



December 2006

the Joyful Noise

Upon Christ's Nativity

of St. James' Episcopal Church

by Jason Metheny



Jason Metheny enters his third season as composer-in-residence for the Master Singers of Stow. The chorus' next concert in December will feature two original carols and several transcriptions for brass quintet by Metheny. Here, Jason shares his inspiration for his latest composition.

For me, the process of composing almost always begins with selecting a text. The words form the skeletal structure on the composition and shape the form and forces of the music. When a composition comes easily, the words dictate their own natural rhythm and musical phrasing. Today it is common for a composer to borrow from a traditional text or an established poet (usually those whose works are now in the public domain). But many of the great composers, especially those of the Renaissance, were often composer and poet, writing words and music simultaneously for their madrigals and motets. My first attempt to emulate the old masters by writing my own poetry was in graduate school with a short

motet, but I decided to try it again to fulfill my most recent commission.

For the upcoming Master Singers concert, I've composed a carol for them with my own poetry entitled "What Bed is This, O Heav'nly Child." The inspiration comes from a poem by Rowland Watkyns (c. 1662) entitled "Upon Christ's Nativity, or Christmas" in which the penultimate line is "Christ had four beds and those not soft nor brave."

"The Virgin's womb, the manger, cross, and grave." The imagery evoked in the "four beds" is striking and a marvelous point from where to expound upon the incarnation of the Saviour. Writing music for me is much easier than writing text (and the end result is more likely a simple pastiche of other more established poets) but this is the carol that resulted from my efforts:

What bed is this, O heav'nly child,
where mak'st thy dwelling undefiled?
'Tis Mary meek, and blameless she;
Et de fructus ventris tui!

"Magnificat," Maria dixit,
"I, the handmaid of the Lord,"
(Dominus tecum; et concepit)
"shall do according to thy Word."

What bed is this thou liest upon,
Sweet babe of bliss, salvation's dawn?
Come down from heav'n, in straw to sleep
amongst the silly ox and sheep.

Thy manger bed until the morn
Can comfort give thee for a night.
Thy kinsmen: Sorrow, Grief, and Scorn
Shall thee attend at morrow's light.

What bed of nails and crown of thorn
Sweet lamb, dost thy love now lie on?

(cont. p.3)

Editorial Information

The Joyful Noise is published monthly September through June as a ministry of St. James Episcopal Church. Submissions in accord with the Mission of St. James are encouraged. The address of the Editor is 429 Kinney Circle, Wooster, OH 44691 and you may e-mail: astolat@sssnet.com

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 Evelyn Manzella
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Folders for the last issue were:

Jean Barnes
 Gwen Bayless
 Clara Patton
 Ken Plusquellec



coffee

Please add your name to the sign up sheets on the bulletin board for greeters and Coffee Hour hosts/hostesses.



Astolat
 Publications

Our Fall Ingathering for United Thank Offering took place on November 12th and the total from the blue boxes and envelopes came to \$697.62. A check has been forwarded to the Diocesan Coordinator for the program.



from Joyce Roe

Thanks to all who participated in this Outreach project.

Saint James Episcopal Church

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8:00 am and 10:00 am Sunday, 7:30 am Wednesday

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The Collect for St. James': "almighty and everlasting God, who didst move Thy servants in times past to establish and sustain this parish of St. James: Grant us grace so to follow their good example that we in our time may fulfill Thy will for us by knowing, loving, and serving Thee and Thy people; through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen."

The Mission of St. James Episcopal Church is to Greet, Grow, and Give in the name of Jesus Christ.

Upon Christ's Nativity *(from page 1)*

Advanced nigh the hosts of woe;
Darkness the light seeks overthrow.
O makeless fawn, the wolves o'ertake thee
And sore wound thy side and head;
Thy royal mantle, spotless white be,
Now is a pall of scarlet red.

What bed is this, hewn from the stone
where late my Saviour rest upon?
"He is not here," the women cry!
Thus spake the angel hovering nigh:

"Seek not the Christ among the dead
for he is risen as he said;
Be now the death shroud cast away,
thy night has turned to endless day!"

The virgin meek, the cradle low,
the cross the grave, all hell below!
Reposed in Christ, the wearied rise
to take their place in paradise.

The music for this carol was also inspired by an ancient source, and is an arrangement of "A la venue de Noel," a melody from Fleurs des Noels of 1535. The Master Singers chorus will present this and another carol of mine at their next concert featuring two brass quintets. I hope that many of you will be able to attend. I would like to conclude by saying that the support of the people of St. James Church has been an invaluable source of strength and inspiration for me in my work, and it is no exaggeration to say that much of my success has arisen from your generous encouragement



For those people who don't have a computer and would like to be added to the telephone tree, please call Pat Petsch at (330) 262-9506 or Nancy Slaydon at (330) 262-8561.



Communion can be brought to you at home or in the hospital whether you find you cannot make it to church for two weeks or two months. Please call the office if you would like to arrange for communion.



