

THE HERALD

SAINT LUKE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

MARCH 2007



After a quiet winter, we finally had The Blizzard of the Century™ which dropped, what, 8 inches on us? The way the weather folks were foaming at the mouth I was about ready to go out and buy bread, milk and ammo, but in the end it seemed like a pretty ordinary winter storm, at least here in the Cities. It did snow a lot more down south, and give thanks we weren't in Winona with their 30 inches! Still, our snow made a pretty setting for the church, shown on the left Sunday February 25. You may notice how nicely cleared the steps are; thank Greg Opitz, who, despite having ascended to power as Senior Warden, was dutifully fulfilling the Sidewalk Ministry when we pulled up. You can see

Greg in the center photo tossing a shovelful aside.



Not that a bit of snow stops us (well, ok, it stopped a lot of people), and below you can see Jane Peck and Michael Jensen after the 11:00 service, to which they skied. It's getting to the time of year when the snow doesn't seem to stick around long and remember, your ice houses had to be off the lakes the last day of February, and then it'll be March and the mud season before spring really sets in.

Meanwhile, Lent's upon us, a season of reflection and contemplation. One of the things my father contemplated was that, if you actually look at the calendar, the forty days of Lent excludes Sundays! It took us devout kids years to figure out, when we gave up, say, chocolate for the season to better understand Christ's trials, Mom and Dad gave up drinking but would still have a snort on Sundays. How'd that work? Did Christ wander in the desert all week but pop out with the Sunday NY Times for brunch and the crossword?



There's lots of things going on this upcoming month, including the new Taizé dinner, liturgy and study Tuesday evenings through Lent and a visit from the Bishop March 25th. We've got a letter from him in this issue, too. And of course it's Loaves and Fishes month, so on Monday the 26th we'll be at St. Stephens Community Center where I'll do my Lenten Suffering by scraping more scalloped potatoes.

See you Sunday!

Matt Cole, interim editor

LOVE ACCEPTANCE COMPASSION INQUIRY NURTURE GENEROSITY JOY WHIMSY

The Athlete's Prayer

One of the pleasures of autumn and winter is NFL Football and all that it brings with it. I'm not actually that devoted a fan, and when last fall I went to the Vikings' win over Carolina in Week 2 it was my first live game in 16 years, but for a couple of decades I've run a football pool and for the last half-dozen years each NFL week has been enlivened by the erudite Tuesday Morning Quarterback (TMQ) column. TMQ is Gregg Easterbrook, he's a practicing Christian, and from time to time he mentions religion in among the zone blitzes, pass-wacky offenses, cheerleaders of the week and analysis of line play. After the Super Bowl, TMQ had this to say:

"Every year between the college bowls and the Super Bowl, there's at least one major game that begins with some unctuous minister leading a prayer for victory. As a churchgoing Christian, I wince whenever I hear clergy appeal to the divine for success in sports. God doesn't care who wins games, while many sports prayers boil down to, "Lord, help me crush my opponent." For that matter public prayer contradicts Jesus, who taught, "Whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Amen I tell you, they have received their reward. When you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you." (Jesus often said of religious hypocrites or the rich that they "have received their reward," meaning they will not ascend to heaven – everything they are ever going to get, they already have.) At sports events, dedications and at the openings of legislatures, Christians routinely violate Christ's teaching regarding public prayer. Considering the rabbi Jesus even opposed prayer in synagogues, it can be argued that Christians contradict Christ when they pray together in churches [*ignore that bit, and get those pledge cards in!* –Ed.]. Each time I read of Christian fundamentalists or evangelicals demanding prayer in public schools, I wince anew, since it suggests they know little about the actual ministry of their

Redeemer. But don't get me started on ways in which Christians ignore the teachings of Jesus.

While prayer for victory in sports is offensive, there seems nothing wrong with nonsectarian prayer for inner strength during competition. Years ago for the ecumenical Web site Beliefnet.com – which is by a huge margin the best destination on the Internet for anyone interested in any faith – I composed a nonsectarian athlete's prayer:

The Athlete's Prayer

God (or Adonai or Allah), let me play well but fairly.
Let competition make me strong but never hostile.
In this and in all things, guide me to the virtuous path.
If I know victory, grant me happiness;
If I am denied, keep me from envy.
See me not when I am cheered, but when I bend to help
my opponent up.
Seal it in my heart that everyone who takes the field
with me becomes my brother.
Remind me that sports are just games.
Teach me something that will matter once the games
are over.
And if through athletics I set an example – let it be a
good one.

