

the Joyful Noise

of St. James' Episcopal Church

Easter Faith in Practice

by Evelyn Manzella

Every Easter makes me think of my grandmother. She was really my step-grandmother, and we entered her life as young teenagers but to us, she was Gram. She was the matriarch of her two daughters and son's families, so children, grandchildren approached Gram before making major decisions. Many a time she would question me about why I was taking the classes I was and what in the world was I

Saturday evening mass at the Roman Catholic Church I had grown up in and we had gone back to her apartment for dinner. As she put the pasta and sausage on the table, she said, "Guess what I did yesterday?" "I planned my funeral." I was taken aback for a minute, not really wanting to talk about her death, since she had been hospitalized recently with congestive heart failure. I asked her what that was like, thinking about her own death and making plans. Her response was, "It's a lot like making plans for my trip to Florida, only easier." For her, planning her funeral was planning the farewell party for a move. She had great faith that she would live into the resurrection life we celebrate each Easter. Four years later, when she knew she was going to the hospital for the last time, she called her daughter, who lived down the street, and asked her to come and see her. Her daughter wanted to bring her to the hospital immediately, but she told her to wait, and fetch her file with her papers. Gram made sure that her daughter and other children knew exactly what her wishes were for her funeral service, for her will, and her wishes not to be resuscitated. Gram wanted to make her death as uncomplicated for her



going to do with that information. When she was really frustrated with me, she'd ask why I didn't find a nice man to settle down with so he could take care of me. We came to a mutual understanding that each of us was doing a good job of caring for ourselves, after I pointed out that she had never remarried after being widowed in her thirties. We had a good, honest sometimes frustrating relationship.

But there is a particular conversation with Gram that revisits my memory every Easter season. It was just before I was leaving for seminary. I had taken her to

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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

Contributors this month include:

Jean Barnes
Richard Figge
Damon Hickey
Peggy Hockett
Evelyn Manzella

Folders for the last issue were:

Ferne Haghiri
Ken Plusquellec
Clara Patton



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



Astolat
Publications



from Joyce Roe

Spring Ingathering for United Thank Offering is May 6th, 2007.

United Thank Offering is an important outreach endeavor of the Episcopal Church. To achieve this, daily prayers and dropping coins into our UTO boxes can show our thankfulness for God's blessings.

Do you have a blue UTO box? There are some on the table with the poster in the parish hall and some on the tract stand in the southwest entrance.

Saint James Episcopal Church

Corner of East North and Market Streets, Wooster, OH (330) 262-4476

Parish Hall: (330) 262-4488

Web Address: <http://www.stjameswooster.org/index.html>

E-mail: saintjameswooster@earthlink.net

Holy Eucharist Services

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

Staff

Rector - The Reverend Evelyn N. Manzella	(330) 262-1930
Organist - Jason Metheny	(330) 769-2867
Choir Director - Ned Brooks	(330) 264-9495
Parish Secretary - Gladys Hunter	(330) 682-0117
Pledge Secretary - Pat Watson	(330) 263-7811
Treasurer - John Cook	(330) 263-0073
Ass't Treasurer - Stewart Fitz Gibbon	(330) 263-7676
Liz Glick - Bookkeeper	(220) 263-4048
Joyful Noise Editor - Russell T. Cross	(330) 345-1416

When there is no priest available, call Senior Warden, Celia Smart at (330) 262-0299, or Junior Warden, Brad Burns, at (330) 263-7504 in case of emergency.

2007 Vestry

Gwen Bayless	(330) 264-1874
Ruth Brown (09)	(330) 264-3691
Brad Burns: Jr. Warden (07)	(330) 263-7504
Susan Figge (09)	(330) 262-6242
Sue Gorman (07)	(330) 262-0973
Peggy Hockett (08)	(330) 345-7825
Roger Kienzle (08)	(330) 262-4262
Pete Miller (09)	(330) 264-7201
Jane Richardson (08)	(330) 264-4342
Celia Smart: Sr. Warden (07)	(330) 262-0299
Tim Urang (07)	(330) 682-0118

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.

