

Hearing the Voice of Jesus

by Pastor Beverly Berry

When we pray together the Collect for the Fourth Sunday in the Easter Season, we say, "O God, whose Son Jesus is the good shepherd of your people; Grant that when we hear his voice we may know him who calls us each by name, and follow where he leads; who, with you and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen."

At Good Samaritan, we're presently working our way through a sermon and small group study series on our identity as Christians. One of the messages of the women's retreat this year was that, in order to know who we are, we have to know which voice to listen to. There are lots of voices in our culture that offer us false truths that will lead us away from Jesus, so we must be on our guard and train ourselves to listen to the voice of Jesus as he guides us day by day. Doing so will make it easier for us to distinguish Jesus' voice of truth and love.

The Collect calls Jesus the good shepherd of God's people, and indeed, Jesus says of himself that he is the "good shepherd" who knows his sheep and who will lay down his life for them. (John 10:11-18) The image of Jesus being a shepherd for his people conveys a great deal; the people living in Jesus' time understood the job description of a good shepherd, someone who cares for his flock in every way, by providing food, water, shelter, and protection. A good shepherd also trains his flock so that each sheep would be able to recognize his voice, and follow where he leads.

Part of developing our identity as Christians involves learning to recognize and trust Jesus' voice. It took me a long time to understand that Jesus *does* speak to us, and even more, that Jesus desires to be in a personal relationship with us. So what are some ways in which Jesus may speak to us?

Jesus speaks to us directly through his word, the Bible. I'm amazed at how the Bible is able to help me in my daily living, at how a passage I may have read many times suddenly speaks directly to me through the insight of the Holy Spirit. Jesus frequently uses other people to speak his word to us. An example of this in my own life occurred in the early 1990s as I was arguing with God about how my husband, Michael, and I could afford to go to seminary (as I knew God was calling me to do). One day, a dear young friend of mine, who was also struggling with the question of whether to go to graduate school in the arts or to seminary came to me and said, "Beverly, God showed me this verse, Psalm 119:105, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path." My friend said she knew God showed her this particular verse to help her understand that she didn't need to plan her whole future, she just needed to see far enough ahead to take the next step. I knew God had spoken to my friend, but I also knew he used her to speak directly to my heart.

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Jesus may also speak to us through the beautiful things in his creation; through art, music, and nature. He may speak through our personal prayer times and as we journal our deepest thoughts and questions. There is really no limit to the way the Creator of the universe is able to communicate with us!

May you be encouraged by the knowledge that Jesus loves each of us deeply, that he knows each of us by name, and that he speaks to us. My prayer is that we will all train ourselves to listen more intentionally for Jesus' daily guidance, and have the grace to be obedient to follow where He leads us.



Good Samaritan Fair Days

Friday, June 12

10:00am-8:00pm

&

Saturday, June 13

9:00am-4:00pm



Report from the Discernment Committee

The Discernment Committee is pleased and excited to announce that we have retained the Rev. Dr. Howard Friend, Jr. as our consultant to guide and coach us through the various stages of the work before us. Our most immediate work will be to engage you, the congregation, in gathering information for our Parish Profile.

As Director of the Parish Empowerment Network, Dr. Friend brings over 20 years of experience coaching more than 150 churches from a wide variety of Christian denominations through organizational transitions. We were extremely impressed with his outstanding references as we explored his background and credentials. We eagerly look forward to working side-by-side with the Vestry's Strategic Planning Committee and Dr. Friend as we define, with you, plans for Good Samaritan's future.

Dr. Friend brings an enthusiasm and commitment to working with us, which underscores the awesome and sacred nature of discerning God's will for Good Samaritan and the importance of obtaining input from each one of you!

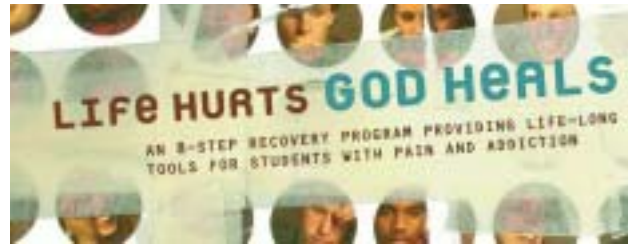
In the next few weeks, we will provide you with specific ways in which you can share with us your vision for The Church of the Good Samaritan.