Two notes. First, there have been centuries of debate in the rabbinical, pastoral and imam's traditions regarding what can be asked of the divine; I would argue that "in this and in all things, guide me to the virtuous path" is the essence of prayer. Second, you might wonder, why pray for happiness in victory -- aren't all victors happy? If only! It's amazing how often the victorious don't seem to enjoy their triumphs: rather they complain that the score wasn't higher or the accolades louder or the opponent humiliated. A basic reason people engage in sports is for that happy moment when victory is won and all involved can hug and dance and spend the next 24 hours on cloud nine. In athletics and other aspects of life, too many work arduously to win, then do not enjoy their triumphs. Therefore the humble athlete prays that God will grant happiness. “

This resonates with me because of my mother's attitude. She was a longtime Miami Dolphins fan, not a common fan affiliation for an Englishwoman in Des Moines, but she made the choice in the early 1970s when, before one of their Super Bowl appearances, coach Don Shula was asked if the team prayed before the game. No, said Shula scornfully, God's got better things to worry about than who wins a football game. That did it, and a Dolphins fan Mom was.

If you would like to read TMQ, you can get read this article at <http://sports.espn.go.com/espn/page2/story?page=easterbrook/070206>. There's a link there to the archive of his articles on ESPN.com. And before you get huffy about me quoting an ESPN football commentator in *The Herald*, you might consider that Easterbrook is also the author of "The Progress Paradox: How Life Gets Better While People Feel Worse", and other books including the wonderful but out-of-print "Beside Still Waters". He is also a contributing editor for *The New Republic*, *The Atlantic Monthly* and *The Washington Monthly*, and a visiting fellow at the Brookings Institution. TMQ ran originally in Slate, then on the NFL site itself, and now resides at ESPN.

February Birthdays

3/1	June Lundgren
3/2	Patrick Smith
3/4	Gloria Holm
3/5	Sarah Koshniol
3/6	James Watson
3/15	Richard Duling
3/24	Hilary Krogstad

I See Dead People

OK, so last month I ran some birthdays for people who have moved on. If you notice errors on this listing, whether omissions or inclusions of people who have left the parish or those who rejoice with us on another shore and in a greater light, please email Sarah at office@st-lukes.net and let her know so she can correct the list and we'll get it right next year! And if you find any other newsletter deficiencies, please let me know directly, or, better yet, volunteer to take it over! Thanks! Matt.

Announcements

Hear Ye, Hear Ye!

The **Bells of St. Luke** invite you to join them and forty or more bell choirs in a massed bell ringing festival, **Bellfest!** The choirs rehearse the festival music on **March 3rd** and present a concert free and open to the public at **3:00** that afternoon at North Heights Lutheran Church in Arden Hills. If you've never heard this many bells (400!) playing at once, it is a rare treat. Come and cheer us on! And then you can drop the kids off at church to starve—the **Famine Retreat** is March 3/4th at Saint Luke's for kids from 6th to 12th grade and their friends. Youth Director Jason Lucas has further details. Throughout Lent there will be Tuesday evening **Taizé Programs**. These start off with a 6:00 supper followed by a simple Taizé Liturgy at 6:45 and a short study program at 7:15 focusing on the values of peace embodied in Taizé music. This will run until Holy Week. Remember the **Saint Luke's Music Series** concert Friday March 16th at 7:30PM when the Lute Duo of Thomas Walker and Paul Berger will play. Remember that the **Bishop James Jelinek** is Coming to visit March 25th. He's got a letter to the Diocese in this Herald, too. This is **Loaves and Fishes** month for us; we do cleanup at St. Stephens Community Center, 2211 Clinton Avenue in Minneapolis. Show up Monday March 26th about 6:00, it'll run until a little after 7:00. Thinking ahead, Sheila Foster would like to have an **Evening of Dinner and Conversation** about our current **Youth Programs** on Saturday, April 21 from 6-8PM. This is for parents of 5th to 12th graders. Of particular interest will be any ideas on the direction of the program, what's going well and what could be improved. Please contact Sheila if you have an interest in attending this. And remember that we have the Sunday of Memorial Day (May 27th) for the **Bandshell Service** this year. There will be oodles of people in the park and Karla's scared silly it's going to be her up there playing piano by herself. Which it might be, since I have a nephew in Iowa graduating from High School that weekend. Really, you don't want that, do you? If possible, please plan to be around that weekend to help celebrate!

