



**The mission of St. John's Episcopal Church  
is to be a loving and diverse community  
celebrating the Good News of Jesus Christ  
by word, example, and service to others**

December 2009  
Volume 4, Issue 9  
Season of Pentecost

St. John's Episcopal Church, College Park, Georgia

# Eagle Notes

## Dates to Remember

- December 2**
  - 5:30 p.m., Holy Comforter
- Thursday, December 3**
  - 10:30 a.m., Speeders
- December 6**
  - 8 & 10:30 a.m. Healing Prayers
  - 1—4 p.m., Safeguarding God's Children Class
  - 7 p.m., Taizé Service
- December 7**
  - 7 p.m., Holy Grounds
- December 13**
  - Annual Parish Meeting + Second Sunday Brunch
- December 16**
  - Eagle Notes Articles Due
- December 20**
  - Advent Lessons and Carols 10:30 a.m.
  - Liturgy Commission 11:45 a.m.
- December 24**
  - 7 p.m., Christmas Eve Service + Family Pageant
  - 10:30 p.m. Midnight Mass + Christmas Lessons & Carols
- December 25**
  - 11 a.m., Christmas Day srvc
- December 27**
  - Sunday School Winter Break
- January 9**
  - Atl Harp Association Event
- January 10**
  - 1st Sunday after Epiphany

## From the Presiding Bishop

**Our job is to help give birth to hope**

-by the Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori

**November 8, 2009, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, SW Atlanta**  
*Scripture readings: Ruth 3:1-5; 4:13-17, Mark 12:38-44. Edited for space.*

A story like Ruth and Naomi's could probably only be made into a movie if it carried an X rating. We miss a lot of the innuendo in translation, but basically, Naomi is out to procure a husband for her widowed daughter-in-law. That's the only way either one of them is going to survive economically. She says to Ruth, "Look, there's Boaz, time to jump the broom with him – and he's OK, he's not a complete foreigner. Go get gussied up, then get yourself over to the barnyard– be visible, show yourself off. Don't talk to him until after dinner, but find out where he sleeps." Actually, Naomi says, "Don't make yourself known to him until after dinner." The word *to know* has the same meaning as "and Adam knew his wife and she conceived and bore a child."

Naomi goes on, "Well, when you know where he's going to sleep, get yourself over there, uncover his feet" (feet are a euphemism here), and they're not feet for making a descent, but feet for making descendants! "Lie down, and he'll tell you what to do." I'm sorry, but this is way too racy for children.

Naomi is a very canny widow. She knows that the two of them aren't going to survive if they don't have a male family member – a wage earner or a farmer – and they aren't going to get one without Ruth's cooperation. Julia Dinsmore would call this an example of "the survival skills of the poor." Dinsmore wrote a powerful book titled *My Name is Child of God, Not "Those People."* It's about the gifts of the poor, particularly their creativity.

We tend to judge this story from a very different economic location – one that has the luxury of at least some choice about what kind of work we'll take or who we'll marry or not marry. And if we read further in this story of creative survival, we discover that God is at work in the midst of it, for Ruth becomes great-grandmother to David, the hoped-for savior of Israel. When David doesn't pan out so well, God keeps on working. Ruth shows up in Jesus' list of ancestors, along with the prostitute Rahab; Tamar, a widow who gets sons by seducing her father-in-law; and another foreigner, Bathsheba, with whom David commits adultery, and then makes her a widow. God is at work in all of this "inappropriate sexual behavior," which eventually, according to Matthew's gospel, leads to Jesus, born of Mary, wife of Joseph of the house of David.

*(Continued on page 9)*

# What's Happening?

**Wednesday, December 2** **5:30 p.m.**

## **Holy Comforter Visit & Meal**



*Church of the Holy Comforter*

The Holy Comforter Ministry in East Atlanta serves meals and holds services for approximately 80 mentally disabled adults each week.

The first Wednesday in December is St. John's final scheduled Holy Comforter visit for the year.

**We need your help!** It is a rewarding effort, and we still need shoppers, cooks, servers, and a clean-up crew. Please consider starting this Advent season of preparation for the birth of our Lord by spending time with your parish family and helping with this meaningful visit.

Please call **Jackie Berlin** (770-960-0022) to sign up in advance. We meet to carpool from the horseshoe parking lot at 5:30 p.m. If you cannot spend your time on these dates, donations for food are always needed! Please make out checks to St. John's marked Holy Comforter.