This information gathering process will likely include a parish survey, large group meetings, and several types of smaller "cottage meetings." Please know that our meetings will be announced well in advance and will take place at various times and locales so that every one of our parish family is able to participate in giving us input about your hopes, dreams, and expectations for Good Samaritan. Very shortly, we will announce a timeline for this process. We are also working on a list of **Frequently Asked Questions** which will soon be available for your information.

Meanwhile, we have begun gathering a wide variety of information for inclusion in our Parish Profile. Among other things, this will include our history, what our church is like in terms of ministries, and what our Southeastern Pennsylvania community has to offer. Such information will assist potential candidates in knowing more about the character of Good Samaritan.

We value and thank you for your prayers for God's guidance for our parish, Vestry, and the Discernment Committee.

Faithfully, Hartley Connett; Linda Davis; Mary Ernst, Co-Chair; Judy Farrell; Mike Figgins; Dina Gibson; Chaz Howard; Mac McCausland, Co-Chair; Richard Parry; Betty Pehlman; Charlie Smith; Dave Tower, Secretary.



Life Hurts God Heals

by Michael Guernsey

On May 11 a group of five youth and four adult leaders gathered for the final session of a thirteen-week program called, *Life Hurts God Heals*. LHGH is an eight-step recovery program providing life-long tools for students with pain. Each week there was a teaching on one of the eight steps including leader and student testimonies followed by single-gender small groups to go deeper in a discussion of the hurts in the lives of the students.

As a part of the final week of the program, each student and leader shared with the whole group what God had been doing in him/her through LHGH. Some responses given were:

- A few people mentioned deep learning about and experience of forgiveness.
- One girl enthusiastically shared that she had made big steps in both forgiving others as well as learning to say "no" to people.
- One girl said how thankful she was that she had a specific place to talk about her hurts. She also said that she was learning how to put her hurtful experiences into words as well as how to pray and work through them.
- One boy said his heart was changing and has begun to pray for people around him much more often.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God (2 Corinthians 1:3-4).

Celebrate Your Faith Night at the Reading Phillies

by George Scheffey

Men's Ministry is again sponsoring a family night out at the ball park on Thursday evening, July 16, as the Reading Phillies take on the New Britain Rock Cats. This night is one of several *Celebrate Your Faith Nights* that the Reading Phils sponsor. Prior to the game, we will have a unique opportunity to hear a few Reading Phillies' players discuss their beliefs and religion. Last year's testimonials were both insightful and inspiring - a great faith-based message for kids (and adults) to hear!

Tickets are only \$8, parking is free, concessions are minor-league priced, and there is a great fireworks show after the game. Sign up for a low-cost night out now before your summer schedule gets too full. RSVP to mensministry@good-samaritan.org or call George Scheffey (610-407-0941) for details. You can either meet at the stadium, or carpool from the church, leaving around 4:30pm for the Celebrate Your Faith program. Game time is 7:00pm.



Two members of the Reading Phillies share their stories during last year's Celebrate Your Faith Night

Notes from the Parish Administrator

As I write this month's Samaritan article I must admit that my mind wanders forward to the coming two days of fun, food and fellowship which is otherwise known as Fair Days. Much too quickly my thoughts meander only a few weeks further as I meditate on the coming Parish Picnic, as well as the week-long transformation of our campus into ancient Rome (columns and all!) for Marketplace. In the midst of these wonderful ministry initiatives it easy to overlook those who are already in the final stages of planning their short-term mission trips to Pittsburgh, North Dakota and Kensington. Could it be God is smiling as the lazy, hazy days of summer yield to the Kingdom work that we are each called to?

A few weeks ago (May 10) Fr. John preached a sermon which reminded us that we are called to "use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in many forms." (1 Peter 4:10). As Christians and a people who seek to be Disciples of Christ, we are each called to "follow Him..." No longer a passive intellectual exercise; seeking the face of Christ calls us into action as we discover, develop and deploy the gifts God has given us for His glory! I have come to understand that the life of a Christian is neither solitary nor passive. As we are called to serve Him by serving others, it seems we are fundamentally called first into action and secondly into a deeper sense of community.

