



The Bellringer

E-mail: august@bestweb.net Website: www.stacroton.org November 2007

Rector:
The Reverend Bradley C. Dyche
Priest Associate:
The Rev. Betsy Johns Roadman
Deacon:
The Rev. Deacon Keith McKenna

St. Augustine's Episcopal Church ♦ 6 Old Post Road North, Croton on Hudson, NY 10520 ♦ 914-271-3501 (Office)

November 2007

3	Saturday	5:00 p.m.	Holy Eucharist II
			DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS
4	<u>The Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost</u>		
		8:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist I
		9:30 a.m.	Peekskill Soup Kitchen Meeting in Parish House
		10:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist II, Children's Service
		11:00 a.m.	Adult Education Class on the exploration of Celtic Christianity
5	Monday	7:30 p.m.	Discernment Committee
6	Tuesday	7:00 p.m.	EFM Class
7	Wednesday	12:00 p.m.	First Wednesday
10	Saturday	9 a.m. – 4 p.m.	Diocesan Convention
		5:00 p.m.	Holy Eucharist II, Betsy Roadman Preaching
11	<u>The Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost and Stewardship/Commitment Sunday</u>		
		8:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist I, Betsy Roadman Preaching
		9:45 a.m.	Sunday School
		10:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist II, Betsy Roadman Preaching
		11:30 a.m.	Potluck Stewardship Brunch
13	Tuesday	7:00 p.m.	EFM Class
17	Saturday	5:00 p.m.	Holy Eucharist II, Betsy Roadman Preaching
18	<u>The Twenty-Sixth Sunday after Pentecost</u>		
		8:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist I, Betsy Roadman Preaching
		9:45 a.m.	Sunday School
		10:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist II, Betsy Roadman Preaching
		11:00 a.m.	Wondrous Things Fundraiser
		11:15 a.m.	Book Group/ Bible Study
19	Monday	7:30 p.m.	Outreach Committee Meeting
20	Tuesday	6:30 p.m.	Interfaith Thanksgiving Seder at Temple Israel
22/23	Thurs - Friday		Thanksgiving Holiday, Office Closed
24	Saturday	5:00 p.m.	Holy Eucharist II, Keith McKenna Celebrating
25	<u>The Last Sunday after Pentecost, The Feast of Christ the King</u>		
		8:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist I, Keith McKenna Preaching
		10:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist II, Keith McKenna Preaching
27	Tuesday	7:00 p.m.	EFM Class
		7:30 p.m.	Ribbon making for wreaths in Parish Hall
28	Wednesday	7:45 p.m.	Vestry Meeting



Thank you to Jill Mader, Jenn Latham, Louise Levey and Dana Holland who organized and put together the Coffee Hour for the Bishop's Visit.

Stewardship Talk, October 20/21, 2007
from the Rector.

***“Where your treasure is,
there will your heart be also”
(Luke 12:34)***

I feel compelled to share with you that I was the one who chose this year's stewardship theme, a passage from Luke which reads, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Luke 12:34). If you do not love it, do not blame Dana Garrett who wrote our stewardship letter or Duncan, the Senior Warden, who preached about stewardship, or even Jenn Latham who still quietly "runs" much around here, though she is no longer paid to do so. The treasure and heart buck stops here! And I selected this oddly worded, and yet I believe inspiring, passage because when it appeared in a Gospel reading this summer, I found myself dumbfounded. I repeated the words to myself over and over. I liked the idea that where we put our treasure is related to our hearts, but at the same time, I kept stumbling over the confusing sense of cause and effect between that treasure and heart. "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." It seems counter-intuitive. I would expect the reverse. After all, we put our money where our mouth is not our mouth where our money is. But in these words, we hear a "Just do it" sort of message, and we are supposed to accept that our hearts and metaphorical mouths will follow. The thought of preaching such a message for stewardship seems a bit dicey. Should I get up here and tell you to just fork over the cash, as much as you can spare, knowing that it will ultimately transform you for the better? Where your treasure is... after all, I might say. I could, but I somehow have doubts about the return. I know that I picked the theme, but frankly, even I feel a little uncomfortable with some of its implications

I find that I am not the only one who feels uncomfortable with the concept, at least in terms of asking for money. Episcopal Priest Barbara Crafton writes about her own feelings of fund-raising. She says, "*I have... [a] dislike of fund-raising... People who are good at it point out that what we're really doing is giving people an opportunity to be part of something they value. [Where your treasure is,*

there will your heart be also. And so] Don't feel reluctant to ask; you're giving them a gift by asking, a chance to do something important. Right. I do believe that.