**Wednesday night classes are cancelled for the visit.**

**Thursday, December 3** **10:30 a.m.**

## **Speeders**

Join us for Holy Eucharist, followed by lunch and a presentation. This month, we will hear from our very own **Bruce Braxton** regarding holiday safety. Speeders is held on first Thursdays. Special thanks goes out to **Robert Gregory** for preparing lunch!

**Sunday, December 6**

- **Healing Prayers** **8 & 10:30 a.m.**

The first Sunday of every month, we offer healing prayers and anointing with holy oil at both services. Do you need physical, mental, or spiritual healing? Does someone you love need that healing? Do you know of a condition in the world that needs healing? Come pray with us and know the love that surrounds us all.

- **Taizé Service** **7 p.m.**
- Taizé is held the first Sunday of each month at 7 p.m. It includes music, silence, scripture and prayer, and provides a time to experience the presence of God in a unique way.

**Sunday, December 6** **1—4 p.m.**

## **Safeguarding God's Children Mandatory Training Class**

- **How common is child sexual abuse?**
- **How do perpetrators gain access to children?**
- **How can our church prevent & respond to abuse?**

**Find out the answers to these questions and more at the upcoming Safeguarding God's Children class at St. John's on Saturday, December 6, from 1—4 p.m. It is free and open to all adults concerned about children and youth.**

Safeguarding God's Children is a program developed for the Episcopal Church which deals with the prevention of sexual abuse. It teaches congregations how to protect the children we know and care for in both our personal lives and in the ministries in which we serve. It details the dynamics of abuse, how to teach children ways to protect themselves, how to recognize signs of abuse, and what to do if you have concerns about a person's behavior toward a child or youth, or if you suspect that a child has been molested. If every adult can protect just one child, they will forever change one life. If we can each change one life, together we will make a differ-

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| • clergy & staff,                   | • Eucharistic ministers and Eucharistic visitors,                  |
| • vestry members,                   | • Begin Again volunteers,  |
| • Sunday School & nursery teachers, | • church key holders,  |
| • acolyte captains,                 | • and lay people who work with children and youth in any capacity. |
| • vergers,                          |  |

ence in this and in future generations.

Our diocese and parish requires this class for all *Please register in advance as soon as possible because those who fail to participate in one of these classes cannot continue in their positions until training is complete.*

**Register online: [www.stjohnscollegepark.com](http://www.stjohnscollegepark.com)** (or call the church office to register by Dec. 2.)

It is a helpful, informative class, and **all** parishioners and parents are strongly encouraged to attend.

# What's Happening?

*Please join us!*  
**Monday, December 7** **7 p.m.**  
**Holy Grounds**  
 On the first Monday of every month Fr. Troy will be at Jeffrey's Coffee Shop on Virginia Avenue (near the new Landmark Diner) at 5:30 p.m. to talk about anything on your mind in a relaxed, casual setting. Enjoy a cup of joe and and jaw for a while at Jeffrey's!

**Sunday, December 13**  
**Annual Parish Meeting  
 + Second Sunday Brunch**  
 Come one, come all to the Annual Parish Meeting! Enjoy food and fellowship with friends old and new, review together where we have been as a community, and renew our commitment to serve God with love. We will also vote on the 2010 Vestry nominees. Bring your favorite dish to share with others. (Don't forget to bring food for Family Life!)



*There is a combined 10 a.m. service scheduled that day. There will be no 8 a.m. Rite I service and no Sunday School.*

**Wednesday, December 16**  
**Eagle Notes Articles Due**  
 Send in good news or needs, thoughts, thanks, and prayers! E-mail parishadmin@stjohnscollegepark.com or mail to 3480 E. Main Street, College Park, GA 30337.

- Sunday, December 20**
- **Advent Lessons and Carols** **10:30 a.m.**
  - **Liturgy Commission** **11:45 a.m.**  
 The Liturgy Commission will meet in the Parlor after the 10:30 a.m. service. All are welcome to join in the planning and discussions of our worship life together!
  - **Music Department Travelers Group Trip**  
**Cancelled**  
 The visit to the Cathedral for Choral Evensong and Contemporary Worship is cancelled this month. Please join us next

month on the third Sunday!



## Bells, Bells, BELLS!

This year, we will start the 10:30am Rite II Advent services with special procession music that features hand bells. Bell ringers and singers of all ages are needed to help make this music a success and we hope you will consider joining in.