Easter Faith...

(from page 1)

family as it could be. She felt that as the mother, (as our matriarch), clarity would make her death easier for everyone it would touch.

I remember this when I think about my death. There would be no one in my family who would be able to plan a funeral service that would reflect my faith. They don't know the hymns, the scriptures, or the tradition of the Episcopal Church. I also learned, at the death of both my parents, how hard it is to focus on making those decisions in the heart of grief.

I encourage you to give your family and friends the gift of having preplanned your funeral as a celebration of your life and faith. We are often tempted to say that funerals are for those who remain but everyone who plans wants to honor the one who has died.

There are planning sheets available at the office that will help guide you through the service and I am available to help you through the process as well. Making decisions about DNRs, medical proxy, funeral planning, and wills and trusts, and sharing them with your family is truly a tremendous gift to those you love. It is preplanning for the most amazing journey any of us will ever make, our journey home, our own Easter trip.

Thanks for all you do...

Thank you to everyone who gave so much time and effort to make Holy Week go so smoothly so we could fully enter into the events of Christ's last days. Special thanks go to the Altar Guild, under the direction of Velda Cross, to Jason Metheney our organist, the choir and musicians, under the direction of Ned Brooks, and those who helped with hospitality, under the direction of Connie Cook. We also thank Gladys for all her extra work during the week.



Several 12 step groups have expressed their thanks for new tables and chairs in the Undercroft. They have brightened up the space and made everyone feel more welcome. The thank you cards are on the bulletin board.



The Bishop's Annual Appeal enables the people of the Diocese of Ohio (that's us!) to respond to human needs and to support new mission and service opportunities in our Diocese. Please prayerfully make your gift or pledge and mail it in the envelope included in this newsletter, or contribute online at www.dohio.org. Your help is very

much needed and appreciated, whether you are able to make a small gift or a larger one. It would be wonderful if everyone at St. James would join in supporting these vital ministries.

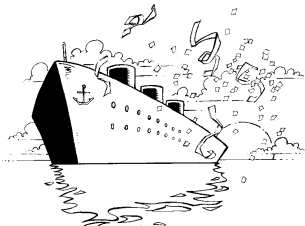
South Central Deanery Report

Susan Lau, ECW President, South Central Deanery

The South Central Deanery ECW Spring meeting and mini-retreat was held at Grace Church, Mansfield, on Saturday, March 31st. Snacks and coffee were served before the mini-retreat. Jo Richards of Grace Church led the mini-retreat on the Via Dolorosa (the Way of Sorrows). We followed the Stations of the Cross weaving our way through the Church and Parish Hall. CDs for the retreat were sent out beforehand so that attendees could be familiar with the music for the retreat. The meditations, prayers and pictures allowed us to feel like a participant on the journey through the streets of Jerusalem. Jo put together a very nice retreat and helped us engage our thoughts in a Lenten spiritual encounter. At the end of the retreat, we were led to the Church where the Reverend Kay Ashby from St. Matthew's, Ashland, celebrated the Eucharist.

Lunch was provided by the women of Grace Church which included Lenten explanations of the food. The offering of \$44.00 went to the Grace Church Food Pantry. There were 33 attendees from South Central Deanery churches: Grace, Mansfield; St. Mark's, Shelby; St. Matthew's, Ashland; and St. Paul's, Mount Vernon. The Fall SCD ECW meeting will be held at St. Mark's Church, Shelby. The Spring SCD ECW mini-retreat/meeting will be held at St. Paul's Church, Marion.

Note to Parishes in the South Central Deanery: A small stipend from each parish in the South Central Deanery (\$10.00 or \$15.00) would help defray the costs of printing and mailing. Please send your check to Doris Williams, 2771 Taylortown Road, Shelby, OH 44875. Make checks payable to South Central Deanery ECW.



Cruise Ship St James

Peggy Hockett

Hurrah! Gwen Bayless has agreed to coordinate a progressive dinner in the fall.

