

# NEVERTHELESS

Newsletter of the Church of St. James the Less, a parish of the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia  
125 Beverly Road, Ashland VA 23005 (804) 798-6336; Internet: [www.stjamestheless.com](http://www.stjamestheless.com)

March 2008

## A Lenten Invitation

As we move through the last part of Lent our attention turns toward the story of Jesus' last week in Jerusalem-the week we call "holy". On March 2<sup>nd</sup> the Adult Class will focus on the account of these events in Matthew's Gospel. On March 9<sup>th</sup> children's Sunday School classes will prepare for Palm Sunday (March 16<sup>th</sup>) in ways appropriate for each age group. There are no classes on Palm Sunday and Easter-days when no matter what our age, we are invited to experience and celebrate the drama in our worship.

Holy Week is an invitation to make a pilgrimage that Christians have made for centuries-a pilgrimage of the heart to deepen our understanding and faith in Christ, and to renew our identity as people of the resurrection. It's a journey we make in worship-following Jesus from his triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday to the Upper Room on Thursday for a farewell meal with his disciples and afterwards to Gethsemane-through the streets of Jerusalem on Friday to Calvary and the cross, bringing us three days later to an empty tomb.

The journey is not just remembering the story of past events or a liturgical tour of places associated with the story of the last week of Jesus' life. The journey does not take us out of the world we live and work in, or away from what is going on in our own lives. But hopefully, the journey will enable us to see where Jesus walks in our lives; and where God continues to bring life out of what looks to all the world like death.

When we walk the Way of the Cross\* with Jesus-one foot in Jerusalem and the other in Ashland, Mechanicsville, Richmond, Hanover or wherever we find ourselves during this time, we are drawn into the mystery of our salvation in a new way. The liturgies of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter are one continuous revelation of God's amazing love and forgiveness- they cannot be separated. Each is an essential part of the pilgrimage.

May this Holy Week and Easter be a time of renewal and blessing for each of you.

In Christ's love,

Barbara



When I lived in Albuquerque it was hard to get lost. If I happened to find myself momentarily lost it only took a second to decide which direction to go. The reason being is a 5280-foot landmark called the Sandia Mountains. The mile high landmark is on the eastern boundary of the city. So when I got turned around all I had to do was to look toward the mountains to get my bearings. Even at night you can see the lights on top of the crest of the mountain to guide you.

Since I left Albuquerque, and have no mountain to guide me, I get lost all the time now. I do not know Richmond too well and I am still discovering Ashland and the surrounding environs. Most of the time I can usually find a place after a few wrong turns, but when it gets dark and there is no light on top of the crest to guide me I can really get turned around and totally lost.

To help guide me from being lost, I've been looking into getting one of those Global Positioning Satellite units or "GPS." It's a gadget that receives information from a satellite circling above us and then tells you where you are. After you key in your home address and then the address of where you want to go, it will guide you with turn-by-turn instructions on how to get to your destination. Even if you do make a wrong turn it will automatically determine another way to your destination. And no matter how lost one might get (and I can get pretty lost) all you need do is push the "Home" button and it will guide you there automatically. "How cool is that!!!"

After I started to do a little research to find out what would be a good GPS unit to buy, I discovered, like most other electronic devices these days, it's never simple to just go to the store get one. Not all the units have all the same features. For instance, most all the GPS units will tell you to "Turn right 500 feet ahead." However, not all of the units will announce the name of the street you are to turn on 500 feet ahead. Since I couldn't tell you how far 500 feet is compared to 200 feet, that's going to present more than a little problem for me. When that GPS tells me to "Turn 500 feet ahead" I can guarantee you I'm going to turn before that and wind up on some road that ends in the middle of a cow pasture! So I definitely need a unit that will announce the name of the street.

As you probably already figured up, those GPS units are a lot like our relationship with God. If you miss a turn in life and wind up headed in the wrong direction God will automatically continue to call out the direction you need to turn and tell you where to make a U-turn to get you headed back in the right direction. And like the GPS, God won't yell and scream at you or call you a jerk if you wind up going down the wrong road. God really wants you to arrive at your destination safely.

God even comes with some cool features too! (But you knew that!) God will not only guide you in the right direction but will also call out street names too. You'll know you are headed in the right direction when you hear street names announced like Lent, Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter. And if by chance you happen to make a wrong turn and travel down some back road and find yourself in the middle of one of life's cow pastures, with darkness swiftly closing in, you can be assured that you will have help from on high, and here below also, to guide you back toward the right road again.