If you want to ring a bell or be a procession singer, please talk with **Tom Elston** after services, contact him at stjohns.atl.musicians@gmail.com/770-416-7225, or visit the "Bells, Bells, BELLS!" page on the St. John's website to let us know of your interest as soon as possible. Let's ring in the season together!

- December 24**
- **Christmas Eve Service** **7 p.m.**  
**+ Family Christmas Pageant**
  - **Christmas Eve Midnight Mass**  
**+ Christmas Lessons & Carols**  
**10:30**

**December 25** **11 a.m.**  
**Christmas Day service**

**December 27**  
**Sunday School Winter Break**

**Tuesdays** **6-7:30 p.m.**  
**Beginning Mat Yoga**  
 Hylan Scott's class explores standing postures, flow sequences, and breathing practices to expand flexibility, strength, circulation, vitality and peace of mind. Please bring an exercise mat and/or a bath towel. Cost: \$5 for parishioners, \$10 for non-parishioners.

**Wednesdays** **6-8 p.m.**  
**Adult Spiritual Formation**  
 \$5 Dinner begins at 6 and Bible study at 6:30 p.m. As

## Parish Life

### *Our deepest sympathy*

*To Reuben Bostic and his family, on the death of  
Enid Springer.*

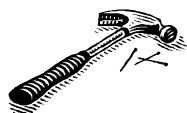
We rejoice that ones we love have entered into the nearer presence of our Lord, though we sorrow and grieve with those who mourn.

### **New Parish Project in the Works:**



Are you interested in volunteering to help work on a local **Habitat for Humanity** house? If so, please contact **Paul Brady** (phbrady@bellsouth.net / 770-969-6138) as soon as possible! If enough people express interest, he will be announcing a project build date and details soon. Call today!

Habitat for Humanity is a non-profit ecumenical housing ministry that helps families achieve the American dream of homeownership. Atlanta Habitat for Humanity partners with local working families, sponsors, and communities to build affordable, green, quality homes and to provide support services that promote successful home purchase and ownership. It is a movement of concerned and motivated citizens from all walks of life coming together to make a difference in our city.



*Volunteers must be at least 16 years of age, and must sign a release and waiver of liability form before working on a build site.*

### *We welcome to St. John's*

*Lyssa & Auri Muñoz Rennie-Hogue  
baptized at St. John's on All Saint's Day  
and*

*Robert Kennedy  
baptized at St. John's on All Saint's Day,  
recently united in Holy Matrimony with  
Chris Floistead Kennedy*

**We receive you into the fellowship of this communion! May God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless, preserve, and keep you!**

## Why It's Important

*-From Paul Brady, Vestry*

Stewardship is personal responsibility for taking care of another person's property or financial affairs or in religious orders taking care of finances.

God has elected us to be stewards.

As stewards of the planet we are responsible for the whole planet, not just the little part we own. How do we react if someone is polluting our yard vs. our neighbor's yard? Are we less responsible just because it's on another person's "property"? It still affects us all. We are also responsible for our private property and our communal property equally.

The purpose of the Church is to take care of the greater world, not just our fellow congregants.

Brothers and Sisters - why do we refer to each other that way? John is my brother. What if he lived down the street and called to say he was literally starving, out of money? I would rush over and feed him. What if he lived in another country and was starving? Would I not do the same? Does the fact that we are separated by oceans make others any less our brothers and sisters?

What if your boss said he'd pay you a salary but never told you how much it would be? How would you make a budget? As members of the Vestry, we are responsible for monetary decisions and you in the congregation are just as responsible! The pledge cards we ask you to fill out are the only way we can figure out how much money the church will have to pay the bills.

To be on the Vestry, we are required to be actively pledging and attending services. Being on the Vestry is the most effective way you can participate in the life of the church. As I am writing this, we have only received 41 pledge cards for a total of \$119,000.00! That would only cover about half of last year's budget!

Try to look at your budget and figure out what you can afford to contribute to the life of St. John's. Once you've made your pledge, if you get in financial trouble, you can always talk to Troy and let him know you can't afford the full amount for now.