This summer, let's not miss the wonderful opportunities we have to seek and find the face of Christ. More importantly, let's not miss the opportunity to BE the face of Christ to the world around us. Let's make this year's Fair Days, Marketplace, Summer Mission trips, Parish Picnic and Fine Arts Camp all about and for Him! Let's be participants rather than spectators in professing and proclaiming the Good News to a desperate world.

WE NEED YOU!

Jeff Moretzsohn, Parish Administrator



Good Samaritan Membership Update

Births:

Sylvia Grace Bruni to Joe & Kate Bruni on 2/14/2009
Zachary Maddoc Evans to Bill & Elrena Evans on 3/13/2009
Silas Asaph Shaffer to Adam & Rachel Shaffer on 3/16/2009
Robert Shearer Lawrence III to Robb & Meg Lawrence on 3/18/2009

Baptisms:

Kira Jacquelyn Garrett on 1/11/2009
Benjamin Robert Garrett on 1/11/2009
Shannon Maroney-Garrett on 1/11/2009
Jake Rhodes Matty on 1/11/2009
Joseph Howard (Shep) Dolfe on 4/19/2009
Avery Justice Krider on 4/19/2009
Lindsay Isobel Maurer on 4/19/2009

Deaths:

Osceola Wesley on 2/14/2009
Virginia Morris on 3/29/2009
Jane Hines on 4/6/2009
Lucy Hoch on 5/10/2009

Weddings:

Megan Nicholas & Matthew Steinruck on 1/17/2009
Shannon Kehoe & Scott Shaffer on 5/2/2009

Transfers In:

Charlene Myers from Christ Episcopal Church in Charlotte, NC
Caroline (Campbell) & Piper Siddons from Falls Church in Falls Church, VA
Virginia Sykes from St. Alban's Episcopal Church in Newtown Square, PA
Jeanette Tremblay from St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Norwood, PA
Edmund (Skip) & Geraldine (Gerri) Trethewey from Holy Comforter Episcopal Church in Drexel Hill, PA
Betsy Williams from All Saints Anglican Church in Pawleys Island, SC

Transfers Out:

Michael Arthur to St. John's Episcopal Church in Charlotte, NC
Laura Lee Brewer & sons (James, Lee & Mark) to Calvary-St. George Episcopal Church, NYC
Stephen Gatlin to St. David's Episcopal Church in Wayne, PA
Greg Gibson to Trinity Episcopal Church in Ambler, PA
Ralph & Elfrida Goetzenberger to St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Oaks, PA
Eric MacDonald to Media Presbyterian Church in Media, PA
William & Allison Stewart & family to St. Francis-in-the-Fields in Malvern, PA

Swine Flu Concerns

There has been much media coverage over the current outbreak of swine flu. To put it in perspective, on average there are 36,000 deaths from seasonal flu each year out of hundreds of thousands of cases. There are only ten cases of swine flu that have been documented in all of Pennsylvania. It is already sounding as if this particular outbreak may have peaked.

The symptoms of swine flu are similar to the symptoms of seasonal flu and may include: fever (> 100°F), sore throat, cough, stuffy nose, chills, headache and body aches and fatigue. If you are experiencing flu-like symptoms, contact your health-care provider.

To prevent the spread of swine flu:

- Avoid contact with ill persons.
- When you cough or sneeze, cover your nose and mouth.
- Wash your hands often and especially after you cough or sneeze.
- Don't share drinks, food, toothbrushes or eating utensils.
- If you think you are ill with flu, avoid close contact with others as much as possible. Do not go to work/school or other crowded places.

At present the CDC recommends that no one travel to Mexico except for absolutely essential reasons until further notice.

Flu viruses sometimes return after a time and are then often much more likely to cause serious illness. I would hope everyone would consider getting a flu vaccine in the fall.

Please feel free to call or email me with any questions! Susan Starke, MSN, CRNP susans@good-samaritan.org 610-644-4040 x207.



The Episcopal Day School

Are you looking for a place for your children (toddlers to kindergarten) to grow socially, emotionally, physically and spiritually? The Day School offers a caring community of teachers and families. We still have a few openings for the 2009-2010 school year! Call Barb Condit, Director at 610-644-6181 to schedule a tour.



