

The Clarion

www.saintclement.org

November 2008

**THE CHURCH OF
SAINT CLEMENT**
Episcopal + Alexandria, VA

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Twelfth Bishop of Virginia

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Bishop Coadjutor

The Rt. Rev. David Colin Jones
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Martha Crawley
William DeVan
Annette Foster
Brenda Graves
Michael Gray
Frances Harbour
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Communications Update

By Lee Lavinder (Vestry Liaison for Communications)

'Tis the holiday season with many great ways to get more involved at Saint Clement church. November is the month of Thanksgiving, for saying thanks for the wonderful things you've been given and for giving to others. This busy month has lots of opportunities to get involved. Everything from volunteering to help the homeless at the Carpenter's Shelter to bringing in Christmas toys for the needy families in Alexandria. Also, remember to send your pledges in, if you have not done so already.

The Rev. Deacon Cynthia Park has written two great articles with a glimpse at two of the wonderful programs church tidings are used for. This issue has information on the Carpenter's Shelter and St. Mark's Theological College. Make sure to read up and learn more about what great programs our Church hosts and how you can help.

Remember to Turn Your Pledges In

It is important to submit your pledges as soon as possible so that the Vestry can decide on a budget for 2009. If the vestry does not know of a pledge, they cannot plan on it and may have to cut programs or services so that a balanced (or nearly) budget can be submitted to the parish.

A letter from the senior warden should have arrived at your home last month explaining the expected needs and how to pledge. If you have any questions, please contact Lee Lavinder or any member of the vestry.

If you haven't visited our web site (www.saintclement.org), now is a great time to check it out. It's not just a way to access the Clarion (current and back issues) it's also a great way to keep informed on everything from the Episcopal Church to Volunteer Opportunities. While you're there why not "bookmark" and add St. Clements to your list of favorite internet sites.

As always, if you have ideas, stories or articles you would like to include in a future issue of the Clarion please let us know. It's easy, just drop the article off in the church office prior to the 20th of the month.

UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

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| Nov. 27 | Thanksgiving Day Service at 10AM |
| Nov. 28 | Christmas Tree Unloading |
| Nov. 28 | Annual Christmas Tree Sale Begins |

Books And The Bible

The Books and the Bible group that meets every Saturday at 8:30 a.m. in the kitchen of Marshall-Rutter Hall is now reading *A Wing and A Prayer: A Message of Faith and Hope*, by Katherine Jefferts Schori. In this slim volume of brief essays written before she became Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, Bishop Schori uses her varied life experiences and deep knowledge of scripture to give readers a fresh perspective on life. For example, in one essay she uses the stories of Medad and Eldad in the Book of Numbers and an incident related in the gospel of Mark to show how the Bible teaches against exclusionary ministry. She talks about the ministry of baptism – we are all ministers with the opportunity and the responsibility to serve.

Our group starts with greetings, a prayer, and coffee, a necessity for some of us on a Saturday morning! Then we discuss the chapters we had agreed on reading for the week. Everyone has an opinion, and not necessarily the same one. Some books have study guides with questions, but usually we ask our own questions and listen to each other's comments on the text.

Starting in October through the beginning of Advent, we will be reading *Whose Bible Is It* by Jaroslav Pelikan, (2005), an overview of how the Bible grew from the oral narrative to the many versions we have today. In Advent, we will read and discuss the lectionary for each Sunday. Examples of the books we are planning for this later this year include Henri Nouwen's *Encounters with Merton* and Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williamson's *Christ on Trial*.

The group chooses what to read, with advice from the clergy, friends, reviews, etc., so it's a pretty varied selection. Over the years we have read liberal and conservative commentators, writers from other religious traditions, and secular writers, too. We have read the *Book of Revelation* with the commentary of William Barclay and the work of Raymond E. Brown, a Catholic priest who wrote scholarly essays for lay people about the Christmas gospels and many other texts. We have dipped into the Gnostic gospels with Elaine Pagels and have read Marcus Borg's *Jesus and the Buddha*. A bestseller by Adam Nicolson, *God's Secretaries: the Making of the King James Bible*, was a fascinating look at the writing of the most well known version of the bible. In *The Good Book: Reading the Bible with Mind and Heart*, by Peter Gomes and *Walking the Bible*, by Bruce Feiler, we enjoyed the wonderful gift of the personal experiences and insights of these two different, thoughtful authors.

We buy our own books, whether new or used, or we get them from the Public Library. St. Clement's own library in the Spiritual Center has many of these titles that anyone can borrow. If I didn't have Books and the Bible, I know I wouldn't read all these works on my own. It makes such a difference to have people to talk with about the ideas and challenges of each book. There is no one right answer in our group – impossible! I have learned to really love the Bible and not to be afraid to look at it closely, from many different points of view. Others have told me the same thing. If you are interested, please see the list of books for this year posted in Marshall-Rutter Hall and on the Books and the Bible page on the St. Clement's website. You might want to come for only one, or you might be interested in several – feel free to e-mail me at mc1092@verizon.net for more information. Martha Crawley

Nothern Virginia Aids Ministry

View and read about the NOVAM by clicking on this link (novam.org). The website describes the NOVAM 2008 Concert for Hope. It will be held at the Kenmore Middle School auditorium on November 15th. Talk to Elyse Mosqueda about getting tickets.