But I am scarred. I write fundraising letters and feel sorry for the people to whom I send them, afraid that they'll resent me for asking. That's funny, since I don't resent them for asking. I must restrain myself from penciling in an apology. In the manner of fundraising letters... Sometimes you... scrawl down at the bottom of the letter [something like] -- "Hope you can help!"... You're not supposed to write "Listen, I feel just terrible about this, but they made me send it."

So I imagine that, in Hell, I'll have to be the development director. Little demons with pitchforks will force me to send out billions of letters to our donor base, which by then will be very large: "If by some chance you did find a way to take it with you, won't you consider making a gift to make it possible for your loved ones to go to Hell, too?" I'll invite people to the annual Disco Madness Gala, which will feature only one song, 'Turn the Beat Around,' over and over and over. "Hope you can come and dance, dance dance!" I'll scribble at the bottom of the letters... We'll have a fundraising drive on the radio every other week, and we will pre-empt the season finale of 'West Wing' for our Gingivitis Telethon." She concludes, "This could happen. We do not know what lies beyond this life. Better be very, very good from now on."

"Where your treasure is, there will your heart will be also." No matter my and perhaps your dislike of fund-raising and the difficulty of broaching the most taboo, testy, and difficult subject of money, that is what I want to do today. And I want to do so in the context of stewardship, which is more than fund-raising. Stewardship is about, as Bishop Don said last week, living a life of gratitude and rejoicing that everything in life is a gift from God. And in talking about stewardship and money, I want to bear in mind our challenging theme of "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also", because ultimately, I believe stewardship, fund-raising, treasures and hearts are all interconnected.

To begin to address stewardship, fund-raising, treasure, and hearts, I want to first talk about treasure. And I want to define treasure in the loosest of terms. I want to say that treasure is everything that we consider valuable: our money, our time, our relationships, our natural resources, our families, and our vocations (or at least the money we are paid from such positions). Treasure is all that is good and needed in our lives. And if we bear in mind the parable of the talents, the parable in which several servants were told to invest on behalf of their master, we are called to nurture and invest our treasures on God's behalf, so that they might grow and bear fruit. Of course, as in the parable of the talents, everyone is not given the same resources. We all have different treasures and challenges, and we have all probably made a mix of good and, well, challenging decisions with those treasures. But whether our treasure is large or small, we are invited to live a life of thanksgiving and stewardship, caring for and investing in our world, our families, our church, and all who are in need, not simply hiding what treasures we have away.

In terms of money and treasure, and I would love to be able to apply this to relationships, the church has always upheld the biblical concept of sharing a percentage of your income, something off of the top to our church, to other charities, and with people in need, even other family members. For those of us who are accepting that challenge, but are unable to jump in at the recommended 10 percent, which is what a tithe is, I hold up my personal model, again, which was to start out at some percent, in my case it was 3 percent, and keep adding to that percentage each year. However, even if you cannot share a tithe or a proportional gift, hopefully, you can still share part of who and what you are in this place and in the world. Ultimately, I have to believe that what Jesus is saying is correct. We have to make a leap of faith with our treasure, in every sense of the word treasure, even if we have to start with small, manageable baby jumps. We are called and invited to live a life of thankfulness and giving. And we have to trust that it will transform our hearts and lives.

And so to our hearts and where they will be. As some of you have heard me say, I often declare that

much of my soul resides on my Grandparent's farm in Cheyenne Valley, Oklahoma. It is the place where I grew up with beef cattle and wheat and spent my summers. And the center of that small, rural farming community is a Methodist Church. And Cheyenne Valley Methodist Church is the small red brick building where the denizens of Cheyenne Valley learned to care for one another. It is the place where Edna May Marlatt organized Vacation Bible School along with Darlene Inman who led us with extensive crafts, far beyond popsicle stick 101. And when a minister accidentally left the boiler on and the church burned down, it was the place that was rebuilt by everyone in the community. The church has been home to many a supper with fried chicken and four layer cake, and when my Grandfather died two months after my ordination, I led the funeral there.