Thanks from *Every Woman's House*

Dear Friends:

Please let me express my sincere thanks and gratitude for your generous gift of toiletries and cell phones. I continue to be awed and amazed by the support that the community provides to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. We could not do what we do without your volunteer and financial help.

The Every Woman's House Staff and Board of Trustees are committed to assuring that every available dollar is delegated in the best way possible to help families that are struggling with violence. We see miracles every day as our clients courageously work to rebuild their lives. Thank you for being part of these miracles.

Sincerely,

Bobbi E. Douglas
Executive Director
November 2, 2006

Ton of Love Collects 2, 219 lbs

Ton of Love Project collects 2219 pounds of food for People to People

Thank you for participating in the Ton of Love Drive. St. James has contributed over four tons of food in the past four years. When the need is great you have always done your share! That is amazing!!

Peg and John Hockett deserve a special thanks for taking over on short notice. To the Outreach Committee and their helpers, the 2007 goal is to top 10,000 lbs. WE CAN DO IT!





Evelyn's Epistle

My Friends,

I was thinking about prayer and the different kinds of prayers we say. At Thanksgiving time our prayers are often of gratitude. We often say

intercessory prayers when people we care for are sick or in trouble. In penitential times like Lent, we may be more drawn to prayers of confession. When we are in personal need, we may make petitionary prayers. Out of the five classic forms of prayer, that leaves prayers of adoration. For me, Advent and Christmas are the times I am most drawn into adoration of God.

In the Bible study we are reading the Gospel of John. Read some of the words of the first chapter of John:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it..."

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known."

These words inspire and stir the heart. They call forth in us a yearning, and a reverence for God that we lose sight of sometimes. Let this Advent and Christmas seasons stir in you awe of God. Take time to simply sit in the presence of God. Find your advent wreath, (or make one at home), put in some fresh candles and sit in the flicking light and be present to God. Pray Compline (BCP, p. 127) at the end of the day, and remember the love you have for God. Allow yourself to express the profound love you have for God and allow God's love for you to encircle you. What an amazing gift we have been given believing, in knowing Jesus the Christ.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory. Amen.

Evelyn

A
joyous
Christmas and
a happy New Year
filled with God's peace
to you and your family
from your staff at Saint James
Gladys, Ned, Nancy
Jason, Liz
Evelyn
and
Brooker

Holy Humor

A Christian Dictionary

AMEN: The only part of a prayer that everyone knows.

BULLETIN: 1. Parish information, read only during the homily. 2. Air conditioning. 3. Your receipt for attending the service.

CHOIR: A group of people whose singing allows the rest of the congregation to lip-sync.

HOLY WATER: A liquid whose chemical formula is H2OLY.

HYMN: A song of praise, usually sung in a key three octaves higher than that of the congregation's range.

RECESSIONAL HYMN: The last song of the service, often sung a little more quietly since some of the people have already left.

INCENSE: Holy Smoke!

JONAH: The original "Jaws" story.

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December Birthdays

- 3 Matthew Blanchard
Tim Peterson
- 7 Liz Allis
- 5 Merlin Peterson
- 9 Jane Buxton
- 11 Laura Timothy
- 17 Stewart Fitz Gibbon
- 23 Robert Varga
- 25 Carol Kienzle
- 28 Carl Smith



December Anniversaries

- 6/52 Lowell and Nancy Reynolds
- 23/76 Jack and Betty Martin
- 27/47 Bill and Peg Martin
- 27/75 Jim and Marcy Richard



When you or a member of your family is in the hospital, please let the office know. Due to new privacy regulations, the hospital is no longer allowed to give us that information.



The black mailbox in front of the office is being used by the apartment upstairs for mail. Please **do not put items in there for the office.** You may use the mail slot or leave items between the doors to the right of the mailbox, but please let the office know.



Brown Bag: Dec. 7
Jason Metheny



The cost for flowers is \$40 plus tax for two arrangements. You are welcome to share dates with another family. If you wish to donate, please sign the calendar in the North Street Entrance. Flowers are ordered by Velda Cross, altar guild directress, from *Com-Patt-ibles*, who sends a bill to the parishioner. If you have special instructions, please indicate it on the calendar or give Velda a call on (330) 345-1416. The flowers are yours to take after the 10:00 service

- Dec 3 Janice Miller in thanksgiving for family and friends
- Dec 10 Cameron Maneese in memory of loved ones
- Dec 17 Heather and Stewart Fitz Gibbon in honor of Stewart's birthday
- Dec 24 Open
- Dec 31 Christmas flowers

The 2007 flower calendar is posted in the North Street entrance, if you would like to provide flowers for the Sunday services.



If you would like to make donations to People to People and/or for Christmas flowers/Greenery to decorate the church, please fill out the form below and return it to the office no later than **December 10**.