Good Samaritan Parish Picnic Sunday, June 28

1:30-4:00pm

Strawberry Hollow Farm
305 Buckwalter Road, Phoenixville, PA 19460
(Simon & Lucy Barnes' Home)

Please join us for Fellowship, Food and Fun at beautiful Strawberry Hollow Farm!

NO PETS PLEASE

Fun for all the Good Samaritan Family!

Moon Bounce, bungee run, and other games for the young and young at heart

Fishing in the pond

Play catch, throw frisbees, take a walk, relax, and much more

\$7 per person / \$20 per family.

Main course and dessert provided.

Bring a side dish/salad to serve 8

Christian Financial Counseling

Is your checkbook tired after paying bills? Are your investments losing weight? Has your savings account lost interest? Is your income looking anemic? Do you feel like you have no more to give? The Christian Financial Counseling ministry can help.

Contact Chuck Kramer (610-933-2331) to arrange a personal financial stress test.

Be Thinking Ahead – Stephen Ministry

by Jim Ferguson

The school year is winding down, April showers have given way to May showers, and warm summer days will soon be upon us. The year has rhythms; often summer seems to have a slower pace of life, possibly just because days are longer. Many of us will be planning vacations and looking forward to outdoor activities. Summer is a good time to refresh our physical batteries; summer can also be a good time to refresh our spiritual batteries. As you do so, prayerfully consider what ministries God may be calling you to consider. Stephen Ministry will be looking to recruit a new class of Stephen Ministers and we need you!

Why consider Stephen Ministry? You have a friend just diagnosed with a debilitating disease, or a friend who has lost a job, or one who is struggling with some other life crisis; you know that someone who will listen and encourage them would be a godsend for them. A Stephen Minister provides that trained, listening, confidential ear. What is said between a Care Receiver and a Stephen Minister stays between the Care Receiver and Stephen Minister. Over time, God's process of healing can be seen in action by the Stephen Minister and Care Receiver. Both the Stephen Minister and Care Receiver are blessed as God affects His cure. Why consider Stephen Ministry? You become the cup of cold water used by God to quench the thirst of the thirsty.

What's involved? Stephen Ministers join together in 50 hours (yes, 50 hours!) of training. So, you don't enter into a caring relationship unprepared. In addition, Stephen Ministers meet on the first and third Monday evenings from September through May and monthly the rest of the year for peer supervision and continuing education. So you also don't enter into a caring relationship alone.

For how long? Since training is extensive, we ask that Stephen Ministers serve for two years. Many stay on longer, as they find the experience so rewarding. There are also opportunities to serve on the Stephen Leaders team.

As you enjoy the summer, prayerfully consider how God may be calling you to serve in 2010 and beyond. In Stephen Ministry you serve your fellow Good Samaritan congregants in a one-on-one relationship, as well as many who seek help who are not members of the Good Samaritan community, but desire a cup of cold water. If you are interested in Stephen Ministry and desire more information contact Pastor Beverly or Louise Geisinger at 610-644-4040 x 777.

**Marketplace ~ Rome
June 29-July 2**

**Fine Arts Camp
August 3-7**

**Registration forms are available
on the website
www.good-samaritan.org
and in the office.**

The Good Sam Food Closet Wants YOU!!!

by Barb Peterson

Got a little extra time on your hands? Looking to make a difference? Well, volunteering to help with the Good Sam Food Closet is the perfect answer to those questions!

We are looking for extra hands this summer and fall to help keep the Food Closet running smoothly and the families we serve supplied with much-needed food. Volunteer time can be from as little as one hour now and then to as many hours as you care to give.

There are a number of Food Closet activities for you to choose:

- * Distributing food to our clients. We are open twice a month on Thursday mornings.
- * Collecting bread/pastry products from a local Giant and setting them up on days before we're open.
- * Unloading food deliveries from various agencies and stocking the Closet shelves.
- * Shopping for the products we put in holiday gift baskets.
- * Assisting in collecting and organizing the products we receive from food drives.

Please consider donating your services to this wonderful outreach program...and know that you will make a huge difference in the lives of others. If you are interested, call Deb Ackerman at 610-695-9287.