Viola Startzman Clinic *Peggy Hockett*

St. James has a special relationship to the **Viola Startzman Free Clinic**. The donations made at our "Brown Bag Concerts" are given to help support the marvelous work of that organization and Evelyn now serves on their board of directors. The Adult Forum was fortunate to have John Moritz who became the executive director in 2006 speak to us about the progress that is being made and some special needs of this very important community service.

Volunteers are the backbone of the organization; doctors, nurses, technicians, clerical and maintenance are all done by people sharing their time and talent for those less fortunate. It is said with a chuckle that you must have a PhD to sweep the floors of the clinic as many who volunteer to do this job are in that category. From January to March of this year 476.3 hours were given by trained medical volunteers. 1,039.1 hours were donated by support volunteers for such services as clerks, accountants, data entry and custodial. Take note, this is just for a 3 month period of time!

If these people were to have been paid it would have cost about \$39,322.00. However there are still expenses for which money is needed, such as full-time nurses, building repair and maintenance and direct patient care. It is a big job find the funds to support an operation this extensive and to keep enough volunteers to manage the large number of patients.

Who are the patients who come to the clinic?? Those who meet the 2007 established Government Poverty level, Wayne County residents (50% are from Wooster) and are uninsured. 60% of these people earn less than \$1000 per month for the entire household. From January through March this year, 858 total patients were served

HELP! Keep your eye on the bulletin board in May and vote for possible activities to have some social time together this summer. Put a check by ones you would enjoy or write an idea that's different and give it to me.

and 209 of these were new patients. In those 3 months there were a total of 2,145 patient visits for one or more of the clinic's services, nearly half are employed but below poverty level. In 1995 there were 400 patient visits, in 2006 there were 8,583 patient visits. The Clinic has working relations with most of our other local agencies.

The Free Clinic offers a wide range of services including care for acute and chronic conditions, laboratory services, short term medications, diabetic treatment and education, counseling and dental care. They have established relationships with over 40 specialists and in 2006 made 631 referrals to outside providers. It is impossible to do a just job of describing the importance of this agency to the community. Viola Startzman and her friends probably had no idea in 1992 how much their clinic would have to grow to meet needs which would develop between the clinic's conception and today. What can we do? Volunteer a day a month, donate a special talent you may have which would be appropriate, support the United Way and the Bishop's Appeal and put a little extra in the "Brown Bag" collection basket.

Bridges and Circles

Your Peace and Justice Committee is introducing an exciting new program to our greater community.

This program is designed to help the poor break the cycle of poverty, and is now being presented, with approval from Evelyn and Vestry, to existing social agencies throughout this community.

Bridges provides a pathway between people in different economic and social worlds whereby they can come together on a level playing field. This is accomplished by:

- Understanding the 'hidden rules' we all live by (whether we know it or not)
- Understanding the very different world-view mental picture we all have
- Understanding the importance of relationships and how they differ from one societal culture to another
- These insights into our differences lead to the growth of Significant Relationships.

"No Significant learning occurs without a significant relationship," Dr. James Comer

(cont. p.11)

May Birthdays

1	Barbara Sharp	
2	Barbara Brooks Marcy Richard	
3	Christine Anfang	
4	Cameron Maneese Michael Richard	Susan Brooks
5	Jessica Sanford	Campeon
6	David Grenert	Madeline Burns
8	Janet Brayer Isabella Hillyer	22 Susan Figge 23 Betty Martin
10	Peggy Hockett Michael Peterson	24 Mary Lou Lathrop 25 Roseanne Anfang
11	Lauren Grifo	Tyler Kraker
12	John Zoller	27 Louise Hamel
17	Sarah McGinty Crabtree	31 Jean Barnes
18	Thomas Fitz Gibbon Mallory Evans	Laila Dutton Barbara Breeden-
19	Jim Smart	Scmenk,



Adult Forums Schedule

Sunday, May 6

A Dance Demonstration given by our own Roger and Carol Kienzle

Sunday, May 13

Saint James; Serving the Community

Bridges Out of Poverty and the **Circles** programs presented by members of the Peace and Justice Committee and the Out Reach Committee.

