

Nativity's Tidings

April 2006
Volume 22, Issue 4



An Episcopal family serving Jesus Christ, caring for one another.

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Bishop

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From the Rector:

The Powers That Be

As I was reflecting on this month's article for Tidings, I had decided to write an article, or maybe a short series over the next few months, on the battles we face in life, more specifically the powers that be. That is the spiritual forces that we may sometimes find ourselves up against. Because if we believe what we say every week in our liturgy, and what we read in scripture, then we know that we are up against unseen forces in life. But then I opened up an email, and the following little satire came across my screen. It is a great little piece on the existence of God. I thought this would be a good beginning. The scene is in a barbershop, and the following dialogue takes place between a barber and his customer:

A man went to a barbershop to have his hair cut and his beard trimmed. As the barber began to work, they began to have a good conversation. They talked about so many things and various subjects. When they eventually touched on the subject of God, the barber said, "I don't believe that God exists."

"Why do you say that?" asked the customer.

"Well, you just have to go out in the street to realize that God doesn't exist. Tell me, if God exists, would there be so many sick people? Would there be abandoned children? If God existed, there

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ChurchOfTheNativity.com

Our Diocese:

DioceseSWfla.org

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would be neither suffering nor pain. I can't imagine a loving God who would allow all of these things."

The customer thought for a moment but didn't respond because he didn't want to start an argument. The barber finished his job, and the customer left the shop. Just after he left the barbershop, he saw a man in the street with long, stringy, dirty hair and

an untrimmed beard. He

looked dirty and unkempt. The customer turned back and entered the barber shop again, and he said to the barber: "You know what? Barbers do not exist."

"How can you say that?" asked the surprised barber. "I am here, and I am a barber. And I just worked on you!"

"No!" The customer exclaimed. "Barbers don't exist because if they did, there would be no people with dirty long hair and untrimmed beards, like that man outside."

"Ah, but barbers DO exist! What happens is, people do not come to me."

"Exactly!" affirmed the customer. "That's the point! God, too, DOES exist! What happens is people don't go to Him and do not look for Him. That's why there's so much pain and suffering in the world."

I say this is a good beginning because the first thing we have to realize is that God does exist. Now you are probably saying to yourself, well, of course He exists. That's why we go to church. That's why we pray. That's why we do all the things we do surrounding our life as a parish. And I would say that is true.

However, I think many times, even though we agree on His existence, we sometimes forget about His existence until Sunday rolls around. If we only look for

God on the weekend, we are missing a lot of interaction with our Lord during the week. We are missing a vital part of our walk with the Him: allowing Him to go before us. We are also opening ourselves up for battles that come our way, and we don't know how to fight them. God does not exist so we can just worship Him on Sunday. We exist so

God does exist...We exist so that we can have fellowship with Him.

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we can have fellowship with Him and allow Him to interact in our daily lives.

This doesn't mean we have to ask God what color shirt to wear because we have a wonderful gift to have special likes and dislikes, common sense, and the freedom to choose certain things. However, God does want to be interactive in our lives and our daily walk through life. I try to pray every morning that God will use me this day as He needs me—whether I am working, enjoying a

Powers that be would like nothing more than to pull us away from Him.

will take place. However, if we are preparing ourselves with the Lord, when those moments do happen, big or small, we will be ready.

Let us stay in communication with Him every day and throughout the day. There are a lot of things out there, powers that be, that would like nothing more than to pull us away from that kind of relationship with our God. Our God does exist, and he has something special for each of us. Talk to Him, ask for His direction, ask for the Holy Spirit to fill you with His presence, and He will. May God bless each of you as we continue in our journey together.

In His peace and service,

Fr. Chuck

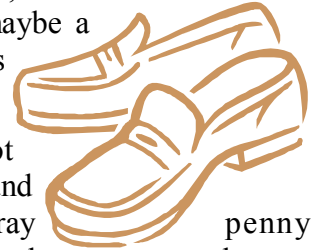
Reminiscing

As I was driving home the other day, I was listening to the car radio and thinking about what I could write about for next month's Nativity's Tidings article. Then someone on the radio mentioned "penny loafers."

I know some of you remember penny loafers—those brand new shiny shoes we got for school in the fall—loafers with the slit on top where the penny just fit. Thus, the penny loafer... Whatever happened to them? Are they still around? I just know that these days I'm more comfortable in sneakers in cool weather and sandals on hot days.

But if we no longer have penny loafers, what has happened to all those pennies? They haven't been showing up in our red penny basket recently.

Maybe you're saving yours to bring in when you get more. That's OK. I'd be happy to see some of those big jars, coffee cans or similar containers (maybe a shoe) with pennies for me to count.



I hope you're not loafing on the job and overlooking the stray penny on the ground. Although today we don't think of a penny as having much value, when we combine them with others people bring, just think about the books or supplies that can be purchased for youngsters all over the world who need them.