We have now traveled halfway through our journey from Lent to Easter. There are still some more roads to travel and turns to make on our trip before we arrive at an empty tomb and meet the risen Lord on Easter morn. There are still opportunities for finding new ways to grow with God during the holy journey too. I hope you discover some new sights along the way. But if you have been a little late in starting off on the journey "fear not" there is still time to begin. In that regard I should mention one other thing I discovered.

The thing I discovered about GPS (and much the same way about God too!) is really quite simple. No matter how many features that GPS comes with and no matter how great it is, it can't guide you to where you need to go if you if you leave it in the box it came in.

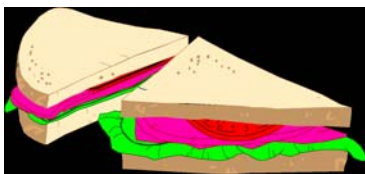
*See you on the road,  
Ed*

*P.S. In case, like me, you do not already own a GPS I have found the following to be even more reassuring.*

*MY LORD GOD, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road, though I may know nothing about it. Therefore I will trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone. (By Thomas Merton, "Thoughts in Solitude").*



## COLLEGE MINISTRY



**Sandwich makers** are still needed (as of this writing) for Mar. 2 and Mar. 16. Can you provide sandwiches for one of our Lenten Sandwich Suppers at R-MC? We need about 10 sandwiches each Sunday evening of Lent. Sandwiches can be delivered to the Upper Room in the RMC Campus Center (stay and worship with us and get to meet some of our students!) or dropped off in the SJTL kitchen by 4:30. There is a sign up sheet on the bulletin board.

### R-MC

EALF will continue having a service of Evening Prayer on Sunday's at 5:00 in the Upper Room. During Lent, we will share a simple "sandwich supper" and discussion. We'll be finished by 6:30.

We have tentative plans to play Laser Tag on Friday, March 7 and to bake our traditional Random Acts of Kindness St. Patrick's Day cookies on March 16. Check your emails for up-to-the-minute information!

EALF will also continue to meet Thursday evenings in Estes to share dinner and informal conversation between 5:00 and 7:00. You are welcome to come when you can or leave early if you need to.

Carol will also continue to be available in the Campus Center on Wednesday evenings from 7:00 to 9:00. And, of course, you can always call (798-6336 or email [carol.sjtl@comcast.net](mailto:carol.sjtl@comcast.net)) to see her some other time!



## Service Trip to Guatemala

See what our students have to say about this special trip!

For the week of Randolph-Macon's January break, Campus Ministries took a group of 20 RMC students to Guatemala on a mission trip. The trip was an amazing experience which brought together groups from different denominations in support of one cause, a mission to help less fortunate people. The project we were involved with was started by a group called AMA (Asociacion de Mujeres del Altiplano) which translated means the Association of Highland Women. This group has helped the people of their community, specifically Qui'ché Maya women, better their living conditions.

We spent four days building stoves in different houses, painting a school, and gathering organic matter to get ready for the tree planting season. The stoves will help the women of the family during cooking and will also help prevent such illnesses such as upper respiratory infections. The community was very warm and welcoming to us, even putting on shows to display some of their native dances and teach us about the Mayan culture. The women's clothing and the textiles they produced were a beautiful sight to see. But something I wasn't prepared to see was the impoverished living conditions of the village we worked in, which is considered one of the "wealthier" villages. The first day was a bit of a culture shock to me, having to witness sights such as a hole in the ground outside for a bathroom, or compact dirt for a floor. But the women of the Highlands, through AMA, are learning different ways to support each other (like exporting their textiles and involvement in women's circles). The empowerment of the Mayan women is one of AMA's main goals.

This trip has opened my eyes a little wider to my surroundings. It has made me stop and think about how lucky I am to be able to get an education beyond grade school and also to have the opportunity to go on a mission trip such as this one. I definitely will not take for granted what I have at college and at home. Starting, of course, with the support from the church for this trip. So, thank you St James the Less for this scholarship and the opportunity to help those less fortunate.

