



Bellringer

Interim Pastor:
The Rev. Betsy Johns Roadman

august@bestweb.net, wstacroton.org

Dec 2005/Jan 2006

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

December 2005

1	Thursday	7:00 p.m.-9 p.m.,	Wreath Decorating in Parish Hall
2	Friday	10 a.m.-4 p.m.,	Wreath Decorating in Parish Hall
		7:30 p.m.-9 p.m.,	Wreath Decorating in Parish Hall
3	Saturday	10 a.m.-4 p.m.,	Christmas Wreath and Youth Council Bake Sale in the Parish Hall
		10:30 a.m.	Meeting of Eucharistic Ministers and Lectors in St. A's House
		5:00 p.m.	Holy Eucharist II
4	<u>Second Sunday in Advent</u>		
		8:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist I
		9:45 a.m.	Sunday School pageant rehearsal
		10:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist II
		9 a.m.-3 p.m.	Croton Blood Drive at CHS
6	Tuesday	7:30 p.m.	EFM Class
7	Wednesday	Noon	First Wednesday Holiday Gathering TBA
10	Saturday	9:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m.,	Advent Quiet Day
		5:00 p.m.	Holy Eucharist II
		6:00 p.m.	Robert Ellsberg book reading and signing, wine and cheese reception
11	<u>Third Sunday in Advent</u>		
		8:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist I
		9:45 a.m.	Sunday School pageant rehearsal
		10:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist II
		11:15 a.m.	African Team Ministries Sale
13	Tuesday	7:30 p.m.	EFM Class
14	Wednesday	7:00 p.m.	Vestry and staff annual dinner and meeting
17	Saturday	10:00 a.m.	Sunday School Christmas Pageant rehearsal in the church
		11:30 a.m.	Church and Parish Hall decorating party
		2:30 p.m.	Christmas Carols at Sky View Nursing Home
		5:00 p.m.	Holy Eucharist II and Healing Service
18	<u>Fourth Sunday in Advent</u>		
		8:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist I, followed by coffee hour
		10:00 a.m.	Children's Service and Christmas Pageant
		11:15 a.m.	Festive "Christmas" Coffee Hour
			African Team Ministries Sale
20	Tuesday	7:30 p.m.	EFM Class
24	<u>Christmas Eve</u>		
		4:00 p.m.	Children's Service with presentation of the Crèche and Holy Eucharist
		7:00 p.m.	Family Service, Holy Eucharist II
		10:00 p.m.	First Service of Christmas, Holy Eucharist II
25	<u>Christmas Day</u>		
		9:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist II
Dec. 25-Dec. 31			Parish office closed No 5 p.m. service on Saturday, December 31

January 2006



1	<u>First Sunday After Christmas Day, The Rev. Carole Johannsen celebrating</u>		
		(no 8 a.m. or 10 a.m. services)	
		9:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist II
3	Tuesday	7:30 p.m.	EFM Class
4	Wednesday		No First Wednesday gathering
7	Saturday	5:00 p.m.	Evening Prayer II
8	<u>First Sunday After The Epiphany, The Baptism of Our Lord,</u>		
	<u>The Rev. Carole Johannsen celebrating and preaching</u>		
		8:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist I
		9:45 a.m.	Sunday School, Block IV begins
		10:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist II, dedication of the new window
14	Saturday	5:00 p.m.	Holy Eucharist II
15	<u>Second Sunday After The Epiphany</u>		
		8:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist I
		9:45 a.m.	Sunday School
		10:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist II
		3:00 p.m.	Interfaith Service of Remembrance, Martin Luther King, Jr
16	Monday		Parish Office closed in observance of Martin Luther King Day
17	Tuesday	7:30 p.m.	EFM Class
18	Wednesday	8:00 p.m.	Vestry Meeting
21	Saturday	9:30-10:30 a.m.	Health Care Proxy workshop in parish hall
		10:45 a.m. – noon	Funeral planning workshop in parish hall
		5:00 p.m.	Holy Eucharist II
22	<u>Third Sunday After The Epiphany</u>		
		8:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist I
		9:45 a.m.	Sunday School
		10:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist II
24	Tuesday	7:30 p.m.	EFM Class
28	Saturday	3:00 p.m.	Bible Study
		5:00 p.m.	Holy Eucharist II and Healing Service
		6:00 p.m.	Screening of Paul Schneeberger's film, "Twilights Last Gleaming," followed by discussion in parish hall
29	<u>Fourth Sunday After the Epiphany</u>		
		8:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist I
		9:45 a.m.	Sunday School
		10:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist II
		11:15 a.m.	Annual Parish Meeting & Vestry Election