Given By _____
for: _____

In thanksgiving

In memory of: _____

Amount: \$ _____

People to People _____ Flowers/Greenery _____



St. James' Peace and Justice Committee

Susan Figge

Our Health Insurance Is Not Well; Is There a Cure?
A discussion sponsored by ECCOHIO and the Wooster Area Interfaith Partnership
November 18, 2006

What shall we do about the growing number of people without affordable, accessible or adequate health care? Health care costs are rising at double-digit rates. What is an effective public policy response?

According to Dr. Johnathan Ross, M.D. (Associate Chair of Internal Medicine at St. Vincent Mercy Medical Center, Toledo; and co-founder of SPAN, the Single Payer Action Network);

- 46 million people in the U.S. are uninsured (1.3 million in Ohio). Twenty-five percent of these are children and 50% are employed. Others are inadequately covered or one illness or job loss away from losing the coverage they have.
- 18,000 Americans died last year as a direct result of not being able to afford health care, and 46% of personal bankruptcies are related to health care expenses;
- the World Health Organization ranks the U.S. health care system 37th in quality compared to other countries.
- Health costs in the U.S. currently represent at least 16% of our GNP.
- And some \$11.6 billion is wasted annually in Ohio by a complex and inefficient private health insurance system with 20-30% overhead.

In the face of these concerns, Dr. Ross stressed that it was "time to throw the money-changers out of the temple of medicine." Both progressives and conservatives should support publically funded, universally available health care. Unlike much privately insured care, which can force physicians to act on behalf of insurance companies as well as their patients, such a system could offer greater individual freedom for doctors and patients, allowing patients to choose health-care providers and allowing doctors to maintain their private offices and hospitals and to make medical decisions with fewer constraints. Fiscally, Dr. Ross believes, cost-containment would be assured, while managed care has been "a jobs program for paper-

pushers," greatly increasing the ratio of administrators to physicians, and driving up overhead costs. Above all, a single-payer, universally available health care system would be more just, and it is an area of public policy where churches can play an important advocacy role. This is the civil rights issue for the 21st century," Dr. Ross observed, and as with great social justice movements of the past, from abolition to women's suffrage, the churches will have to help proclaim the need and push for reform.

In his presentation Tom Kelly, Administrator of the Cleveland Clinic/Wooster, agreed that everyone is frustrated with the current system, and he acknowledged that a single payer system was "an interesting idea." But he believes that a program could "decimate the health care system," and that a system focused on accessibility, quality, and control of costs could be achieved within a competitive framework. He pointed to the variety of factors that make up the current health care crisis, including the demographic pressure of the aging population, and the war and other economic stresses. These will not go away anytime soon, but he sees hopeful new initiatives in health care funding, like health savings accounts, on the horizon. Both presenters agreed, however, that the time for reform had arrived, and that whatever the system, the public must participate in deciding what is important. Reforms put forward now will spark an essential and timely public debate.

The meeting concluded with discussion of a petition currently circulating in support of universal health care in Ohio, to be submitted first to the General Assembly. Details about The Health Care for All Ohioans Act are posted on the Peace and Justice bulletin board, and Susan Figge has a copy of the petition.

The Episcopal Diocese of Ohio is among the many endorsers of the campaign to get the Ohio General Assembly to pass publicly funded health care guaranteeing coverage for all Ohioans. The Episcopal Diocese of Ohio Web site also provides a link to FamiliesUSA, which offers information on health care issues and tools for health care justice advocacy.

<http://www.familiesusa.org/index.html>. The Single Payer Action Network Web site is <http://www.spanohio.org>. See also Physicians for a National Health Program at <http://www.pnhp.org>.

Among Royalty

Two recent films take us into royal courts to give us a close look at the lives of queens. Both deal with women who were reluctant monarchs, thrust into the position at an early age. And both films focus on the isolation of the queens from their subjects as a source of crisis.

Marie Antoinette, written and directed by Sofia Coppola and starring Kirsten Dunst in the title role, follows the 14-year-old daughter of the Austrian Empress Maria Theresa from the Habsburg court in Vienna to France, where she is betrothed to the ineffectual future King Louis XVI (Jason Schwartzman). The cheerful, affectionate young woman is initially puzzled by the endlessly elaborate, often cheerless rituals of Versailles. At the end of her first levée, attended by dozens of ladies of the court and accompanied by a small orchestra, she observes, "This is ridiculous!" To which her instructor and mentor in court manners, the Comtesse de Noaille (Judy Davis), replies, "This, Madame, is Versailles."

Alas, Marie's commonsense reaction will be submerged in the vastly expensive and self-indulgent pursuits of pleasure at court. But what else is there for her? The marriage was arranged for purely political reasons. Leaving her country, in a scene that suggests the delivery of a prisoner, she is stripped naked and everything of her native Austria is taken from her. Due to her husband's sexual inadequacies, the marriage remains unconsummated for years, and yet her position at court depends on her producing an heir to the throne. Under these pressures it is hardly surprising that she seeks refuge in the extravagant diversions of Versailles.