We are in the process of initiating a program which will reach out into the community and involve other churches, community agencies and families who live in poverty. Come and see what it is about. We need your help and support. Volunteers are welcome!

The Adult Forums will run through Sunday, June 1st. Watch the church bulletin to discover the topics and the speakers for each Sunday.

May Anniversaries

5/79	Mark and Barbara Kraker
9/85	Dwight and Molly Mathias
16/80	John and Cathy Cook
18/96	Brian and Susan Anderson
22/93	Brad and Mary Burns
24/92	John and Peggy Hockett
27/67	Damon and Mary Hickey
30/92	Peter and Jill Sanford Bill and Marilyn Blanchard

Jeff Baker's Ordination

Jeff Baker, our seminarian intern, will graduate from Bexley Seminary in the beginning of June and he will be ordained as a transitional deacon at Trinity Cathedral on June 9, 2007. If you would like to join in celebrating his time with us and his ordination, you can make a contribution to a monetary gift from all of us at St. James. Please make your donation payable to St. James and mark the memo line "Baker gift". Carpooling to the ordination will be organized closer to June.



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

May 6	Cameron Maneese in thanksgiving for this day
May 13	Janice Hutton in memory of her sister, Eunice Hutton Woods
May 20	John and Peggy Hockett in celebration of their anniversary
May 27	Damon and Mary Hickey in celebration of their 40th anniversary Shirley Buytendyk in celebration of her grandson Andrew's birthday

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

Letter from the Bishop



Dear Friends,

Last year, in order to respond more fully to the mission opportunities that God puts before us, the **Bishop's Annual Appeal** was established in the Diocese of Ohio. The purpose of The Bishop's Annual Appeal is to provide annual

support for the important work of the Episcopal Community Services Foundation and to provide financial resources for new mission initiatives.

Though the Bishop's Annual Appeal is not a program grant source, it is an essential income source for ECSF and for strategic priorities that benefit the entire diocese.

I am delighted to report to you that in its initial effort, the Diocese of Ohio's Bishop's Annual Appeal collected gifts totaling \$212,480 in 2006. Thank you very much for your generous participation.

ECSF continues to be central to our common Christian witness in the Diocese of Ohio. Your generosity in last year's campaign provided the Episcopal Community Services Foundation with \$106,240, which has been used for direct funding of services to those in need across the Diocese of Ohio. A list of programs that received grant support is available on our diocesan website.

In addition to support for ECSF, \$106,240 has been allocated for investment in the following initiatives that present fresh and creative opportunities to minister and serve:

- diocesan youth mission trips which this year will send young people to serve mission areas within the diocese and around the country;
- internships for seminarians and recently ordained clergy; and
- ministry on college and university campuses, forming and inspiring a new generation of servant leaders.

Now we approach the campaign season for the Bishop's Annual Appeal 2007. I invite all Episcopalians in the diocese to join me in this collective effort. With your generous gift to the Bishop's Annual Appeal, we

can continue strong support for ECSF and also continue strong support of these important mission priorities.

To strengthen parochial efforts in support of the Appeal, the Office of Stewardship and Development will follow up by direct communication with parishioners in the Diocese of Ohio at subsequent times during the year.

Our 2007 campaign goal is \$250,000, and we are hopeful that you and others in your congregation will help us realize this goal.

If you have any questions, please give me a call or be in touch with Cheryl Joseph (800-551-4815 x474 or cjoseph@dohio.org).

Gratefully,
The Rt. Rev. Mark Hollingsworth, Jr.
Bishop of Ohio



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.

If you or a family member is graduating from high school or college, please submit a picture and a paragraph or two about your future plans to Russell Cross for the next newsletter.



People to People's **Feed a Family Food Drive** is in May. You may bring food or donate money to purchase a case of food. Flyers with the prices and types of food needed are available at the back of the church.

The top ten items needed are peanut butter, jelly, cold cereal, applesauce, soup, saltine crackers, pork and beans, spaghetti, spaghetti sauce, and macaroni and cheese.



