, also, if you would kindly let the church office know in time for the Sunday service bulletin.

Thank you very much indeed, and please let me know if you would like to help with this important ministry at St. Paul's (704.282.0654).

~Jenny Gale Tsering



The average pencil is seven inches long, with just a half-inch eraser. Remember that, in case you thought optimism was dead.

~Robert Brault



Coffee Hosts