--Kaitlyn Vernier

Thanks to the congregation of Saint James the Less, I was able to travel on a mission trip to Guatemala for one week in February. It was truly a blessing to be able to serve in Guatemala by building stoves for the Mayan families. A group of twenty students and leaders traveled to Chucavioc, Guatemala and built a total of ten stoves that benefited many of the impoverished families. The area we worked in was mainly filled with families that were forced to move because of a natural disaster (Hurricane Stan) that swept away their homes. In Guatemala, the average birth rate is around 5 to 7 children. Many children get upper respiratory infections and illnesses from the burning wood their mothers use for cooking. It was a very humbling and fulfilling experience to know that we were able to bless these families and enable them to go to AMA (Asociacion de Mujeres del Altiplano) meetings. There they learn more about textile making, feeding their families with healthy food, and acquire education and self-confidence. The women were very thankful for our efforts and I just want to express my gratitude to you all. I did not know if I would receive enough funding to pay for this trip, and through this church God provided a way for me. Thank you very much!

--Kennan McVey

Spring break time is here! Let Carol know when you're in town!

Tell the folks at home what's going on at YOUR school! Send Carol your stories (and pictures) to share with everyone back at home.



## SENIOR HIGH NEWS

Thanks to all of you who donated to our clinic on super bowl Sunday. We were pleased to post our total of \$300 on the "Souper Bowl of Caring" website.

Tri-cities Workcamp is holding a 20<sup>th</sup> reunion celebration on Saturday, April 26<sup>th</sup>. Anyone who has ever been to work camp is invited. Please e-mail Connie Romaine at [TCW20Years@aol.com](mailto:TCW20Years@aol.com) to be put on the mailing list for this fabulous event.

**Applications for Work Camp 2008 are due by February 24<sup>th</sup>.** The camp runs from Sunday, July 20<sup>th</sup> until Saturday, July 26<sup>th</sup> and we have reserved 12 spots for teens. Any current high school student or rising ninth grader may attend. This camp provides 200 teenagers a wonderful opportunity to spend a week repairing homes in the Petersburg area and sharing their Christian values. We also must have an adult male and female chaperone. Please consider your ability to help in this ministry to our youth.

Dates to put on your calendar:

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Feb 24 (Sunday)                   | Applications for Work Camp 2008 are due  |
| March 23 (Easter)                 | Applications for Senior High Weekend on Mar 28/30 due<br>(parents, these will be coming in the mail) |
| April 26 <sup>th</sup> (Saturday) | Tri Cities Workcamp reunion in Petersburg and the Relay for Life                                     |
| May 4 (Sunday)                    | Senior High Service, 10 am   |



## MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP UPDATE

The group hopes that everyone enjoyed the annual middle school youth service on February 3<sup>rd</sup>. The kids certainly enjoyed pulling the service together.

We are in the planning stages for a spring retreat for the youth at Shrine Mont. Plans are to go the weekend of April 11<sup>th</sup>.

The weekend of February 8<sup>th</sup>, a group of us attended Black History in Song and Story at Randolph-Macon. The kids helped pass out water during the intermission on Friday night. After the show on Friday night, we went to Cold Stone for a late night treat.

Jessica Sanders joined a couple of the Senior High youth and parents on our trip to Aylett to pack food for St. David's food ministry. This food is then distributed to needy families.

Please remember our continuing newspaper recycling program. All of the money from this project goes directly to our youth group.

As always, if you have any questions regarding the group, please feel free to contact any of the advisors.

PK Kinser      Vicki Morison      Steve Pace      Janet Taylor      Christin May

**Christian Formation Calendar for March**

**March 2-**Lent IV

Adults-Gospel of Matthew continues focusing on Jesus’ last days, the Passion  
Children and Youth- John 9:1-41. God’s love has no limits-A story of a man born blind.

**March 9-**Lent V-Adults will hear Carol Abaire and two Randolph-Macon students report on their mission trip to Guatemala. The youth of the parish (middle school and up) are invited to join us.  
Sunday School classes for children through grade five will hear and respond to the stories of Palm Sunday and Holy Week.

**March 16-**Palm Sunday – No Sunday School Classes today. Services at 8:00 and 10:00 will include the Liturgy of the Palms and the reading of the Passion from Matthew’s Gospel. At 9:00 we continue our custom of meeting other churches at Henry Clay Elementary for a Liturgy of the Palms and procession back to our respective churches.

**March 23-**The Day of Resurrection–No classes. Services on this day are **at 9:00 & 11:00.** An egg hunt will follow the later service.

**March 30-** Regular Christian Formation classes for children and adults resume

**Don’t forget!** Music with Dani Pettit is a regular part of all children’s classes-something everyone looks forward to from the smallest Cherubs who sing at the start of the Sunday School time to older classes she visits in their classrooms.

\*At SJtL the High School Youth traditionally present The Stations of the Cross at 7:00 pm on Good Friday.