For those people who don't have a computer and would like to be added to the telephone tree, please call Cindy Slater at 330/601-0576 or Jill Hockenberry at 330/264-2489

The Lives of Others

VIENNA—In the opening sequence of Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck's **The Lives of Others** (**Das Leben der anderen**), a prisoner is taken through dark corridors in the Ministry of State Security (Stasi) prison at Hohenschönhausen to an interrogation room. He is suspected of being an enemy of socialism who has knowledge of how a neighbor escaped to the west. He has already made a statement to the authorities, but they do not believe his story and are determined to find out more.

Prisoner 227 (we never learn the wretched man's name) is confronted by Stasi Captain Gerd Wiesler (Ulrich Mühe), a specialist in interrogation and surveillance. The prisoner says he knows nothing, that this is all a mistake. In a fine example of Stasi logic and intimidation, Wiesler responds, "So you think we go around arresting innocent citizens, just like that? If you think our humanistic state is capable of such a thing, then you deserve to be arrested, even without any other charge." He then proceeds to make the prisoner tell his story again and again. The interrogation will continue for up to 48 hours, interrogators working in shifts while the prisoner is deprived of sleep. When the proper level of exhaustion and desperation is reached, threats to his family are made, and the prisoner reveals what he has so carefully held back.

What makes this all the more chilling is the fact that the interrogation, carefully tape recorded, is intercut with Wiesler's presentation of the material to his class at the Stasi training center at Potsdam-Eiche, where he explains the effectiveness of these techniques. When one student objects that these methods are inhuman, Wiesler quietly makes a mark next to the young man's name on the seating chart.

Wiesler is highly competent and respected in his field. How can he treat people this way? He tells his students never to forget that the prisoners to be interrogated are enemies of socialism and as such are to be hated.

Wiesler is a firm believer in GDR socialism as the necessary precursor to true communism, and he works

hard for the system. In the course of the story, however, he comes to realize that his superiors are self-seeking hypocrites and opportunists. His boss, Stasi Lieutenant Colonel Anton Grubitz, takes him to the theater to see a play by the celebrated GDR dramatist Georg Dreyman (Sebastian Koch) and starring Dreyman's partner, the beautiful and gifted Christa-Maria Sieland (Martina Gedeck). Attending the performance is Minister Bruno Hempf (Thomas Thieme), Grubitz's superior and a member of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party. Hempf, a complete cynic, cares nothing for the

theater but sees Christa-Marie as a potential conquest and is prepared to do anything to get Dreyman out of the way. Grubitz is only too willing to suggest that they discreetly put Dreyman under surveillance, and Wiesler is put in charge of the operation.

In an unlikely but dramatically effective move, the listening station

is set up in the unused attic area of the building where Dreyman and Sieland have their apartment. For 12 hours a day Wiesler listens to everything that goes on in the apartment and keeps a written record of what is done and said. The uneventful midnight shift is taken over by an underling. What happens when Wiesler, a man without any personal life, listens to the rich and interconnected lives and intimacies of these two artists becomes the central theme of the film. Interestingly, the most fascinating relationship in the film may be between Dreyman and Wiesler, two characters who never actually meet.

When a beloved colleague, blacklisted by the Party, commits suicide, Dreyman and some friends decide they must speak out about the state of affairs in their country, and Dreyman composes a piece that is smuggled out and becomes a cover story of the West German weekly news magazine *Der Spiegel*. It causes a scandal in the east, and state forces are brought to bear on the attempt to identify the writer.

This film is an engrossing thriller, always focused on character and motivation. I won't spoil it by revealing any more of the plot, but I find the ending entirely

(cont. p.8)



Speaking of Movies *(from page 7)*

satisfying, and although it has been a focus of debate here in Europe, I find that its central dynamic parallels events that five years later would bring down the Wall.