Coppola's director of photography, Lance Acord, production designer K. K. Barrett, and costume designer Milena Canonero must have had a field day on this sumptuous film. They actually shot at the Palace of Versailles, using the original rooms where the events took place. The fabled French pastry restaurant Ladurée made the cakes and pastries seen in this production, and Spanish designer Manolo Blahnik created hundreds of pairs of shoes expressly for the

film. It is all a constant visual pleasure.

The film was roundly booed and hissed at the Cannes Film Festival, perhaps for the liberties it takes with history, which for some may include its essentially sympathetic portrayal of the queen. Likewise it was faulted for largely excluding the political background of the period, but this misses the essential point that these people lived in a kind of bubble and had precious little sense of what was going on around them. They are not just conscienceless but unconscious predators. In one of the few scenes with any direct reference to politics,

Louis XVI's advisers suggest that France should send money to support the Americans in their War of Independence as a way of demonstrating France's power. The feckless Louis asks where the money would come from. Almost with a shrug, an adviser assures him, "We could raise taxes slightly." The burdens borne by the taxed are

never considered.

Many were also put off by the 1980's pop music that dominates much of the soundtrack. The film suggests parallels between the culture of Versailles and modern celebrity culture, both seen as at once privileged, self-indulgent, and sealed off from any external reality.

It might be more interesting, however, to consider the film as a political parable of a privileged society preoccupied by its every desire and living largely in ignorance of the outside world. It comes as a terrible shock when news arrives of the storming of the Bastille and the palace is soon surrounded by an angry mob. That sudden shock is as important as anything else in the film, because it the logical result of everything that has gone before. The final shot is from the carriage of the royal family as they leave their beloved Versailles. There is no need to follow their story to its familiar conclusion at the guillotine in 1793, although this too has been criticized as an omission. Let someone else make a film about that. In her final adversities Marie became an interesting person in her own right, and it would be a story worth the telling, but it is not Coppola's concern.

If *Marie Antoinette* is clearly a modern take on an old

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Among Royalty

(from page 7)

story, Stephen Frears's **The Queen** is closer to our own time in the events it portrays and fixes our attention on the central figures without making us constantly step back to puzzle about the director's intentions and liberties taken.

The opening scene is brilliantly conceived and revealing. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II (Helen Mirren) is sitting for a portrait painter in the tradition of all previous monarchs. The image she herself is watching, however, is of the young new Prime Minister Tony Blair (Michael Sheen) on a television screen, clearly at home with modern mass media.

The film concentrates primarily on the first days of September 1997, from the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, in a car crash in Paris to the funeral in England a week later. We will never know, of course, precisely what went on behind the doors of Buckingham Palace, at the Queen's Balmoral estate in Scotland, or at 10 Downing Street in those days, but Peter Morgan's very intelligent script makes credible and fascinating conjectures about the unfolding events and the clash of older and more modern views of the monarchy.

Since her divorce from Prince Charles, Diana was no longer a member of the Royal Family, and Elizabeth, who despised Diana as a publicity-seeking celebrity and media darling, refuses to make any statement or public display of mourning. Urged by her young Prime Minister to help the people of England in their grief, she responds that she is concerned only for the grief of the family, especially Diana's two young sons. The Royal Family's traditional reserve and dignity, its refusal to give in to emotional display, she reminds Blair, have always been among the qualities the world has most admired and respected in the British nation.

But the English people feel differently, and Blair's popularity rockets to an all-time high when he makes an emotional speech in which he describes Diana as "the people's princess." The bouquets laid for Diana at the gate of Buckingham Palace multiply to the point of suggesting a barricade, and public anger grows against the unresponsive Queen.

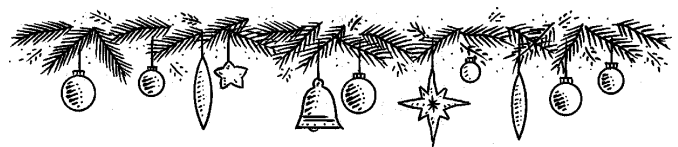
The Queen has always been disciplined, even frugal in every way: fiscally, personally, and socially. Diana was associated with warmth, humanity, and expressiveness,

all of which were indulged in the visibility of the media. Her vulnerability and generosity sometimes led to mistakes and situations not previously associated with royalty, but it was precisely that vulnerability that endeared her to the English people. Elizabeth realizes that she has lost touch with her subjects and that the monarchy itself may be in danger.

As is well known, Blair finally prevailed upon the Queen to make a public statement on television. This film, longer on rich and subtle characterization than on elaborate plot, is the story of their rapprochement and the changes effected in both of them.

Helen Mirren once again demonstrates that she is one of England's finest actors with a performance full of understanding that makes Elizabeth sympathetic without ever asking for sympathy. The physical resemblance is striking, but the performance is from within and is of such subtlety that perhaps only the medium of film could capture it fully. Michael Sheen, an actor new to me, gives his Blair great energy and humor and moves him from awe of the Monarch to a compassionate understanding and respect that force him to revise his earlier impressions. Memorable also are James Cromwell as Prince Philip, Alex Jennings as Prince Charles, and Sylvia Syms as the Queen Mother.