So put on your shoes and watch where you're walking. You never know where you will find a penny someone has dropped because he or she thought it worth so little. We know better, don't we?

Happy hunting and thanks for remembering the red basket with the gold bow.

Liz Stoner

In Memory

Nativity lost two long time members in March. We will miss them, but as Fr. Chuck quoted recently from revival author Dr. Vance Havner, “When you know where something is, you haven’t lost it.” How comforting to know.

Helen Mecklenburg

Helen was one of the earlier members of our church, and each time I took communion to her husband Ralph and her, she remembered Nativity fondly. She could be found helping out in the kitchen or doing her part serving guests. Helen always had a big smile on her face. She would glow when she told you about the two sons she was so proud of. And Helen always looked like a million bucks. I never saw her when she didn’t look like she just stepped out of a bandbox. She contributed much to Nativity in its earlier years, and I am grateful for having known her.



Liz Stoner

Bob Mostertz

Bob was a pillar and servant of God at Nativity. He was an usher and vestry member. He was Junior Warden for three years, and he whistled his way as he toured the church. He was also an early planner of the Memory Garden. Bob loved his music. He was a choir member for awhile, and he particularly enjoyed the handchimes.



Bob and his wife Betty Ann have five children and four grandchildren. He was fond of cats. He and Betty Ann even adopted one kitty from our Memory Garden. Bob never complained about his problems. He liked to tell about his trips to Australia. He had rosy cheeks under sparkling eyes which seemed full of mischief—all encompassed by his salt and pepper beard. I will remember him warmly.

Elly Freyer

Prayer Ministry

You may have noticed that at nearly every service, during the Eucharist, one or two prayer ministers are stationed along the wall to the left of the altar. Fr. Chuck has trained people for this ministry. After you receive the Eucharist, you may go to these persons and request prayer for any concern or need you have for yourself or for other people. The prayers will necessarily be brief, and the requests will be confidential. You may come forward even if there are others already there. If the line is long, we will move into the vesting room to continue praying in privacy during the announcements.

So if you come to church burdened with a situation or need and if the Spirit prompts you to let someone else carry it to the Lord in prayer with you, please don’t hesitate to come forward.

EEW Events

April

Saturday and Sunday, April 8 and 9 (all services): **Palm Sunday Bake Sale**. Please bring a goodie (with a price on it) to sell and, of course, buy a different one to take home. This is the last fundraiser before our summer break.

Tuesday, April 18: **A follow up to the "Great Day in January" workshop** at DaySpring. This is a three-year project on attracting, welcoming, and keeping new church members. So if you missed the first session, there's no problem in jumping in now. Look for the sign up sheet and talk to Irene Wernick. This is an exciting project lead by Marcie Lipscomb. The time will be announced.

Saturday, April 29: **Annual Mystery Trip** including lunch. This is always a great outing, and it is not just for the women. Bring your spouse or friend or neighbor. Middle

school and older youth will also enjoy this event. The time to be at church and the cost of the outing will be announced. Look for a sign up sheet.

May

Saturday, May 13, Noon: This year's program will feature Rebecca Sommers, an entertaining storyteller, quilter, and friend. She is a native of West Liberty, Ohio and now lives in Sarasota.

Come and join Rebecca as she, through story telling and illustrations, quilts her way through various stages of life.

Please put this date on your calendar now and don't miss this wonderful last event before summer. Watch for the sign up sheets, both to come and to help.

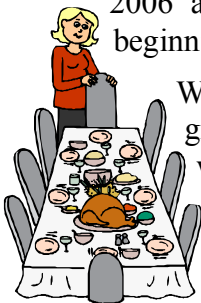
Nicki Coffaro



Mothers and Others Lunch

Winners Dinners

Sign up sheets are posted in the hall for the next two seasons of Winners Dinners. Because many parishioners go away for the summer, we are offering the opportunity to sign up now to be included in the dinner groups meeting from August to November in 2006 and from January to April in 2007. For the group beginning in August, please sign up by the last week in July.



When you sign up, you will be assigned to a dinner group of eight people. The group members then decide when to meet and how they will organize themselves. Typically a group meets monthly at different homes with the host for the evening providing a meat dish and the guests bringing assigned dishes. But a group can also decide to meet at a restaurant or for lunch or for a picnic; creativity reigns. This is a great opportunity for fun, food, and fellowship.

Winner

Peggy Otten, a visitor to our Flower Festival, was the winner of June Carol Hines's wonderful painting of blue flowers. The painting was in a lovely gold frame. Peggy was thrilled to be the lucky recipient. She really wanted it and has just the perfect place planned for hanging it.



Singles Happenings

Saturday, April 22 is our date to go to Cape Haze which is south of Englewood. We will leave Nativity promptly at 3pm. We will carpool south and then take a ten-minute ferry ride to Palm Island where we will eat at the Rum Bay Restaurant. Entrées begin at about \$10. Note that this is a Saturday, not Sunday event. Reservations are required for the ferry, so please call Marilyn Davis or Janice Peel. All Nativity single folks and their friends are welcome for this day of fun and fellowship.