**HAPPY  
BIRTHDAY!**



**December Birthdays:**

- 1 Whitney Reeves, Chidin Okonya
- 7 Chineom Okonya, John Brady
- 8 **Laura Vance**
- 12 Missy Sanchez
- 13 Ruth Crook
- 16 Betsy Daniell,
- 19 Clarke Hunter, Joe Barthelette
- 21 Marian Tillman
- 25 Keith Huffstetter
- 27 Lily Hopkins, Jayne Hayes
- 29 Ramsey Hopkins
- 30 Julia Paris

# December 2009

Sun      Mon      Tue      Wed      Thu      Fri      Sat

		1	2	3	4	5
		9:15 am— Morning Prayer <b>10 am—CP Stitch-In</b> 6 pm— Begin Again 6 pm - Yoga	<b>5:30 p.m. Holy Com- forter Visit</b>	9:15 a.m.- Morning Prayer  <b>10:30 - Speed- ers</b>  8 pm- AA(BH)	8 a.m.— WA Moms' Bible Study	9:30 am— Begin Again
<b>6</b> FLM Sunday 8 am- Rite I 9:15 a.m. - Sunday School 10:30- Rite II <b>Healing Prayers 1-4 pm— Safeguarding God's Children</b> <b>7 pm—Taizé service</b>	<b>7</b> 7 p.m. <b>Holy Grounds</b> (Jeoffrey's)  8 pm- AA (BH)	<b>8</b> 9:15 am— Morning Prayer 6 pm— Begin Again 6 pm - Yoga	<b>9</b> 6-8 p.m.— Wednesday Night Class & \$5 dinner	<b>10</b> 9:15 a.m.- Morning Prayer  10:30 - Holy Eucharist Rite I  8 pm- AA(BH)	<b>11</b> 8 a.m.— WA Moms' Bible Study	<b>12</b> 9:30 am— Begin Again
<b>13</b> 10 a.m. <b>COMBINED SERVICE</b>  • <b>Annual Parish Meeting</b> • <b>2nd Sunday Brunch</b>	<b>14</b> 8 pm- AA (BH)	<b>15</b> 9:15 am— Morning Prayer 6 pm— Begin Again 6 pm - Yoga NO Vestry	<b>16</b> EN Articles Due  6-8 p.m.— Wednesday Night Class & \$5 dinner	<b>17</b> 9:15 a.m.- Morning Prayer  10:30 - Holy Eucharist Rite I  8 pm- AA(BH)	<b>18</b> 8 a.m.— WA Moms' Bible Study	<b>19</b> 9:30 am— Begin Again
<b>20</b> 8 am- Rite I 9:15 a.m. - Sunday School 10:30- Rite II <b>Liturgy Commission</b>	<b>21</b> 8 pm- AA (BH)	<b>22</b> 9:15 am— Morning Prayer 6 pm— Begin Again 6 pm - Yoga	<b>23</b> <i>Office closed</i>	<b>24</b> <i>Office closed</i> <b>7 p.m. Ser- vice/Pageant</b> <b>10:30 p.m. Midnight Mass</b> 8 pm- AA	<b>25</b> 11 a.m. <b>Christ- mas Day Service</b>	<b>26</b> 9:30 am— Begin Again
<b>27</b> 8 am- Rite I 10:30- Rite II	<b>28</b> 8 pm- AA (BH)	<b>29</b> 9:15 am— Morning Prayer 6 pm— Begin Again 6 pm - Yoga	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> <i>Office closed</i> 8 pm- AA(BH)		

## Lay Ministries Schedule

<b>December 6</b>	<b>8 a.m.</b>	<b>10:30 a.m.</b>	<b>2nd Sunday of Advent</b>
<b>Reader</b>	David Wagner	Kei Breedlove	<i>Baruch 5: 1-9 or Malachi 3:1-4</i>
<b>Eucharistic Minister</b>	Jane Randolph	Kei Breedlove/ Robbin Iddins	<i>Philippians 1:3-11</i>
<b>Altar Guild Team #1</b>	Ruth Crook, Will Manders/Phillip Manascalco		<b>Euch. Visitor:</b> Jane Holloman/R. Townsend
<b>Usher/Greeters(10:30)</b>	Creston Portis, Ernie Radaker, Heidi Chandonia		<b>Vestry in Charge(10:30):</b> Andy Korta

<b>December 13</b>	<b>COMBINED SERVICES at 10 a.m.</b>		<b>3rd Sunday of Advent</b>
<b>Reader</b>	Phillip Maniscalco		<i>Zephaniah3 : 14-20</i>
<b>Eucharistic Minister</b>	Bruce Braxton/D. McLeod		<i>Philippians 4:4-7</i>
<b>Altar Guild Team #2</b>	Ruth Crook, Will Manders/Phillip Manascalco		<b>Euch. Visitor:</b> Linda Vinal
<b>Usher/Greeters(10 a)</b>	Shannon Housel, Jason Brown, Linda Vinal		<b>Vestry in Charge(10:30):</b> Robbin Iddins