Please note: All meetings and classes are in St. A's House unless otherwise noted.

First Wednesday: We will have a special lunch gathering on December 7 at noon at a location TBA. Please see the Sunday bulletin or call the parish office (271-3501) for details or to RSVP by December 2. There will be no First Wednesday in January.

After the 10 a.m. service on December 11 and 18, we will sell crafts from African Team Ministries to raise funds for battling HIV/AIDS in Africa. This will be a convenient and thoughtful way to purchase some unique Christmas gifts for all those close to you.

Begin your Christmas decorating with wreaths from St. Augustine's. Our annual wreath sale will be held in the Parish Hall from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. on Saturday, December 3. Wreaths vary in size from 12 inches to 36 inches, plain with a red ribbon or decorated with ribbon, pinecones and berries, in a price range of \$14 - \$50. Come by and give your home that holiday touch. The Youth Council will hold a Bake Sale during the Wreath Sale to raise funds to buy a bicycle for a women's shelter.





Dear friends,

We're attuned to new beginnings associated with the start of the calendar year on January 1 and the academic year in September. There are familiar rituals associated with each. We take on exercise and diet regimes in January, and as we start to fill in the empty squares of a brand new calendar, we promise ourselves and our families that this year, we'll be more organized; we'll set and keep the priorities that are most important; we won't allow ourselves to become overcommitted and stressed. In September, we buy new clothing and shoes for school; we stuff the backpack with fresh notebooks and pencils; we promise to keep up with the homework and not wait until the last minute to finish projects. In both cases, there's a sense of expectation and excitement, because a new year signals a new beginning, with the hope of new possibilities.

We've just torn off the last page of the liturgical calendar of the church. In our three-year cycle, Year A has ended; Year B has begun, as of November 27 – the first Sunday of Advent. Each year at this time, I have to transfer almost an entire bookshelf of resources for preaching and liturgy planning to make way for those of the new church year. While it's inconvenient to haul armloads of volumes from my study down to the basement, it's also become a meaningful ritual for me. Year A is over, with many joys and not a few regrets. I've learned a lot. I've made mistakes. And Year B is an opportunity for a fresh start.

And I deliberately wait a couple of days to fill my office shelves with the books that I need for the new liturgical year. Practically, I like to give my arms and legs a rest before lugging heavy loads back up two flights of stairs. Symbolically, the empty shelves remind me of the need and the opportunity to make space in my life for God in this new year, in new and fresh ways.

The liturgical year begins with the season of Advent – itself a time of expectation and hope, as we prepare for the coming of Christ. How might we make space in our life for God as we embark upon this new year and this new church season? What will truly feed our soul? What will silence the noise of our life so that we might sense the movement of the Spirit within and around us? What spiritual discipline might we begin to practice that will draw us more intentionally and deeply into the presence of God?

Blessings –

Betsy+



The weather on the Mississippi coast has turned hilly and wet in a very short time period. Klub Katrina at Camp Coast Care is in desperate need of OTC (over the counter) medications for colds, coughs, etc. ****IN ORDER FOR US TO BE ABLE TO USE THESE MEDICATIONS, THEY MUST BE SENT IN THEIR ORIGINAL, UNOPENED PACKAGES**** Packages can be sent to Klub Katrina Clinic, c/o Coast Episcopal School, 5065 Espy Ave., Long Beach, MS 39560.