SAVE THIS DATE: **Sunday, the 21st**, will be the date of our **May** get-together.

Sue Thomas

Help Wanted

I would be grateful for some more help with the welcome bread ministry. First of all, if you would be able to occasionally bake a loaf of bread, that would be a big help and would relieve the present bakers. Secondly, I need someone to work with me in this ministry while I am still here before I head north for the summer the end of May.

What is this ministry? When an individual visits our church and completes one of the visitor sheets in the bulletin, they receive a basket of fresh baked bread to welcome them to our community of believers. We have had a lot of positive feed back from those who have received this welcome. Please check with me concerning the responsibilities.

Marilyn Davis

Golf News

If you are taking part in the annual Nativity golf championship on April 8, please check in from 12pm to 12:30pm. Folks coming for dinner only should arrive around 5pm.

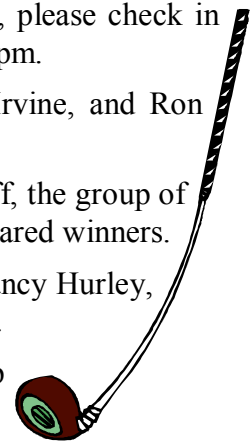
February 21: A fine team effort by Mel Zang, Gerry Morrissey, Walt Irvine, and Ron Hurley resulted in a 33 to win top honors.

February 28: Two teams tied at three under par 33, but in a one-hole playoff, the group of Joanne Miller, Art Riley, Brian Bain, Karl Miller, and Mark Peelor were declared winners.

March 7: Four under par 32 was the winning score fired by the team of Nancy Hurley, Bob Moorman, Mark Peelor, and Dick Berg. All seven teams were under par.

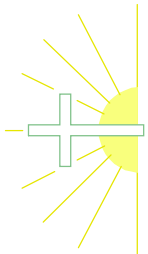
March 14: Bob Moorman, Jim Krugel, and Dick Berg scored 34 to claim top honors.

Dick Berg



Nativity—April 2006




Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 <p>Easter Sunrise Service, April 16, 6:30am (Holy Eucharist in Memory Garden)</p>						
2 Daylight Savings Time Worship Services at 8am, 9:30am, and 11:30am 10:30am Sunday School 5pm Youth Group	3 1pm Bridge	4 2:00pm Golf League	5 10am Healing Eucharist 10:30am Bandage Brigade 7pm Bible Study	6 7pm Choir Practice	7 Youth Relay for Life	1 8:30am Prepare lunches for homeless 5pm Holy Communion (Advance clocks 1 hour)
9 Palm Sunday Worship Services at 8am, 9:30am, and 11:30am 10:30am Sunday School 5pm Youth Group	10 1pm Bridge 7pm Vestry Meeting	11 2:00pm Golf League	12 10am Healing Eucharist 10:30am Bandage Brigade 7pm Bible Study	13 5:45pm Choir Practice 7pm Maundy Thursday Service	14 Noon and 7pm Good Friday Services	15 Easter Vigil 10am to 2pm Family Easter Fun Day 5pm Holy Communion
16 Easter Sunday. Worship Services at 6:30am, 8am, 9:30am, 11:30am 10:30am Sunday School 5pm Youth Group	17 1pm Bridge	18 2:00pm Golf League	19 10am Healing Eucharist 10am P.A. Garden Club 10:30am Band. Brigade 7pm Bible Study	20 7pm Choir Practice	21	22 3pm Singles Outing 5pm Holy Communion
23 Worship Services at 8am, 9:30am, and 11:30am 10:30am Sunday School 5pm Youth Group	24 1pm Bridge	25 2:00pm Golf League	26 10am Healing Eucharist 10:30am Bandage Brigade 7pm Bible Study	27 9:30am LOS Sewing 7pm Choir Practice	28	29 Mystery Trip 5pm Holy Communion
30 Worship Services at 8am, 9:30am, 11:30am 10:30am Sunday School 12:30pm Potluck 5pm Youth Group	Note: Saturday, April 8 and Sunday, April 9 (all services): Palm Sunday Bake Sale					



Thank You, Lord, for:

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Church of the Nativity
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Words to live by...

“So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.” 2 Corinthians 4:18 (NIV)



Sign Board

If you can't
sleep, don't
count sheep.
Talk to the
Shepherd.

The **Episcopal Church of the Nativity** is located on Lockwood Ridge Road one block south of University Parkway. Our telephone number is (941) 355-3262, and our service times are as follows:

Saturday:
5:00pm Holy Communion

Sunday:
8:00am Traditional Eucharist
9:30am Traditional Eucharist with choir
10:30am Sunday School for youth, 10:45am adults
11:30am Praise Eucharist
5:00pm Youth Group

Wednesday:
10:00am Healing Holy Eucharist