Vestry Corner

by Joanne Gillespie

The May Vestry meeting was held on Monday, May 11. It is customary at Good Samaritan to begin each Vestry meeting by starting with Evening Prayer in the Chapel at 7:00pm. The meeting was called to order by Fr. Todd and opened in prayer by Charlene Fitzwater.

Minutes of the April meeting were approved and will be available online in the near future. Fr. Todd noted that the Discernment Committee, the Strategic Planning Committee, Parish Administrator, Rector's Warden and Fr. Todd will be meeting on May 24th with the intention of co-ordinating all efforts in the transition process. This seems a very natural and necessary step in a church the size of Good Samaritan to facilitate things running as smoothly as possible.

Fr. Todd also mentioned how wonderful the Day School Enchanted Night in Venice (dinner and silent auction) was. We are all so pleased that the Day School is doing well and offer many thanks for the great job being done by Barb Condit, the teachers, the parents and the staff.

The staff (COGS) retreat was held Tuesday through Thursday (May 12-14).

Bob Anewalt reported that April was quite satisfactory. We had a current month surplus which helped to reduce our year-to-date deficit which puts us ahead of the projections. It remains wise to proceed cautiously regarding finances, as even with the flurry of positive news from financial markets we are still a long way from the "all clear."

Jeff Moretzsohn reported that our auditors have begun the audit for the church, the Day School audit will be done in July.

The Furniture Store has already grossed \$10,621 to benefit Mission and Outreach.

Plans are underway for a few necessary facilities projects: re-roofing the north side of the Rectory roof, re-roof and replace the Chapel south roof and valley, plans to install a sidewalk along the Sanctuary west lawn and renovation of the Old Rectory laundry room.

Jeff offered thanks to all who reached out to Bishop Frank and Shawnee Lyons while they were here.

Pastor Beverly presented the Clergy report. She reported that Women's ministries are very active – the Purim Festival, the annual retreat held in Avalon, and the Spring Brunch and fashion show, and the new Women's Bible Study, *The Gospel According to Ruth*. Daughters of the King supports the parish and the community in prayer and will sponsor Lauren Gibson in her summer mission on the Mercy Hospital Ship

Stephen Ministry will begin recruiting for training in 2010.

Pastoral Counseling needs continue to fill much of Pastor Beverly's time and Susan Starke, Parish Nurse continues to be an integral part of this ministry. Long range goals are to increase awareness of our prayer resources and sending people for Nigel Mumford's training. Pastor Beverly is working with the Human Resource Committee. Pastor Beverly highlighted the power of the Lent and Holy Week this year. She and Br. Michael traveled to Florida and South Carolina for vacation – visited family and friends, and were tourists at the Kennedy Space Center.

Rich Englander presented the Wardens' Report. He reminded us how blessed we continue to be in the face of the economic times. In the upcoming weeks we have Confirmation, Fair Days, the Parish Picnic, Marketplace and mission trips. Rich met with Fr. Todd and the Strategic task force to pray over and discuss the vestry oversight responsibilities. A new ministry alignment will be available and published in the near future.

The First Fruit Tithes were presented by Kurk Burbank and approved. This includes support to the Lwanwa School (Congo), Christ Church Jerusalem (Israel), Trinity Memorial Church (Philadelphia, PA), African Theological Seminary (Kitale, Kenya).

Mac McCausland gave an update on the work of the Discernment Committee and reminded all of the constant need for continued prayer.

The meeting was adjourned in prayer by Kerk Burbank.

Respectfully Submitted, Wardens of the Church of The Good Samaritan


The Church of the Good Samaritan

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Summer 2009 Events Calendar

June 7
Confirmation

June 23
Women's Book Group

July 13-17
Pittsburgh Project

June 7
Youth Game Night

June 28
Parish Picnic

July 16
Reading Phillies

June 12 & 13
Fair Days

June 29-July 2
Marketplace: Rome

July 17-26
North Dakota Mission

June 16
Samaritan Deadline

June 30
TBS begins

July 21
Samaritan Deadline

June 22
Prayer with the Vestry 7:00pm

July 11-17
UrbanServe

July 27
Prayer with the Vestry 7:00pm