Vestry Nominations: Do you feel called to be on the Vestry of the church? This is the group that makes policy, legal, and financial decisions for St. A's. It is the group that holds vision, planning, and the day to day needs of the church together. We meet once a month, on the third Wednesday, beginning at 8 p.m. We serve three year terms. We're a cross section of people with a common interest and love for the church and God's work here. Please contact Chris Moore, the clerk of the Vestry, if you feel called to serve.

St. A's will host a book reading/signing to celebrate the publication of Robert Ellsberg's most recent book – *Blessed Among Women: Women Saints, Prophets, and Witnesses for our Time* on Saturday, December 10, at 6 p.m. Wine and cheese will be served.

Deck the Halls! On Saturday, December 17 beginning at 11:30 a.m. many hands will be needed to decorate the church and hall in preparation for our Christmas Services. Please come and help; it's great fun! Refreshments will be served. 'Tis the season!

Croton's Annual Blood Drive will be held Sunday, December 4 at CET from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Please help those who depend on this drive during the holiday season which is often a time of increased accidents & illness. If you'd like to make an appointment, please call Mary Ellen O'Neill at 271-1307, or see her at coffee hour.

Christmas Altar Flower Donations

If you wish to have Christmas flowers provided for the altar in memory of a loved one, or in thanksgiving, your donation can be put in the collection plate, or dropped off or mailed to the parish office.

Please be sure to specify the names of those you wish to remember, as well as your own, & write "Altar Fund" on your check. To ensure all names appear in the Christmas bulletins, they must be given to the office by Sunday, December 18.

Our Advent Quiet Day will be held on Sat.,

December 10, from 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. Brother Rick Lorino, Director of Pastoral Care at White Plains Hospital, and members of the Brotherhood of St. Gregory will lead us in worship at Morning and Noonday prayer and at a concluding Eucharist, with meditations on "Advent as Expectation," and plenty of space for silence and reflection. A light lunch will be served. Please sign up on the sheet in the parish hall.

Share Christmas joy : Help the Croton Caring Committee fill Holiday Food Baskets. Non-perishable & non-breakable items can be dropped off anytime at 38 Penfield Ave. on the patio and frozen turkeys can be left from Friday, Dec. 16 to Monday, Dec. 19.

Carol Sing at Sky View Nursing Home --December 17, 2:30 p.m.

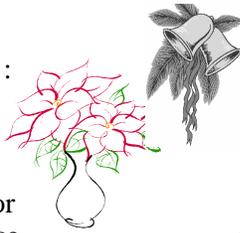
This will be our 10th annual gathering to brighten the lives of our neighbors and to warm their hearts with Christmas cheer. We sing for no more than 30 minutes – it is not a long commitment of time but is one that fills all present with the true spirit of Christmas.

All ages and all abilities of choristers are welcome! We will meet in the lobby of Sky View at 2:15 p.m. (Sky View is located on Route 9A, Croton.)

St. Augustine's children's Christmas pageant will be held during the 10:00 a.m. service on Sunday, December 18. All Sunday School age children (pre-school through grade 6) are invited to participate. Rehearsals will be during regular Sunday School hours (9:45 to 10:30) on Sunday, December 4 and Sunday, December 11, and on Saturday morning December 17. Please contact director Rachel Norfleet at 271-0812 if your child would like to participate but cannot be at the first rehearsal. Following the service on the 18th, we will celebrate with a festive Christmas coffee hour.

The schedule of Christmas services will be the same as last year: 4 p.m. Children's Service, Presentation of the Crèche & Holy Eucharist; 7 p.m. Family Service, Holy Eucharist II; 10 p.m. First Service of Christmas and Holy Eucharist II, and Christmas Day at 9:00 a.m.

Betsy Roadman will be away the first two weeks of January. She and Larry will be celebrating their 25th wedding anniversary with a family trip to Kenya and Uganda.