**Man’s Best Friend in Health, Too**

We’ve all heard the saying that “a dog is man’s best friend.” Well, that statement may be truer than we once thought, particularly when it comes to our health.

Research has shown that dog owners have lower cholesterol and triglyceride levels, lower blood pressure, fewer minor ailments and are less likely to develop serious medical problems than those who don’t own dogs. A study done at Queens University in Belfast, Ireland showed that people who adopted dogs (and cats) from animal shelters reported a decrease in ailments such as headaches, colds and dizziness within the first month after adopting the animals. Interestingly, only those who adopted dogs maintained the improvements ten months later.

Other studies suggest that dogs appear to hasten recovery after a heart attack and to prolong their owners’ lives after these events. In fact, a recent study showed that dog owners were 8.6% more likely to be alive one year after their heart attacks than non-owners. This may be because close physical contact with a dog (holding, cuddling, petting) brings about the release of hormones such as endorphins, which promote a sense of well being and relieve stress. Stress has been strongly linked with the development of heart disease.

But there are other cardiac benefits of dog ownership. Daily walks with a dog provide an outlet for regular exercise and encourage social interaction along the way, both of which are known to improve outcomes in patients after cardiac events.

The bond between man and dog is one of responsibility, loyalty and devotion. A person’s relationship with his or her dog can be just as meaningful and rewarding as a relationship with another human. It is known that

individuals with good social support networks have overall better health and recover more quickly and fully from serious illnesses.

It seems that man’s best friend is also a wonderful form of therapy.

ATTENTION USERS OF BRYDON HALL, LIBRARY, CLASSROOMS AND THE FACILITIES  
AT SJTL!

You must contact the parish administrator, who will work with the property committee, before you schedule any meetings or events. We need to know who you are, who your contact person is and where and when you meet. Note: The furniture and equipment in any room is shared by many other groups, so, when you are finished, please put everything back exactly as you found it.

--Bobbi Street

**HELP!**

Office volunteers are needed to help answer phones, organize files and fold service leaflets. We want to revive the old Nevertheless Editors’ Group. This group will prepare the NTL for publishing. We need a liaison for the various Scout groups who meet here. If you feel called to any of these ministries, please call the church office at 798-6336. Thank you.

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**CARITAS CONFUSION**

CARITAS **IS** coming to St. James the Less in May. Originally, it was scheduled to be at St. Ann’s for two weeks, one of which would be hosted by St. James the Less. But that has changed. It seems there was a schedule mix-up at St. Ann’s, and they are unable to house the guests the week of May 31-June 7. The guests will be living here in Brydon Hall, and then moving on to St. Ann’s on the 7<sup>th</sup> of June. The meals, overnight, breakfasts, and lunches scheduling won’t change, so there will be many churches covering that part of the program while it is at St. James the Less.

The only real issue for us is that Brydon Hall will be off-limits to the parish for the week of May 31-June 7.

Questions? Don Bruce (798-0922), Sandi Shirey (798-6926), Sylvia Spagna (752-6513).

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**ECW News:** ECW of Central Hanover will meet at St. Paul’s at 11 am on Monday March 3. Bring a sandwich.

In March, three women from Region XI will participate in the 2008 Mission Trip to the Dominican Republic. The women must cover all of their own expenses.

If you would like to help by making a contribution, please see the bulletin board across from the office for details.

**Church News:** The Episcopal Church is sponsoring a World Mission Conference at the Maritime Institute in Baltimore from June 5-8.

The Diocese is sponsoring a joint Episcopal/Lutheran Clergy Conference at ShrineMont from April 7-9. Please consider a contribution for the Episcopal Relief and Development Fund.

Literature concerning all of the above is posted on the board opposite the office.

**Boys’ Home Inc.:** This is a mission that SJTL has supported for a long time. They are fundraising by collecting pennies and Campbell’s Soup labels. Again, please refer to the literature on the bulletin board.



## Easter Surprises for Needy Children



During these last days of lent, please remember those in our community who are in need. Please bring to Church items appropriate for children's Easter baskets, and place them in the A.C.E.S. boxes or basket, to be donated to Ashland Christian Emergency Services (A.C.E.S.). These items will be made available to our less fortunate neighbors, so their children, too, will know the joy of an Easter basket on Easter morning!

Questions? Call Lee & Susan Chambers at 798-6647 or Sarah Sanders at 798-7435.