Short Take: If you are in a relax-your-mind mood, you might beguile a couple of hours with Ridley Scott's **A Good Year**. It's a chance to spend some time in beautiful French wine country and see the redemption of a greedy but amiable rascal through the love of a good and beautiful woman. With a script by Marc Klein based on a novel by Peter Mayle, it is also a chance to see Russell Crowe play romantic comedy. (We also see, in top form but all too briefly, Albert Finney as his beloved grandfather and childhood mentor.) And you will not have to strain too hard as you watch a man agonize over the choice of being very rich as a heartless stock trader in gray and rainy London or being very rich and happy in love as the owner of a sun-drenched wine estate and chateau. Light fare offered with a light touch.



Gregory A. Boyd, *God of the Possible: A Biblical Introduction to the Open View of God*. Baker Books, 2000. \$15.99

When Richard Hooker in the sixteenth century set out to define the essence of English Christianity, he likened it to a three-legged stool, in which the legs were the Bible, tradition, and reason. A three-legged stool with legs of unequal length will be stable, but it won't be level. If you try to sit or stand on it, you'll likely slide or fall off. It's hard today to imagine that the three legs of the Anglican stool are all still the same length, if they ever were. For many Anglicans and Episcopalians, reason is the longest leg now. Tradition and the Bible have gotten much shorter. And for many, there is a fourth leg, experience, which is as long as or longer than reason. (If Hooker & Co. had included it on their stool, the Quakers and Methodists might have stayed Anglicans, and a lot more New Agers might be gravitating toward the Episcopal Church today.) Needless to say, a four-legged stool with legs of unequal length is not only not level, but also unstable.

I've always thought of myself as someone who regards the Bible as authoritative in matters of faith and practice—but not in a literalist or fundamentalist way. In practical terms, that means that if I find something in the Bible with which I deeply disagree (something that seems to contradict what reason or experience tells me), I tend to assume that it's the result of early Israel's limited understanding of God that Jesus corrected later ("You have heard it said, . . . but I say to you . . ."), or that it's the result of a mistaken expectation that the world would end in the first century C.E., or that it's intended for a specific audience and must be read in that context, or that it's supposed to be read as poetry rather than as science or history.

I had read about Gregory Boyd in *The New York Times*. He believes in the authority of the Bible and is the pas-

tor of a mega-church in Wisconsin. But he's also a graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary (my alma mater), and a divinity-school professor with a doctorate. He lost a sizeable chunk of his congregation when he started preaching that Bible-believing Christians should not seek political power, "power over," but instead should pursue sacrifice and service, "power under." When I read about him, I thought, "I like how he reads his Bible."

But when I opened Boyd's little book, *God of the Possible: A Biblical Introduction to the Open View of God*, I was in for a shock. Since I agreed with him in many respects, I thought he would interpret the Bible in the light of tradition and reason the same way I do. But he does not. For Boyd, the Bible is *the* authority, and anything that disagrees with it is simply wrong. On his

stool, the Bible leg is definitely longer than that of tradition, reason, or experience. That doesn't mean, as we'll see below, that he interprets Scripture as contrary to reason or experience, as some biblical literalists do. But for Boyd, if reason or experience seems to lead in one direction and Scripture in another, we should follow Scripture and let the others catch up later. If, on the other hand, it can be shown convincingly that Scripture, read honestly and without preconception, actually supports what our natural reason and our human experience would also suggest, so much the better.

Boyd also has no hesitation about abandoning tradition if it seems to conflict with the Bible. He is determined to take Scripture on its own terms, to let it interpret itself, and not to impose on it any theological framework, traditional or otherwise.

God of the Possible provides a good example. Classical Christian tradition, Boyd says, has generally read Greek absolutist ideas back into the Biblical idea of God. In this classical version of Christian theology, God—the Absolute—presides over the universe beyond time and space, knows everything in advance (or "from eternity"), and is therefore responsible for everything that



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The Scriptorium

(from page 9)

happens. There can be no contingency, no change, with God. Thus, when bad things happen to good people, classical Christianity says, “It’s God’s will. You can’t understand it. You just have to have faith.” But that creates a host of problems with what the Bible says, especially about prayer. If God knows everything “before” it happens, what difference could my actions make? Why bother to pray for God to do something if God has already decided from eternity what to do? Furthermore, why does Jesus urge his disciples over and over to pray diligently? Why did he himself pray for his cup of suffering to be taken from him, if he believed that God *could* not change his mind in response to that prayer? And how can God hold you or me responsible for something that’s really his own doing?