**The annual observance of Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Day will be held at St. A's on Sunday, 1/15 at 3 p.m. This Inter-faith service reminds us of our need to fight prejudice in our society, to celebrate freedom and to rejoice in our unity.



St. A's Annual Meeting will be held on 1/29 following the 10 a.m. service. Plan to come and hear reports from parish members & to share in planning for the future. Polls for election of Vestry members will be opened at 5 p.m. Saturday, 1/28 and closed at 11:15 a.m. on 1/29. Anyone interested in running for Vestry should speak with Clerk of the Vestry, Chris Moore.

Vestry Notes

Outreach - Cathie Elliott reported that Laura Seitz is planning a trip to Long Beach, MS during the first week of December to help people there, and is inviting interested parishioners to join her. Cathie also said that Dr. Saleem Mir, in Croton, is collecting heavy winter goods to send to the people of Pakistan who have been left homeless by the earthquake. She said that people should drop off blankets, warm bedding etc. to Dr. Mir's office here in Croton. Cathie said that St. A's is sending down almost \$2,000 to Long Beach, which is the remainder of the Winnebago fund plus funds raised during Oktoberfest.

Youth Council - Louise Levey announced that there will be a bake sale this Sunday, 11/20, and another one on the day of the wreath sale, Saturday, 12/3, and that the proceeds will be used to purchase a bicycle for a woman's shelter – the bike will be used by those in the shelter to do errands. It was decided by the YC to get the shelter a specific "big ticket" item this year instead of donating bags of toiletries and other items, as in the past.

The Vestry met with Bishop Sisk, at his request, after the confirmation service on October 23, and Vestry members described the meeting in very positive terms. Ty West, head of Long Range Planning, asked the Bishop what he thought of St. A's doing long term outreach in the Gulf Coast, and the Bishop thought this was a good idea.

Respectfully submitted, Chris Moore, Clerk of the Vestry



Katrina/Winnebago update : As you have read in previous editions of The Bellringer, St. A's helped send a donated Winnebago to the Gulf area at Long Beach, Mississippi in the weeks following the devastating storm. We have remained in touch with the people working down there. They continue to need 50 volunteers per week as well as donations of specific items (including canned food, shampoo, diapers, cleaning supplies and tools, camping supplies and cold weather clothing). A group from Croton is making the trip down on December 5th to return on the 16th and there is room in the car for more volunteers. If you are



interested in joining the planned trip, or want to volunteer at another time or donate items, please contact Laura Seitz (271-3265) or Carol Shanesy (271-7645).



In the spirit of Christmas, we have volunteered as a community to donate gifts for children affected by the hurricanes. Lutheran Episcopal Services in Mississippi, the same organization that received the Winnebago, has sent us a list of eleven children for whom to provide gifts for Christmas (\$50 gift cards are encouraged, since it allows the individual to shop for what he or she wants or needs). If you are interested in sponsoring a child, please call the parish office at (271-3501). We have a deadline of December 10th.

The Christmas Offering envelope: As you buy gifts for those you love this season would you consider this opportunity to give a gift to your parish family?

A two-part workshop related to end of life issues will be held on Saturday, January 21 in the parish hall. From 9:30 – 10:30 a.m., attorney Penelope Morgan will discuss **Health Care Proxies**. From 10:45 – Noon, Betsy Roadman will deal with the specifics of funeral planning. Those participating in the funeral planning session are asked to pick up a packet of information at the back of the church. Please read through it carefully in order to bring specific questions to the workshop.