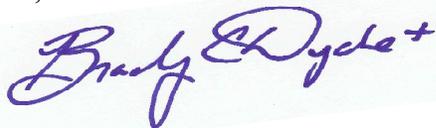
When my sister visited me here a year ago, her first impression was that she felt reminded of Cheyenne Valley Methodist Church, how warm people are, how intimate it all feels. And I would say that we are very similar to them. We also come together in a way that makes us bigger than we are on our own. We center ourselves on love, faith, and hospitality. And we rely on our members to make St. A's work. From serving 70 people at the Croton Caring Committee on October 13th, to running in the Harry Chapin fun run on October 21st, to organizing our work at the Peekskill Soup Kitchen, we are a community that gives. And it goes on. From people who have planned extensively for our Sunday School, to Laura Ravotti who conducts and plays here each week, to the choir, to our Eucharistic Ministers, to our lay readers, to our ushers and altar Guild, to those who schedule all of them, to Kim and Jenn before her in the office, and Holly Anzani who is here almost every day as Treasurer, to our babysitters, to Mark Anzani who worked tirelessly on our computers when one failed and Laura Seitz who coordinates our grounds, to Louise Levey who is helping us attempt to solve our continual problems with rodents in our roof and has applied for grants to help stretch our budget. To those who sell shopping certificates and those who organize and help at JuneFest to fund our church and our outreach programs. To our outreach committee which helps keep us focused on living a life of sharing. To our Senior

who help keep me sane and coordinate everything from stewardship to responses in difficult situations. To the members of our discernment committee who are helping us prepare for who we are and who we are becoming, and to everyone who comes and participates in our life of faith. We are a community that thrives only because so many have chosen to invest our treasure: our time, our efforts, and yes, our money in St. A's.

And our hearts, as a result, are here, at St. A's. "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." For me, and I hope for you, my heart has gone to where my treasure of time, talent, family, money and even my vocation is, right here.

On November 11th, after the 10 am service, I hope that you join with me in celebrating our heart and our community, and our treasures at our annual Stewardship Brunch. And, I invite you to contemplate, pray, reflect, and think about how we each invest our treasures at St. A's so that we and those around us might see the love of God through our community at St. A's.

God's peace,




First Wednesday, November 7th at Noon. We will gather at noon to have lunch and fellowship. Gil and Siegfried Mader will be cooking a German meal. Please call the parish office, 271-3501, to RSVP.

Hurricane Relief Trip: St. A's will be sending a group of 35 volunteers to Christ Church in Mississippi. Room and board will be provided at Coast Episcopal School by Lutheran-Episcopal Services. Transportation arrangements, options and costs are being finalized. Ty West is coordinating this effort. Dates of trip are Wednesday, December 26th thru Tuesday, January 1st, 2008.

On November 1st the Croton Caring Committee's food drive begins and will continue throughout the Holiday season. Share your



Thanksgiving by helping the Croton Caring Committee fill Holiday Food Baskets. Non-perishable and non-breakable items can be dropped off anytime at 38 Penfield Avenue on the patio. Frozen turkeys and hams will be accepted from Friday, November 16 to Monday, November 19 for Thanksgiving and from Friday, December 14 to Tuesday, December 18 for Christmas.

Peekskill Soup Kitchen: Those interested in learning more about the Peekskill Soup Kitchen a meeting is scheduled for **Sunday, November 4th** at 9:30 am in the Parish House.

Stewardship Brunch Sunday, November 11th. After the 10 a.m. service we will gather for a **pot luck brunch** to celebrate our thankfulness, in keeping with our Stewardship theme, "*Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also*", for this year. Please bring an entrée, side dish, salad or desert to share. Please come, carefully consider how you would like to honor your thanks, and make your pledge for 2008.

Book Group/Bible Study Notes: On **September 23rd**, it was decided that our newly formed St. A's bookgroup would read *The Color of Water: a Black Man's Tribute to his White Mother* by James McBride. And our first meeting will be on **Sunday, November 18th** at about 11:15 am (after the 10:00 am service in the Parish House). Hopefully, you can join us.

Save the date: Wondrous Things will be holding a fundraiser for St. A's after the 10:00 am service on November 18th. Come buy a few bangles and baubles and support St. A's. 10% of your purchases will be donated to St. A's. It is not too early to think of all the wonderful people on your Holiday list.

Outreach Committee Meeting: Next meeting will be held on Monday, **November 19th**, at 7:30 pm in the Parish House.

Interfaith Thanksgiving Seder at Temple Israel on Tuesday November 20 at 6:30 p.m. Save the date. At the meal we will participate in a service project to collect items for the National Guard units from Camp Smith. More to come in the weekly bulletin.



'Tis the Season: Our annual wreath sale is scheduled for Saturday, December 1st. The wreath sale will take place as usual the first weekend after Thanksgiving. You will be getting a call to put your order in a few weeks. We will need lots of help with the calls, making bows, decorating the wreaths, and finally selling them on Dec 1st. Look for a sign up sheet in the Parish Hall.

This effort generates several thousand dollars and is an important piece of the budget. Besides it is a great way to get into the spirit of the holiday season. We guarantee that everyone can learn to make beautiful bows on **Tuesday, November 27th** at St. Augustine's starting at 7:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall.