A Letter from our Bishop

In Response to the Communiqué following the Meeting of the Anglican Communion Primates, February 15 to 19, 2007

I am deeply saddened by the recommendations of the Primates of the Anglican Communion, meeting in Tanzania, some of which would require the Episcopal Church to, in effect, to turn back the clock on decades of hard work to provide full inclusion in the Church for all persons.

Full inclusion has been affirmed by resolutions of both the General Convention of the Episcopal Church and the Convention of the Diocese of Minnesota.

A resolution passed by the 142nd Annual Convention of the Diocese of Minnesota, in October 1999, explicitly declared that we not only welcome and embrace gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons, but that we “continue to make available to them all of the Blessings of Christ’s beloved Church . . .”

I, for one bishop, will not turn my back on full inclusion of all persons, which has been at the heart of the Diocese of Minnesota for 150 years—since the time when our first Bishop, Henry Benjamin Whipple, and American Indian leaders worked together to provide ministry across social boundaries.

I hope and pray that there continues to be a vital place in the Anglican Communion for divergent views on the interpretation of Scripture and the impact of modern tradition—a place for the prophetic voice which the Episcopal Church has offered over the decades for the care and well being of all persons.

This is a discussion of justice and morality that will engage the church in the months to come in which I will continue to be a hearty advocate for full inclusion for all.

+James L. Jelinek
VIII Bishop of Minnesota

Teens Encounter Christ (TEC)

TEC is a renewal retreat for Senior High youth. The retreat begins on a Saturday morning and ends on Sunday afternoon. It is an opportunity to deepen

their faith, learn more about the church and make new friends. We also suggest that youth attend a TEC weekend before going on Pilgrimage and/or before Confirmation. The experience gives youth an opportunity to intentionally explore their faith with their peers. There are application forms on the Education Bulletin Board near the Church Office. Please contact Sheila Foster if you plan to attend. You do get a choice, too:

Northern TEC March 16th to 18th
Saint Paul’s Episcopal, Duluth \$25
Grades 9-12, apply by March 10th

Minneapolis TEC April 20th to 22nd
Saint Stephen’s Episcopal, Edina \$95
Grades 10-12, apply by March 29th

Saint Paul TEC April 20th to 22nd
Saint John the Evangelist, Saint Paul \$30
Grades 9-12, deadline not specified

Music Notes

Hollywood often seems to play to Christian audiences around this time of year – remember the kerfuffle a few years ago when Mel Gibson’s **The Passion of the Christ** made headlines and stirred up controversy during the Lent and Easter season? Well, this year’s Lenten offering won’t stir anyone up, except maybe those that go expecting **Amazing Grace** to be about the hymn. It is a biopic about William Wilberforce (1759-1833), an English Member of Parliament who led a decades-long battle to abolish the slave trade in Great Britain. It’s a fine film – they should make more movies like it that you can take your kids to and not fret about the content. It’s got a great message for our time and the best I can tell, it seems

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The deadline for the April *Herald* is Friday March 23rd. Please email material to the interim Editor Matt Cole at

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sedwick@st-lukes.net.

to be historically accurate, with lots of Wilberforce's friends and colleagues among the characters. John Newton (1725-1807), the author of the timeless hymn, *Amazing Grace*, has only a bit part.

Newton's life would rival a modern day soap opera for the sheer quantity and caliber of disaster. His mother died when he was seven and he went to sea with his father. At nineteen, he was press-ganged into the Royal Navy, but didn't like it much and deserted. Upon being caught, he was flogged and demoted. At his own request, he was traded to a slave ship. Not all that much later, Newton had become the master of his own slave ship and brought tens of thousands of slaves out of Africa to be sold in the West Indies. As a captain, he was not a great leader. His crew, fine fellows, I'm sure, thought him quite a brute. When he accidentally fell overboard, they threw a harpoon at him. Unfortunately for them, he caught it and they were forced to drag him in.