<b>December 20</b>	<b>8 a.m.</b>	<b>10:30 a.m.</b>	<b>4th Sunday of Advent</b>
<b>Reader</b>	Mark Robertson	<b>Advent Lessons &amp; Carols</b>	<i>Micah 5:2-5a</i>
<b>Eucharistic Minister</b>	Bruce Braxton	Carl Cheely/Jane Graham	<i>Hebrews 10:5-10</i>
<b>Altar Guild Team #3</b>	Jackie Berlin, Sarah Clark. Beth Ehrensperger		<b>Euch. Visitor:</b> Donn Blosser
<b>Usher/Greeters(10:30)</b>	Glen and Vanessa Rada, Bill Hill		<b>Vestry in Charge(10:30):</b> Paul Brady

<b>December 24</b>	<b>7 p.m.</b>	<b>11 p.m.</b>	<b>Christmas Eve</b>
<b>Reader</b>	<i>No readers, Children's Pageant</i>		<i>2 Samuel 23:1-7</i>
<b>Eucharistic Minister</b>	Bruce Braxton/Mark Robertson	Kei Breedlove/Robbin Iddins	<i>Revelations 1:4b-8</i>
<b>Altar Teams 4 &amp; 1</b>	Linda Vinal & Denise Mcleod's Teams		
<b>Usher/Greeters(7 p)</b>	W. Manders, P. & R. Hopkins	<b>Usher/Greeters(10:30 p.m.):</b> B. Rivas, T. & B. Ehrensperger	
<b>Vestry in Charge: (7 p)</b>	Carl Cheely	<b>Vestry in Charge: (10:30 p.m.):</b> Debbie Reeves	

<b>December 25</b>			<b>Christmas Day</b>
<b>Reader</b>	D. McLeod		<i>Isaiah 9:2-7</i>
<b>Eucharistic Minister</b>	D. McLeod		<i>Titus 2:11-14</i>
<b>Altar Teams 4 &amp; 1</b>	Linda Vinal & Denise Mcleod's Teams		
<b>Usher/Greeters(11)</b>	Will Manders		<b>Vestry in Charge(11)</b> Robbin Iddins

<b>December 27</b>	<b>8 a.m.</b>	<b>10:30 a.m.</b>	<b>1st Sun after Christmas</b>
<b>Reader</b>	David Wagner	Phillip Maniscalco	<i>Isaiah 61:10-62:3</i>
<b>Eucharistic Minister</b>	Bruce Braxton	M. McLeod/Carl Cheely	<i>Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7</i>
<b>Altar Guild Team #2</b>	Ruth Crook, Will Manders/Phillip Manascalco		<b>Euch. Visitor:</b> Jason Brown
<b>Usher/Greeters(10:30)</b>	Nee Odoi, S. Housel, C. Portis		<b>Vestry in Charge(10:30)</b> Sue Johnson

**Note to readers:** use Revised Common Lectionary texts, year B. Please arrive early and allow time to check the bulletin against lectern. If you are unable to serve as scheduled, it is your responsibility to obtain a substitute and notify **Denise McLeod**, the church office and/or a verger ASAP. **Thank you!**

## Holiday Giving Guide

Looking for something extra special to put under the tree this year?

Surprise your friends and loved ones with both local and global gifts that keep on giving...

### 2 Opportunities to Find Christmas at Emmaus House

#### Secret Santa Shop

Sunday, December 20

After the 10:30 a.m. chapel service, children can visit the Secret Santa Shop to buy gifts for their parents and grandparents. All items are priced at **10¢**.

#### How you can help:

- Donate small items for the gift shop, such as: scarves, slippers, socks, soap, shampoo, cologne, shaving cream, razors, gloves, billfolds, decorative items, costume jewelry, and watches, etc. Durable items may be gently used.
- Volunteer to help children select and wrap gifts, etc. that day.

#### Children's Christmas Eve Festival

Thursday, December 24

Santa and Mrs. Claus give presents to children between 8 a.m. and noon on Christmas Eve. Last year more than **750 children** came to Emmaus House! Children and their parents are entertained by a storyteller, magician and a Christmas movie. Snacks are also provided.