Vestry Notes from the October meeting:

☛ *Buildings and Grounds* – St. A's has applied for a grant from the Diocese to defray the cost of repairing/replacing the fascia boards and painting the trim on the parish hall and the church itself. The decision is pending. Cost to the Parish will still be around \$10,000.



☛ *Columbarium:* Vestry member Suzanne Smith has made a map of the Memorial Garden. The map will soon be on the parish website.

☛ Congratulations to the Youth Council for making \$273 at their bake sale of October 14th!

Respectfully submitted,
~Chris Moore, Clerk of the Vestry

Discernment Next Phase: Our thanks to all of you for taking the time to complete and return the discernment surveys. We have received a large

number of them and the committee is currently compiling the views expressed in these returned surveys. We are also making preparations for the next phase of study associated with this work. After the compilation of the survey findings, the committee would like to explore some of these views more deeply in small informal gatherings, in much the same way as we did during the search process. We will host discussion sessions after each of the services on set dates to be announced and we are also planning to use house meetings with pot luck suppers as another forum to share the findings, gather further insight, and seek additional views. If you would be interested in hosting a house meeting on a weekend or weekday during the period of November 9th to December 9th, please let Mark Anzani know with the date(s) you could do this. Mark may be reached by e-mail at Anzani@us.ibm.com or at 914.271.3371. After the dates are set, sign up sheets will be posted in the parish hall. Our thanks again for your support of this discernment.

Financial Operations through September 30, 2007:			
	<i>Expenses</i>		<i>Revenues</i>
	<i>Paid</i>		<i>Received</i>
Administrative	\$ (35,974.39)		
Priest	\$ (61,158.65)	Fundraising	\$ 24,695.28
Service/Program	\$ (15,716.14)	Plate	\$ 16,511.71
Diocese	\$ (14,529.00)	Pledge	\$ 91,366.85
Outreach	\$ (4,264.28)	Space	\$ 3,285.00
Property	\$ (21,283.85)	Investments	\$ 6,076.72
TOTAL	\$ (152,926.31)	TOTAL	\$ 141,935.56
(deficit)/surplus	\$ (10,990.75)		
budgeted deficit	\$ (1,792.24)		

Treasurer's Report: The Church's financial operations have deteriorated somewhat since my last report, which is not unusual given the reduced church attendance (and related reduction in Current Year Pledge income) during the summer months.

Expenses were generally lower than expectations. Administrative expense has come in lower than expected as we were without a Parish Administrator during July and August.

expenses came in lower than expected due to the relatively mild winter and a reduction in our sewer taxes. Priest also came in lower, since we had budgeted for a full year for an Assistant Priest, rather than the actual of eight months. Outreach was close to budget after the expenditure of monies to organizations recommended by the Outreach Committee (\$2,600 during July, and funded from a portion of JuneFest revenues). Program expenses were higher than the budget, due mostly to added investment is our Sunday School program.

The reason for the significant increase in our deficit is the lag in revenues since the beginning of summer, especially pledges. JuneFest raised \$20,988 (remarkably close to the \$21,000 in the budget).

Space Use continues to fall below expectations, with revenues 45% lower than budgeted.

By the end of September, we expected to see \$106,500 in pledges. Of that amount, only \$88,645 has actually been received, leaving a \$18,000 shortfall in pledge revenues. Although expenses were generally lower than expected, they were not low enough to make up for this revenue shortfall, resulting in continued deterioration of our financial position, and an actual deficit of (\$10,991) versus the budgeted deficit of (\$1,792).

Hopefully, after circulation of the quarterly pledge updates to parishioners, Current Year Pledges will recover to their expected levels, eliminating the larger than expected operating deficit.

~submitted by Holly Anzani, Treasurer

⌘ word about Stewardship:

“Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” If you’ve heard that scripture passage a lot lately it’s because that’s the theme of this year’s pledge campaign. In the stewardship letter you received last month, I wrote about how the passage made me think of a scene from Mary Poppins involving tuppence and breadcrumbs. Father Brad and Duncan Cleary each offered their own interpretations of the passage in their sermons. As is so often the case, Jesus’ words spoke to each of us in a slightly different way.

Similarly, each of us feels called to give to the church in a different way. We all offer our own individual talents and as much time as our demanding schedules allow. During pledge campaign season, we’re asked to make a thoughtful decision about how much to give to the church financially. Pledge dollars are so important to the operation of St. Augustine’s. And yet, that is not the only reason to give to the church. As Christians, we’re called to give in the spirit of gratitude as an acknowledgment of the many gifts we receive from God. We are invited to put our treasure where we would most like our hearts to be.