Boyd describes in meticulous detail how the passages of Scripture that seem to present the future as closed are in fact open to other interpretations that seem more faithful to the text. What if, Boyd asks, God has really ordained that the outcome of some events is contingent—unknowable and undetermined? If God says, “I know that this decision you will make will be a free decision, and therefore not even I know *what* it will be,” God still “foreknows” and “foreordains” that decision—but as a *free* decision. In other cases, God may “foreknow” something as settled, decided, determined. To understand God in this way, Boyd argues, is more consistent with human reason (which teaches us that we are free, at least in some limited ways, and that the universe is itself indeterminate in some ways), with experience (in which some eventualities seem more certain than others), and with Scripture (in which God is described again and again as changing his mind, not because God is fickle, but in response to free human actions and prayers). If, Boyd argues, God already knows whatever is going to happen—if there are no surprises for God—how could he possibly be described as changing his mind? But if God can be surprised by us (as we also can be surprised by God!), then our actions and our prayers may indeed open up new possibilities that were not there—and therefore not apparent to God—before. None of this is to say that God’s changes of mind are changes in his nature, which is always lovingly disposed toward his creation. Rather, the element of the unknown in creation opens new possibilities for the Creator to exercise his nature, which is love, in novel ways. This understanding of God also gets God “off the hook” morally by not making him the author of evil, while putting us back “on the hook.” Some things that seem bad at the

time may in fact be God’s will, with a hidden purpose for good, but others may be acts of freedom carried out by sinful human beings—as when someone flies a plane into an office tower—about which God can only grieve along with those who grieve in order to bring about healing.

There are some examples in Scripture that seem to contradict this understanding of the “God of the Possible,” and Boyd deals with most of them to my satisfaction, at least. His “Open View of God” has been attacked by some people who look to the Bible as their authority too, but few of whom have tried to refute him on purely biblical grounds, accusing him instead of heresy because his ideas don’t fit with “tradition” or their own religious preconceptions. These people readily dismiss as “figurative language” any passage of Scripture that challenges their view, while embracing others as “literally true.” Then they condemn Boyd for insisting that they take the whole Bible as seriously as he does.

I’m still not sure that Boyd, by making the Bible leg the longest, has all the legs of the stool the right length, but I’m grateful for his intellectual honesty in how he reads the Bible. He hasn’t resorted to any of my liberal dodges to explain away uncomfortable passages of Scripture, and he’s willing to let the Bible challenge all his preconceptions in ways that I may not be.

Holy Humor

Three ministers were out on a lake fishing one fine afternoon. There was a Protestant minister, an Episcopalian priest and a Catholic priest. They were sitting out in the middle of the lake and the Protestant minister said he had to relieve himself, so he got out of the boat and walked across the water to shore, relieved himself behind a tree. He then walked back to the boat. The Episcopalian priest did the same thing. The Catholic priest thought to himself, if they can do it, so can I. So he stepped out of the boat and promptly sank to the bottom. The other two looked at each other and one said “Do you think we should have told him about the rocks just under the water?”



Colorectal Cancer

by Ruth Brown



Colorectal Cancer is the third most common cancer in both men and women. It begins in either the colon or the rectum, which are both the part of the digestive or gastrointestinal system, where food is processed.

Most colorectal cancers begin as a polyp, which is an abnormal cell growth in the lining of the colon or rectum that later becomes cancerous.

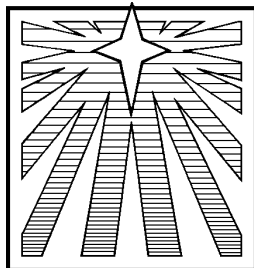
Early colorectal cancer often has no symptoms. But, later on, colorectal cancer symptoms may include rectal bleeding, stomach cramps, weight loss, blood in the stool or a change in bowel habits. IF you have any of the symptoms, see your doctor to make sure colon cancer isn't the cause.

Take the Quiz: What is Your Risk for colorectal Cancer?

- Are you 50 years of age or older?
- Do you eat fewer than five to nine servings of fruits and vegetables everyday?
- Do you consume a diet mostly from red meat?
- Are you physically inactive?
- Do you smoke?
- Do you have a family history of colorectal cancer?
- Do you have a personal history of intestinal polyps or colon cancer?
- Do you have a personal history of other bowel disease?
- Are you African-American?

A YES answer to any of these questions places you at risk for colorectal cancer. Talk with your doctor about prevention and a screening schedule.

American Cancer Society
Ruth Brown RNC Parish Nurse



From the Junior Warden

Many thanks to everyone for their help in keeping the church properties in good running order!



Occasionally, people have approached me while at church for services or other activities, with information about items that need attention. It is difficult, in that setting, for me to stop and make a note for the Buildings and Grounds Committee.

There are note pads and pencils in each of the pews that will assist in our communications. If you notice an item that needs attention—repair, replace, etc.—please jot it down on one of the notepads, and place the note in the offering plate OR the “Junior Warden/Buildings and Grounds” Mail box, located in the Sacristy (behind the Choir loft). This method will ensure that information gets to the right people and that these items will be taken care of in a timely fashion.

Alternately, a call to the Church Office 330-262-4476 would ensure that this information is captured and channeled to the right source as well.

It does “take a village” to keep our facilities clean and in good repair, so keep up the good work.