The "come to Jesus" moment came in the form of a terrific storm at sea. Livestock and cargo were swept away and the crew was busily lashing themselves down to avoid being washed overboard. That storm on May 10, 1748 changed John Newton's life completely. He married; gave up slaving and educated himself in Latin, Greek and Hebrew; and was ultimately ordained in the Anglican church. He was sent to Olney in Buckinghamshire, where his preaching drew such large crowds of people that they had to enlarge the church. He also met the poet William Cowper and they collaborated on a series of weekly prayer meetings for which they wrote many new hymns. *Amazing Grace* was likely written for one of their services. The first edition of **Olney Hymns** was published in 1779 and contained 260 of John Newton's hymns. In 1780, Newton left the shire and went to St. Mary Woolnoth Church in London, where he continued to preach and teach, even though his health and eyesight had failed him, until he died in 1807. Among the many whose lives he touched while he preached there was young William Wilberforce.

Though he wrote hundreds of hymns, among them *Glorious things of thee are spoken* and *How sweet the name of Jesus sounds*, the name of John Newton is synonymous with *Amazing Grace*. That hymn appeared in

soldiers' army-issued hymnals during the Civil War – on both sides. While on the "trail of tears", the Cherokee were not always able to give their dead a proper burial and the singing of *Amazing Grace* had to suffice. The hymn was an oft-heard anthem at civil rights marches in the 1960's and was sung and recorded by many folk singers of the day, including Pete Seeger, Judy Collins and Joan Baez. Arlo Guthrie sang it at the Woodstock Festival in 1969. It has become ubiquitous at funerals and in times of civic mourning. It must be the first tune that any aspiring bagpiper learns to play. The reedy wail of a pipe band playing *Amazing Grace* has the power to move the stoniest heart. Though John Newton didn't write the music, his text is so firmly married to that particular tune that hearing the melody instantly conjures up the text. This abiding hymn is so much a part of our collective consciousness that I feel certain that most any English-speaking adult and many children could sing at least the first verse of it from memory. Maybe that would be a good bit for Jay Leno when he goes out and asks easy questions on Wilshire Blvd. Or, since they often can't identify when the War of 1812 took place, maybe not.

Karla Cole



"Through many dangers, toils and snares, I have already come" – a window in the Olney Parish Church

Saint Luke's Episcopal Church March 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 7:00A Eucharist & Conversation	2	3 3:00P BellFest @ North Heights Lutheran Famine Overnight starts @ St Lukes
4 Famine Ends 9:00 Eucharist 10:00 Education Hr 11:00 Holy Eucharist	5	6 6:00 Taizé Supper 6:45 Taizé Liturgy & Study 7:30P Bells of Saint Luke's	7 6:00P JuBellation 7:00P Saint Luke's Choir rehearsal	8 7:00A Eucharist & Conversation	9	10
11 9:00 Eucharist 10:00 Education Hr 11:00 Holy Eucharist	12	13 6:00 Taizé Supper 6:45 Taizé Liturgy & Study 7:30P Bells of Saint Luke's	14 6:00P JuBellation 7:00P Saint Luke's Choir rehearsal	15 7:00A Eucharist & Conversation	16 7:30P Saint Luke's Music Series (Lute Duo)	17
18 9:00 Eucharist 10:00 Education Hr 11:00 Holy Eucharist	19 7:00P Vestry Mtng	20 6:00 Taizé Supper 6:45 Taizé Liturgy & Study 7:30P Bells of Saint Luke's	21 6:00P JuBellation 7:00P Saint Luke's Choir rehearsal	22 7:00A Eucharist & Conversation	23 <u>HERALD DEADLINE</u>	24
25 Bishop's Visit 9:00 Eucharist 10:00 Education Hr 11:00 Holy Eucharist	26 6:00P Loaves & Fishes	27 6:00 Taizé Supper 6:45 Taizé Liturgy & Study 7:30P Bells of Saint Luke's	28 6:00P JuBellation 7:00P Saint Luke's Choir rehearsal	29 7:00A Eucharist & Conversation	30	31

Saint Luke's Episcopal Church

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Last month eight St. Luke's kids attended the Episcopal Youth Music Festival at the Cathedral. In the morning, there was an audition for the Bishop's Chorister Award. This audition requires sight-reading, major and minor scales, as well as the actual music prepared for the day. This is a fairly intimidating process for these young singers and we are very pleased to tell you that (for the third year in a row) a St. Lukan, our own **Sydney Foster** was this year's recipient. Congratulations, Sydney!

On the left you can see 2007 Chorister Sydney Foster, 2005 Chorister Zoë Foster and 2006 Chorister Geneva Cole. These three make up about half our soprano section at the moment and can be seen in the choir stalls each Sunday.