#### How you can help:

- Shop, wrap and label toys (using the wrapping guidelines below.) We ask that gifts be wrapped before they are delivered. This is a wonderful and fun family or group activity!
- Gifts should be delivered to Emmaus House no later than December 19
- No time to shop? Send a donation to Emmaus House or make a donation online and Emmaus House will shop for you!

For a gift suggestions guide for specific age ranges, please call Emmaus House or visit [www.emmaushouse.org](http://www.emmaushouse.org).

Gifts for children should be durable goods—not candy or perishable items. Dolls, action figures, and books should reflect cultural sensitivity. If it requires batteries, please provide them! Please, no military toys or guns! Stuffed animals, balls, books, musical and educational toys are always great.

#### Gift Wrap Instructions

- Please do not wrap: stuffed animals, book bags, sleeping bags, basketballs, footballs and other balls.
- All other gifts should be wrapped, and then labeled to indicate the age/gender suitability. Use a white adhesive label to write the range (infant, toddler/1-2 years, 3-5 years, 6-9 years, 9-12 years, 13-16 years) and a colored dot to indicate gender (boys=blue colored dot, girls=red, either=yellow.)

**Emmaus House** - [www.emmaushouse.org](http://www.emmaushouse.org) - 1017 Hank Aaron Dr. SW Atl, GA 30315  
Stephanie Coble Hankins - 404-525-5948 - [stephaniecoble@emmaushouse.org](mailto:stephaniecoble@emmaushouse.org).

### ERD Gifts for Life



The Episcopal Relief and Development gift catalog features new items to fit any budget, offering you even more ways to make a personal difference in the lives of people living in extreme poverty around the world.

Choose gifts to help with animals and agriculture, such as a flock of chickens, drought-resistant seeds, a share in a fish farm, or even an entire cow! You can choose to give gifts that prevent diseases, such as treated mosquito netting, a share in a mobile health clinic, or medicines. Or choose to donate a micro loan to a small business in a developing country. There is even a gift section just for kids.

You will receive an attractive card or e-card for each gift you purchase, so you can personalize gifts for friends and loved ones.

Visit ERD online at [www.er-d.org/giftsforlife](http://www.er-d.org/giftsforlife) for the complete catalogue, to order gifts, or for further details.



**Episcopal  
Relief & Development**  
Healing a hurting world

## Reflections of a Church Mouse

Christmas is coming. We mice have noticed people in all the storage rooms looking for decorations. I have had to hide quickly more than once.

It sent me to thinking, how do people know what is happening at St. John's? Do you humans encourage the church's parishioners to act as ambassadors? Have you placed our bulletins and newsletters in local Laundromats, the library, beauty salons and barbershops, or doctors offices? Do you send out press releases to local newspapers, radio, or TV?

We are challenged every day to proclaim the Good News.

Informing people where they can come to hear it is just as important! In being a user-friendly congregation, St. John's must go out and invite the gifts that others may bring to us.

Be an Ambassador of Faith. Speak to others about the good things you have found at St. John's. From the Gamelan Players to Begin Again, we provide extraordinary meaning to our community, and it is noteworthy!

Happy holy days and best wishes for the New Year!

**-Your Church Mouse**

P.S. Any chance of cheesecake for the 2nd Sunday brunch potluck in December?



## Buy One, Bring One:

### Church 'Needs Please!' List:

- Toilet Paper
- Paper towels and paper cups/plates/napkins
- cleaning supplies
- Craft supplies/non-allergenic snacks (nursery)
- Electric pencil sharpener (Sunday School)
- Box of 8 1/2 x 11 Avery Lamination Sheets
- Assorted small baskets no handles (Sunday School)

## November Attendance

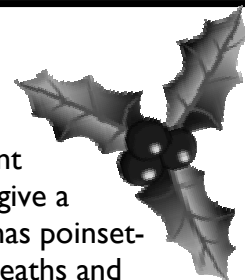
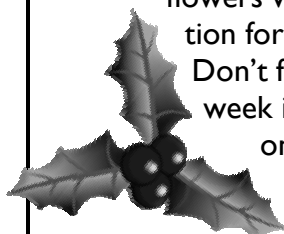
[# of services / people in attendance]

Service	2008	2009
Holy Eucharist – Sunday	8 / 403	8 / 420
Holy Eucharist – Weekday	3 / 25	5 / 31
Morning Prayer	5 / 25	10 / 34
Speeders	1 / 30	1 / 30
Taizé Service	n/a	1 / 4
Evensong	1 / 28	n/a
Blessing of the Animals	1 / 185	1 / 125
Celebration/New Ministry	1 / 131	n/a