St. Mark's Theological College

The Rev. Cynthia Park

In its first meeting of the year after the summer break the vestry of St. Clement voted unanimously in support of vestryperson **Annette Foster**'s recommendation that we contribute \$750 out of our Outreach budget to underwrite the construction and equipment necessary for St. Mark's Theological College in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. These funds make it possible for the college to offer training and education for HIV-AIDS. **The Rev. William Mdwla**, a graduate of Virginia Theological Seminary, is one of the deans at the college in Dar. While I was there two summers ago teaching, William shared with me the great need for future clergy to be educated about the causes and prevention of this disease.

I was humbled by the witness of the many hardworking students I encountered there studying Bible and theology in very austere buildings with a limited number of books and other supplies. I promised William that I would bring back to the Church in America the needs of the college there in Tanzania.

Now Fr. William is joyfully overseeing the construction to equip a special room with sound and video so that training films may be screened for the students. William is hopeful that the college's outreach to the larger community may be enlarged as well, because they will now be able to become a training center for other community leaders.

Our parish does a remarkable job of outreach to the community and this opportunity to extend that work to the school in Dar es Salaam is encouraging. Every day's news brings home to me the reality that the world is one family, and certainly that, in Christ, there is no east or west.

The Rev. Mdwla is sending a letter of appreciation to the parish that we will include in next month's newsletter.

Shelter Prepares to Welcome Guests

The Rev. Cynthia Park

"What good is it, my brothers and sister, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them 'Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill' and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead." James 2. 14-17

Again this year, from January 1 through March 15, St. Clement will serve as host for the overflow guests of the Carpenter's Shelter. Vestryperson **Victoria Hughes** and I are co-chairing this ministry and looking forward to working with so many of our parish family who have already signed up to assist with opening, snacks, closing, and other tasks that are part of this ministry.

During **Fr. John**'s initial visit with the clergy at our new neighbor church, Christ the King, he invited them to participate with us in the Shelter ministry. They responded with great affirmation. When I spoke to their rector, David Glade, last week about the Shelter he reiterated what a joy it will be to participate in this work with us. How wisely Fr. John reminded us early on that what we share together with the people of this new parish as fellow laborers in God's vineyard is so much more than those issues that divide us. Now we have this new partner in Christ's outreach of love.

With the economic uncertainty of the coming months, it seems certain that there will be a rise in the number of persons who find themselves without a safe and warm place to sleep at night. If you have helped before, you know the great joy of working with this ministry, and we welcome you back! If you have never worked with a ministry such as this and are curious but a little uncertain about how to get involved, please see me or Vicky Hughes or Fr. John and let us visit with you about this very important way to be Church.

Christmas Toy Drive

Community Partners for Children is having the annual toy drive for the needy children and families of the City of Alexandria. Now is the time to pick up toys before the after Thanksgiving crush. Bring the toys to church and place them in the box in Marshall/Rutter Hall. The toys will be distributed and they need volunteers. Contact Debbie Williams (703-824-3520) for times to volunteer or with any questions you have.

Call for Ushers

Like the Marine Corps, our "elite" corps of ushers needs "a few good men"--and women!!!--to fill out its ranks. The duties are not onerous: one Sunday per month, with clear instructions and support from those experienced in this ministry. Those of us in the ushers ministry have found it to be a great opportunity to serve the parish in a meaningful and visible way. If you are interested, or would just like more information, please contact me at 703 370 0648, or at candjziegler@hotmail.com.

Christmas Tree Unloading

Work off that pumkin pie unloading Christmas trees for our annual sale! You may sign up in Marshall Rutter Hall or call the office to volunteer. 703-998-6166

SATURDAY November 28, 2008
Annual Christmas Tree Sale Begins!

Our annual Christmas tree sales benefit the programs of The Church of Saint Clement, including community outreach. Blue Spruce, Douglas Fir and Fraser Fir trees will be sold. For more information and to volunteer to sell trees, please contact the church office at 703-998-6166.

Birthdays in October

11/1
Matthew Ziegler
11/03
Leon Scioscia
11/05
Bud Armstrong
11/06
Monica Rodgers
Sharon Atherton
Nicholas Prentice
11/07
Andrew Rogers
11/11
Arianne Graves
11/13
Kelly Thompson
David Groves
11/14
Susan Askin
11/15
Alex Scioscia
11/17
Patrick Crerar
11/18
Nick King
11/19
Helen Manich
11/22
Alistair Wearmouth
11/27
Mark Drake
11/29
Jennifer Hughes
11/30
Les Rosenbaum

CLARION SUBMISSIONS: Submissions for the Clarion should be made to Lee Lavinder either by email (lavinder_lee@yahoo.com) or by dropping it off in the church office.