Celia Smart
Junior Warden

Address Change

Al Moxon has moved to:

Westview Manor
1715 Mechanicsburg Rd
Waterford # 22
Wooster, OH 44691



Pastoral Care *from Janice Miller*



Life moves in a fascinating way within the St. James community. Special ministries are performed without fanfare to communicate and to provide comfort and support.

Thank you;

- Jean Barnes for the many birthday and congratulatory cards you have sent over the years.
- Jane Miller for accepting that role this past year.
- Nancy Reynolds for the numerous sympathy and get well cards you have sent.
- Shirley Buytendyk for organizing meals at the time of a birth, death or a family crisis.
- Joyce Roe, Karen Kendall and numerous others who provide food for gatherings following funerals and special events throughout the year.
- Stuart Ling, Kim Watkins and Janice Miller for providing Lay Eucharistic Visits.
- Pat Petsch and Nancy Slaydon for sharing e-mail messages by phone. (If you do not have e-mail call the church office and you will be contacted by Pat or Nancy.)
- To all who provide rides, meals, services and support to others.

We are blessed to be a part of the St. James community!

A Christian Dictionary *(from page 4)*

MAGI: The most famous trio to attend a baby shower.

MANGER: 1. Where Mary gave birth to Jesus because Joseph wasn't covered by an HMO. 2. The Bible's way of showing us that holiday travel has always been rough.

PEW: A medieval torture device still found in churches.

PROCESSION: The ceremonial formation at the beginning of service, consisting of altar servers, the celebrant, and late parishioners looking for seats.

RECESSIONAL: The ceremonial procession at the conclusion of the service, led by parishioners trying to beat the crowd to the parking lot.

RELICS: People who have been going to church for so long, they actually know when to sit, kneel, and stand.

TEN COMMANDMENTS: The most important Top Ten list not given by David Letterman.



The Editor's Bit

Hippocrates once said "Every thing in excess is opposed to nature." His name, curiously enough, comes from the Greek words *hippos*, meaning *horse*, and *kratos*, meaning *power*. Fortunately for the car sales industry, engine makers opted for abandoning the Greek *hippo* to describe the power of their machines. I'm not sure folks would be wowed by a Porsche that was described as

having the equivalent pulling power of 605 hippos.

As well as being almost famous for sounding like a huge, fat, water horse, Hippocrates is acknowledged as the founder of modern medicine, with the Hippocratic Oath being named after him. As a doctor, he apparently not only talked the talk but walked the walk when it comes to looking after oneself. According to legend, he lived into his 80's, with some sources claiming he hit the century mark. Clearly, avoiding excess and adopting the maxim of "moderation in all things" worked out just peachy for old Hippocrates.

Contrary to this philosophy, Oscar Wilde once wrote, "Moderation is a fatal thing... nothing succeeds like excess." Not exactly noted as a believer in temperance, Wilde died at the age of 46 – only half way towards Hippocrates' expiry date.

However, the spirit of excess lives on in the USA. If Wilde had been alive today, no doubt he would have

cont. p.14

GOD'S UNFINISHED

FUTURE

why it matters NOW



Jurgen
Moltmann
Professor Emeritus
Tubingen University



Barbara
R. Rossing
Professor of New Testa-
ment
*Lutheran School of
Theology in Chicago*



Peter
J. Gomes
Plummer Professor of
Christian Morals
*The Memorial Church,
Harvard University*



James
Carroll
Author, Preacher, Open-
ing Eucharist

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invites you to take part in a web cast presentation
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January 23-24, 2007

**100 East High Street
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January 23 from 8:30-4; January 24 from 8:30-5:30

Cost: \$30 for both days

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For more information or to register contact: The Rev. Julian R Eibin

rector_spmv@earthlink.net or call 740 392-8601 (o); 740 397-9753 (h)

December 2006

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 10:0 am Bag St. Nick cookies 5:00 - 8:00 pm Downtown Church Walk	2
3 St. Nicholas Sunday 8:00 am H.E. 9:00 Choir 9:30 Adult Forum 10:00 Sunday School 10:30 H.E.	4 Salvation Army Bell Ringing - Buehler's Milltown Evelyn at ECSF meeting	5 Evelyn at area clergy meeting	6 7:30 am H.E. 9:30 Bible Study 7:00 pm Choir	7 12:05 Brown Bag: Jason Metheney 7:00 Outreach Committee	8 Office Closed	9
10 8:00 am H.E. 9:00 Choir 9:30 Adult Forum 10:00 Sun. School 10:30 H.E. 11:30 Coffee	11 7:00 pm Steward- ship Meeting EVELYN ON RETREAT	12 EVELYN ON RETREAT	13 7:30 am M.P. 11:00 Book Group 7:00 pm Choir EVELYN ON RETREAT	14 EVELYN ON RETREAT	15 <i>JN Deadline</i> EVELYN ON RETREAT	16 EVELYN ON RETREAT
17 People to People 8:00 am H.E. 9:00 Choir 9:30 Adult Forum 10:00 Sun. School 10:30 H.E. 11:00 Coffee	18 7:00 pm Vestry Meeting	19	20 7:30 am H.E. 7:00 pm Choir	21	22	23
24 9:00 am H.E. 10:00 Coffee Hour and Greening 7:00 pm Christ- mas Eve Service 10:30 Music 11:00 H.E.	25 10:00 am H.E.	26	27	28	29	30
31 8:00 am H.E. 10:30 H.E./ Baptism 11:30 Coffee Hour	1st 10:00 am H.E. followed by breakfast					

Remember, you can check the St. James' website for calendar information and updates. Just go to <http://www.stjameswooster.org>.