Some of us have found that the best way to make our pledge to the church feel more like an acknowledgement of our blessings, and less like a monthly bill that has to be paid, is by giving a percentage of our income rather than simply a fixed dollar amount. It’s called proportional giving – and it helps to make a direct connection between what we receive and what we give. Whether it’s 3%, 5% or 10%, the percentage you choose is a personal decision that requires prayerful consideration. After you’ve given it some thought, you can use the enclosed Proportional Giving Worksheet to help you calculate your pledge amount. All pledges are kept strictly confidential. And if you have any questions about pledging or proportional giving, please don’t hesitate to talk to Brad, Jenn Latham or myself.

Our pledge campaign will culminate in a festive potluck brunch after church on Sunday, November 11th. Please bring your completed pledge card (which is at the bottom of the worksheet) and join us as we celebrate the successful stewardship of our lovely and loving church.

Very sincerely,

Dana Garrett
Stewardship Chairman

3rd Quarter Statement of Contributions: Letters have been mailed out. If you did not receive one or there are corrections to make, please contact the Parish Office. 271-3501

Thank You

The **October Croton Caring Committee** luncheon, hosted by St. Augustine's, was a joyful and delicious event enjoyed by more than 80 senior citizens of Croton and the surrounding area. Many thanks go to all who helped make this an enjoyable meeting, and if names are forgotten, it is not through a lack of gratitude!!

Special thanks to Kim Westphal, Kathe McBride, Holly Anzani, Isabel Anzani, Kathy West, Carole Grimes, Nina Prudden, Becky Haynes, Caren Evans, Louise Levey, Brooke Levey, Father Brad, Libby Carlson and the many brownie bakers who delivered their wonderful baked goods to the church or the community room.

As Ann Kennedy would say – “thank you for caring.”

Trees on the Grounds: A great deal of work has been done on the gardens this fall, pruning, weeding mulching, edging, and the transplanting of bushes that were crowded or in the wrong place. Take a look at the Memorial Garden when you are next at church to see the results.

Still to come is the planting of zoysia grass in the Memorial Garden. It will take a few years to fully grow in, but eventually this low maintenance grass will set off all the rest of our efforts and finally end the problem of a lovely garden surrounding a weedy patch.

Many thanks are due to John Grant, Chris Newton's brother, who has already done a wonderful job of saving our beautiful kousa dogwood. What a friend of the church!!

A big thank you to the small but dedicated group of Bellringer folders and mailers. Thank you to Carol Grimes, Mary O'Gara, and Shelley Gilbert and Kathy Lawton.

Coming in December:

Saturday, December 1 –

St. A's Wreath Sale

Sunday, December .2 –

The First Sunday of Advent, and

Christmas Pageant Rehearsal

Sunday, December 9 –

Christmas Pageant Rehearsal – 10 am

Sunday, December 16 –

The Christmas Pageant

Sunday, December 23 –

Lessons and Carols – 10 am

Monday, December 24 – Christmas Eve

4:00 p.m. Children's Christmas Eve Service,
Holy Eucharist Rite II

7:00 p.m. Family Christmas Eve Service, Holy
Eucharist Rite II

10:00 p.m. First Service of Christmas, Holy
Eucharist Rite II

Tuesday, December 25 – Christmas Day

9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II



Enclosed is your 2008 Pledge Card

Join us on Sunday, November 11th, at a pot luck luncheon,
where we will be collecting your 2008 Pledge Card.

<u>Rector</u>	<u>The Rev. Bradley C. Dyche</u>				
<u>Rector Emeritus</u>	<u>The Rev. David B. Wayne</u>				
<u>Priest Associate</u>	<u>The Rev. Betsy Johns Roadman</u>				
<u>Deacon</u>	<u>The Rev. Deacon Keith McKenna</u>				
<u>2007 VESTRY MEMBERS</u>					
Senior Warden:	<u>Duncan Cleary</u>	Junior Warden:	<u>Dana Garrett</u>		
Treasurer:	<u>Holly Anzani</u>	Clerk:	<u>Chris Moore</u>		
Asst Treasure:	<u>Suzanne Smith</u>				
<u>Class of 2007</u>	Jeff Lawton	<u>Class of</u>	Laura Seitz	<u>Class of</u>	Holly Anzani
	Louise Levey	<u>2008</u>	Suzanne Smith	<u>2009</u>	Ed Godek
	Chris Moore		Loren Zack		Greg Kaebnick
<u>Meeting Schedule:</u> Vestry, 3rd Wednesday, 7:45 p.m.					

© St. Augustine's Episcopal Church

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www.stacroton.org

Address correction requested



NOVEMBER 2007

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