Excerpts from the H-P article:

*The award "honors an Episcopal church or related faith-based non-profit organization within the Diocese whose mission and ministries for those in need give practical expression of exemplary Christian service and love of neighbor." The citation was read and presented by the Right Rev. Peter Lee, Bishop of Virginia. Materials submitted to the diocesan Commission on Human Need in support of St. James the Less noted the following: "Just as Jesus sent the twelve out to proclaim the good news and to heal, we, the St. James the Less parish family, also seek to follow Him. Outreach at SJTL is a story of a church family whose members strive to help others by being loving, generous and deliberately ecumenical."*

Later in the article, a quote by The Very Rev David Keill highlights the Free Clinic:

*The nomination was further supported by the Very Rev. David Keill, Dean of Region 11 within the diocese. In his letter of support, he noted. "The St. James the Less Free Clinic is nothing short of a miracle brought on by a deep rooted sense of spreading the gospel by reaching out, as their mission statement reads, 'To offer faith-based healing ministry to our qualified Hanover neighbors by providing free medical and dental healthcare with compassion, dignity and respect.' "Every Wednesday evening professionals from varying backgrounds of faith offer their service free of charge to the clients of clinic. St. James the Less parishioners are also involved in every capacity of the clinic and the parish generously has donated rental space free of charge. Nearly 200 professional, non-professional and trained volunteers have donated over 4,800 hours during the first year the clinic has been open."*

Well, my own perspective is that, while we are being cited for "exemplary Christian service and love of neighbor" we sure are having a good time! Yeah – I think this is what the kingdom looks like.

Business news: We are well stocked with nurses, yay! (That doesn't mean we will turn you away if you want to help, however.) We continue to be in need of physicians, dentists, and dental hygienists. We are also looking for educational dvds and videos and other material to distribute as well as folks interested in providing education.

If you are interested in making an ongoing pledge to the clinic or have any questions about making a donation, you can call our Board president, Lee Chambers at 798-6647 or send us a note with your intention. Checks can be placed in the collection plate payable to "Saint James the Less Free Clinic" or mailed to us at "Saint James the Less Free Clinic, PO Box 117 Ashland, VA 23005". Thank you.

If you would like to call the clinic for an appointment, a question, or to determine eligibility for services, please call 798-8890 to leave a message and **we will call you back**.

--Julie Ericksen

**EASTER FLOWER ORDER FORM**

Lilies and hydrangeas will be used to decorate the sanctuary on Easter Sunday, March 23, 2008. You are invited to donate flowers to the glory of God and in memory of or in thanksgiving for a loved one. Vestry members, following the service, will distribute the flowers to the homebound and sick.

Please place the completed form with your check in the alms basin or mail to the church office at 125 Beverly Road, Ashland VA 23005. Please note "Easter Flowers" in the memo line of your check. The requested donation for the flowers is \$10.00. We will need your request by Tuesday March 11 so that we can place an order.

**In Memory of:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**In Thanksgiving for:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Given by:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## MARCH BIRTHAYS

- 1 Robert Innes
- 2 Mallory Rison
- 3 Anabel Shifflett
- 4 William Andrew Penland
- 9 Jamie Cobb
- 10 Mary Helen Williams
- 11 Erik Helsley
- 14 Lee Paul, Christina Dull
- 16 Jason Tiffany
- 18 Lorrie Cecchini
- 20 Julie Ericksen, Dawn Penland
- 23 Daniel Ellithorpe, Dutch Jones, Nathaniel Cecchini
- 24 Dick Shirey, Jim Cox, Ann Lawrence
- 25 Elaine Hooley, Annika Cline
- 27 Betty Moore
- 29 Scott Wagner, Sara Page Waugh, Hayden Massey
- 30 Bill Sanders, Matthew Stone

O God, our times are in your hand: Look with favor, we pray, on your servant *N.* as *he* begins another year. Grant that *he* may grow in wisdom and grace, and strengthen *his* trust in your goodness all the days of *his* life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

If your birthday has not been included, please contact the church office at 798-6336 so that it may be added to the list.



### **Our Prayers Are Invited...**

**In this parish, we offer prayer for healing: MADGE Carter, MAUD Brumback, PAM Gillette, DOLO Kerr, For the homebound: JOYCE Jeffers, JOYCE Baublitz & NANCY Bugge, for those serving in the military: PAUL Gilman, PATRICK Raney, ROBERT May Jr., TRENT Chelette, BRAYDEN Pleasants, CHRIS Abaire, WILL Howe, COLE & RICHARD.**