The Editor's Bit

(from page 15)

found his way to the *Heart Attack Grill* in Tempe, Arizona. Armed only with your check book and a portable defibrillator, you can tuck into their infamous "Quadruple Bypass Burger," (QBB) a name that is as accurate as it is graphic.

Here, for the morbidly curious, is the list of contents for a QBB, from top to bottom: Bun, lettuce, beefsteak tomatoes, bacon, red onion, cheddar cheese, ½ lb beef, more onion, more cheese, another ½ lb beef, more onion, more cheese, yet another ½ lb beef, more bacon, another onion, an unashamed fourth ½ lb beef, gourmet sauce, and a bun.

I should say that in a nod towards healthy eating, the lettuce is described as "crisp" and the tomatoes as "fresh," so things could be worse. For those on a diet, it is possible to order the less destructive "Triple Bypass Burger" (only 1 ½ lb of beef in total), the middling "Double Bypass Burger," which is barely meaty at all with a measly 1 lb of beef, or the supermodel special, the "Single Bypass Burger," which with a mere ½ lb of beef makes it practically vegetarian.

For those of us who think that a flight to Arizona just to sample a huge burger is just a little too extravagant, there is the more mundane option of popping in to the local Burger King and ordering a "Quad Stacker." For a lot less than a plane ticket to Tempe, you can fill yourself with 1000 calories, 68 grams of fat, and another 30 grams of saturated fat.

Burger King management are unapologetic about the burger (as are the owners of the Heart Attack Grill). In an official BK statement, a marketing executive said, "We're satisfying the serious meat lovers by leaving off the produce and letting them decide exactly how much meat and cheese they can handle." Notice that "produce" is used as a euphemism for "vegetables."

Although sorely tempted, your intrepid Editor has so far been able to resist the lure of the Quad. However, I have to admit to having tried the Triple and lived to tell the tale. I guess I'm OK with one Triple, which is surely an example of "all things in moderation." My concern is that not everyone knows when to stop; when to "just say no"; when to draw that proverbial line in the sand. At what point does the individual have his or her right to gorge on excessive foods be taken away because "someone" thinks it is bad for them? If a line has to be

drawn in the sand, who should be drawing it; the individual or Society?

Consider the following: Russian Natalya Kashuba, 27, is the owner of an up-market clothes shop. She drank up to three liters of Coke every day for five years. Then, at the beginning of this year, she took legal action against the soft drinks giant after claiming that she had suffered insomnia and heartburn. Miss Kashuba said she had become addicted to the drink as a result of a promotional offer that allowed consumers to swap Coca Cola caps for prizes. And guess what? She won! Although the damages were a token \$100, the principle is that it was not her fault but Coke's.

I know this might sound a little off the wall, but does anyone else think that three liters of ANY sugary soft drink per DAY might be just a tad bad for you? I'm no nutritional scientist, but it's been fairly common knowledge for as long as I can remember – and that's about 40 years – that excess sugar = bad.

Maybe Hippocrates had a point after all.



People to People Thanks

Dear Friends in Christ,

The holidays are just around the corner and we sometimes get busy and forget to say thank you. I want you to know how truly blessed we feel with such a generous donation of food to our ministry. Your "Ton of Love" food drive was a fantastic idea and continues to be a great success again this year with over 2,200 pounds of food. Our requests for financial and food help is up and the needs are great. We could not continue to help those in need without your continued support.

Each donation made to our ministry is a blessing. Blessings can come from the warm feelings you get when you know your gift has helped someone feel the hope and love of Jesus. Thank you for thinking of our ministry during this time of the year. May God continue to bless each and every one of you.

Lydia A. Stahl Executive Director

The Episcopal Church

St. James Episcopal Church
127 West North Street
Wooster, OH 44691



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What's Happening at St. James

- 1st Dec Downtown Church Walk, 5:00 - 8:00 pm
- 4th Dec Salvation Army Bell Ringing, Buehler's Milltown
- 7th Dec Brown Bag: Jason Metheney, 12:05 pm
- 24th Dec Holy Eucharist followed by Coffee Hour and Greening, 9:00 am
Christmas Eve Service, 7:00 pm
Music and Holy Eucharist, 10:30 pm
- 25th Dec Christmas Day: Holy Eucharist, 10:00 am
- 1st Jan Holy Eucharist followed by Breakfast, 10:00 am

December, 2006

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

January, 2007

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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