## The Holiday Flowers on the Altar

Your contributions to the Flower Fund bring the beauty of God's creation to the fore in our worship; with your help, we can create a wonderful and inspiring worship environment this season. If you would like to honor the memory of a loved one, celebrate a friend, or give a gift to the glory of God this Christmas, please order poinsettia today. The special Christmas poinsettias will be \$25 a pot. Your poinsettia purchase this year will also enable us to provide wreaths and garlands in the church during the holidays. Your gift will remain in the church for all of our holiday worship through the feast of Epiphany, January 6, 2010. The names of your friends, family, or loved ones will be placed in the Christmas Eve bulletins. Christmas is full of warm and tender memories, and your gift of flowers will be one of them! We are counting on your contribution. Please fill out the contribution form below or call the church office to reserve your flowers today.

Don't forget — we have flowers on the altar each week—dedicating flowers for a particular week is a good way to commemorate birthdays, anniversaries, and other special days for loved ones! If you would like to donate altar flowers, please sign up by sending a check and a notation as to whom you want to honor or remember. Flowers on the altar for specific Sundays are \$40.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to dedicate flowers for Sunday, (date) \_\_\_\_\_ Holiday Poinsettias \_\_\_\_\_

The notation in the bulletin should read: *The flowers on the altar are given to the glory of God and in*

Please return this form with \$25/40 check attached to the church office or mail to 3480 Main Street, College Park, GA 30337.

*Please keep in Prayer:***MEMBERS**

Martha Mercure Laura Vance  
 Hank Frese Lenora Griffin  
 Dennis Luck Helen Scarbrough  
 Caroline Patrick Joy Lopez  
 Julia Paris Barbarine Thorpe  
 Becky Fields Calvin Fields  
 Martha Fisher Bena Sue Livsey  
 Martha McLeod Fred Daniell  
 Fr. Troy Beecham

**FRIENDS & RELATIVES**

Pfc. Bove R. Bergdahl,  
 M.E. King's friend, Adam Steed,  
 Ray Pawlik  
 Debbie Reeves' sister, Kelly  
 Dwight Condrey's partner, Jon  
 The Springs' family, Renetta & Chip  
 The Mull's friend, Jody  
 Becky Rives' father, Norman  
 Calvin Fields' cousin, Randy  
 Paul Brady's cousin, Kathy  
 Robert Gregory's family, Liston, Sr.  
 and Liston, Jr.  
 Polly Hopkins' friend, Sommers  
 Chris' granddaughter, Giselle Coe  
 Jason Barringer's father, Bill

**THOSE WHO HAVE DIED**

Enid Springer  
 Linda Vinal's cousin, Judy Adler  
 Joanne Lindsey's family friend, Zeb  
 Loudermilk

All those who have died in war,  
 or from preventable diseases,  
 or from malnutrition last month

**THE ALTAR FLOWERS**

*were given to the glory of God and*  
 in celebration of the Bargain Shop's  
 57th birthday, and in appreciation  
 to all the volunteers, managers, and  
 donors over the years for bringing  
 us to the \$1.5 million mark!  
 in honor of Julia Cheely's birthday  
 on Oct. 31st, with love from her  
 godparents, Ernie Radaker, Kei  
 Breedlove, & Gale & Jeanne Mull;  
 And in loving memory of Rose  
 Sinchoc, mother of Cindy  
 Coleman and Denise Morton.

**Presiding Bishop, continued from p. 1**

This story continues, through all the centuries since, with more Naomis and Ruths, desperately looking for hope.

I've just finished reading Edward Ball's *Slaves in the Family*, about black and white descendants of the Ball family who started the big slave plantations outside Charleston. There are a whole lot of arranged marriages in the Ball family. On the white side, most of the marriages are with cousins, designed to keep the "property" in the family. Many of the marriages in the black community are arranged by slave masters who decide which slaves will marry whom. There are a lot of uncouplings and widows made as well, when one or another is sold... And then there are the relationships between the masters themselves and the women in slavery. Edward Ball learns about a lot of this by reading the slave records and connecting the stories he hears from his black relatives. The surprising reality is that there wasn't a whole lot of choice about who married whom on either side of the family, and women were usually on the short end of the decision-making.