Search Committee Update: Our process of discernment has reached the stage where we have completed the receiving of names. You may recall that during this phase of the search process, prospective rectors submit their names to us and the search committee chooses up to twelve of these names for submission to the bishop for approval. We have been blessed with a large number of names submitted and very high quality candidates. In fact, we received so many names we had to cut off the submissions when we reached sixty names submitted. This is a measure of the attractiveness and vitality of our parish. Shortly, we expect feedback from the diocese on the twelve names submitted and then the search committee will be focused on narrowing this list down to the three final candidates for presentation to the vestry, by conducting in depth interviews. Our hope is to be in a position to present these 3 names to the Vestry in January, when we mark the one year anniversary of David's call to the Church of the Good Shepherd. Please feel free to approach any member of the search committee with any questions you may have on the process so far. The committee appreciates the supportive comments many of you have passed to us regarding the work we are doing on the congregation's behalf to choose our next rector.

Mark S. Anzani, Search Committee Chair

Treasurer's Report: October Operations:

Financial operations continue to be strong, despite a severe lag in pledge receipts. To date, pledges are over \$8,000 behind budget, a slight improvement over last month. Overall, expenses to date continue to come in lower than expected, mitigating the sharp decline in pledge income. Other income categories have been stable and in line with the budget. We have spent approximately \$2,500 on the Winnebago and its trip to the Gulf, and we have donated another \$1,985 to the Lutheran Episcopal Services of Mississippi, consisting of donations from others for Hurricane relief plus the net profit from Oktoberfest (\$746).

Stewardship: Denise Bessette and Antonio Mora shared heartwarming and inspirational presentations during the 10:00am service on November 6. Our Stewardship goal for 2006 is to raise enough money (\$150,000) through pledges to fund day-to-day operations so we can focus our fundraising activities on serving the needs of others. The Stewardship Committee is asking each family to consider proportional giving, which was described by Rev. Jerry Keucher, Chief Administrative Officer of the Diocese in his sermon at St. A's during the weekend of October 15/16, by Bishop Sisk when he visited St. A's for Confirmation on October 22/23 as well as by members of the Stewardship Committee at all three services during Stewardship Weekend - November 5/6. The "pledge card" has been redesigned this year as a "pledge worksheet" to encourage parishioners to consider thinking about their pledges as a proportion of income. A copy of the worksheet has been included in this Bellringer for anyone who has not yet had a chance to submit their pledge. You can mail your pledge to the Parish Office or put it in the collection plate next weekend.

In early February: Please join us for an **Introductory Centering Prayer Workshop** on Saturday, February 4, from 10 a. m. - 3 p.m. in the parish hall. Centering prayer is the opening of mind and heart to God beyond thoughts, words, and emotions. The four presentations by staff of Contemplative Outreach of Westchester will include: Prayer as Relationship, Centering Prayer Method, Use of Sacred Word, and Fruits of Centering and Extending the Practice. Ample time is allowed for the practice of centering prayer, and open discussion. The cost is \$20. (Scholarships are available.) Coffee and bagels will be provided. Participants are asked to bring a bag lunch. Please sign up on the sheet in the parish hall.





CHRISTMAS AT ST. AUGUSTINE'S

CHRISTMAS EVE	4:00 P.M.	Children's Service with Presentation of the Crèche and Holy Eucharist*
	7:00 p.m.	Family Service, Holy Eucharist II*
	10:00 p.m.	First Service of Christmas, Holy Eucharist II*
CHRISTMAS DAY	9:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist II
FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS, JANUARY 1	9:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist II*



*Babysitting to be provided at these services

Interim Pastor The Rev. Betsy Johns Roadman

Rector Emeritus: The Rev. David B. Wayne

2005 VESTRY MEMBERS

Senior Warden:	Kim Westphal	Junior Warden:	Ty West
Treasurer:	Holly Anzani	Clerk:	<u>Chris Moore</u>

<u>Class of 2005</u>	Cathie Elliott	<u>Class of 2006</u>	Betsy Joslyn	<u>Class of 2007</u>	Ellen Irvine
	Dana Garrett		Terri Huntington		Louise Levey
	Mark Anzani		Gerald Ardito		Chris Moore

Meeting Schedule: Vestry, 3rd Wednesday, 8:00 p.m.

St. Augustine's Episcopal Church
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Croton-On-Hudson, NY 10520
www.stacroton.org

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