That's really what Jesus is getting at in his jabs at the scribes and his commentary about giving at the temple. Those scribes who "devour widows' houses" are exploiting the lack of freedom widows have to make economic decisions. The widows of Jesus' day had just as wretched a social position as Ruth and Naomi. They weren't going to make it economically without a wage earner in the family. In Jesus' day, there were basically no jobs for poor women without male relatives – except "the oldest profession." ... Jesus is criticizing these interpreters of the law for their self-interest, because they're getting rich off those poor widows. Their legal interpretations just keep squeezing those widows.

That's probably also what lies behind Jesus' comments about the widow and her two coins. He notes the difference between the rich folk who put in lots of money and the widow who gives her last two pennies. In Jesus' day, in order to be a good Jew, you had to make an offering at the Temple; to be left alone by Roman guards, you also had to pay taxes. This widow is giving the very last of what she has... Jesus doesn't praise her, he simply notes that she's giving the

last of what she has. This often turns into a stewardship story about generosity. We rarely hear the critique of a religious system that keeps widows poor by depriving them of economic possibilities and any real hope.

On Friday, I visited **Emmaus House** and met with the interns. They're working with some of today's equivalents of Ruth and Naomi and poor widows. They are working women without much hope or economic freedom of choice, young women who are being trafficked or groomed for exploitation. The urban interns are supported and encouraged by older women and men who are trying to change a system that seduces poor women into relationships for profit – not their own profit, but the profit of others, who are today's equivalent of slave holders and devourers of widows' houses.

All of the sin in these stories is really about removing creative possibility from others, denying them their God-given ability to make choices, to exercise their free will. That is what is most essential about being created in the image of God – sharing in God's own creativity. Ruth and Naomi didn't have much ability to choose another way because their society limited them to specific roles. Jesus' female ancestors were similarly limited. The widow of the gospel is kept poor by a religious and political system of exploitation. The same was true of the Ball family – and the white side was nearly as constrained by the system of slavery as the black side... Many young people today are being raised in a system that says that they have value only for the ways they can be used – by tricks on the corner or athletic teams or the military.

The freedom we have in Christ is about hope. Jesus' way insists that all God's people are created for dignity, and each one has meaning and value from being made in the image of God. No one is a commodity to be bought and sold.

You and I share Jesus' work of confronting the scribes who diminish dignity and steal hope. Opportunities for redemption are all around us, in the young and the old. God is at work even in the worst of despair. Our job is to help give birth to hope, and help it keep growing into full and abundant life.

Let there be no more days when hope unborn has died. Lift every voice. Sing hope. Bring hope. Birth hope. Be hope. ❖

# St. John's Episcopal Church

The Rev. Troy C. Beecham, Rector  
Lee Barthelette, Parish Administrator  
Tom Elston, Organist/Choirmaster  
Keith Huffstetter, Rite I Organist

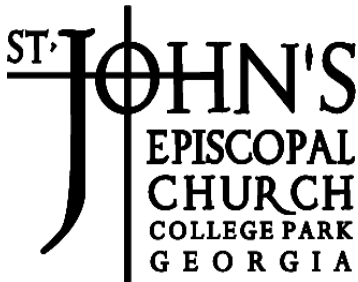
Dennis & Verlyn Luck, Yamiley Gilbert, Nursery  
Martha V. McLeod & Mark Robertson, Vergers  
David McLeod & Bruce Braxton, Vergers-in-Training  
John Brady & Dennis Luck, & Scott Fields, Sextons

## Schedule of Services

- **Holy Eucharist Rite I**  
Sunday 8:00 a.m. & Thursday 10:30 a.m.
- **Holy Eucharist Rite II**  
Sunday 10:30 a.m.
- **Morning Prayer (Parlor)**  
Tuesday & Thursday 9:15 a.m.
- **Wednesday Evening Programs**  
6 –8 p.m.—Bible Study (childcare available)
- **Taizé Service**  
1st Sundays of the month at 7 p.m.

## St. John's Vestry

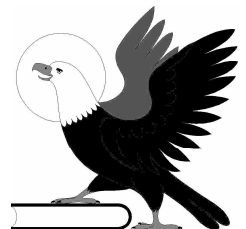
Debbie Reeves	Senior Warden
Sue Johnson	Junior Warden
Donn Blosser	Paul Brady
Kei Breedlove	Carl Cheely
David Houser	Robbin Iddins
Andy Korta	Janet Standen



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