Friends and acquaintances we have talked to during our travels this year agree that it is a film to be considered seriously, although some who grew up in the German Democratic Republic feel no compulsion to revisit it through a drama that centers on the Stasi and its victims. The film has won seven German Film Prizes, three European prizes, a Golden Globe, and the Oscar for Best Foreign-Language at the Academy Awards ceremony this spring. It is von Donnersmarck's first feature film, made from his own script, the central idea for which occurred to him while he was in film school in Munich. Von Donnersmarck is a West German and was only 16 when the Wall came down, so he is obviously not writing from his direct experience, but he has done his homework and he has gone for the human truths of his story. Ulrich Muehe, who plays Wiesler, grew up in the GDR, and had to serve in the army and as a border guard before pursuing an acting career. He did not work with the Stasi, but from everything he knew of life in the east, he believed from the beginning in the remarkable script and the relationships and situations it described, and he was eager to work with von Donnersmarck. From all accounts, the director knew exactly what he was after, prepared carefully with his actors, and worked with unflappable courtesy, patience, and determination not to move on to another scene until he achieved what his script envisioned. The quality of the collaboration on this challenging project is evident throughout.

St. James' Peace and Justice Committee

The target of the **Millennium Development Goal #5** is to reduce the maternal mortality ratio by three quarters.

Every year more than 500,000 women die from complications of pregnancy and childbirth. In some parts of the world, expectant mothers are almost as likely to die in childbirth as they are to live.

Making It Real

Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD) is one organization that is protecting the health of mothers and babies. For example, ERD's program in Haiti sends

health workers to communities to educate women about nutrition, breastfeeding, and hygiene.

Malnutrition is the leading cause of death for children under four years old in Haiti. ERD is organizing small groups of mothers so they can learn how to care for themselves and their children. The women learn to prepare healthy meals, practice proper sanitation, and prevent life-threatening illnesses.

What we at St. James can do:

Give part of our 0.7% to prenatal and postnatal care programs. When more health posts are in place, babies will be more likely to survive past infancy, and mothers will be more likely to survive to raise them.

As individuals we can be effective by talking to family, friends, and groups that we belong to, about maternal mortality and ways we can all be of help, such as:

Supporting "Doctors Without Borders".

Using the web to join with others in ONE.org.

Urging our government to spend more towards helping third world countries educate and care for mothers and children.

Supporting our own Planned Parenthood and other organizations that work with parents in need, by volunteering our time.

Using the ERD "Gifts for Life" catalog, purchase Health Care for Women as a gift for family and friends and/or Critical Postnatal Care for an Infant to strengthen a child's health today for a strong future tomorrow.

Please spend some time thinking about this dreadful dilemma and add your suggestions and comments to the space provided on our church bulletin board.

We really want to hear from you. Are you informed by our MDG monthly messages, do they stir something up within you or do you see them as just more rhetoric to be filed away? Tell us.

Your Peace and Justice committee members are:

Susan Figge, Janice Miller, Peggy Hockett, Mary Hickey, Louise Plusquellec, Ken Plusquellec, Terry Ling, Steve Cook, Jean Barnes.

A message from your Peace and Justice Committee, by Jean Barnes (with a little help from her friends).

In Christ No Straight Or Gay

A Time to Embrace: Same-Gender Relationships in Religion, Law, and Politics

by William Stacy Johnson

William B. Eerdmans, 330 pp., \$25.00

The Best Man at our wedding forty years ago is now a retired church historian and Episcopal priest. He never married, but because he's always been scatterbrained and eccentric, I never wondered why he stayed a bachelor, until he told us years later that he'd always been gay.

Now, whenever the ordination of gay people to the priesthood or the episcopate comes up, it's personal for me. It has our friend's face. I can't imagine him as a bishop, but I also can't imagine voting against him just because he's gay. More than anything else, I wish he'd have found someone to settle down with in a long, loving, and mutually-supportive marriage. But he never found the right partner, and—more to the point—would have been prevented by church and state from marrying. Instead, he would have been shunned by many of his fellow-priests and parishioners had he committed himself publicly to a lifelong partnership.

But I still have trouble thinking of homoeroticism as healthy, normal, natural, and good. The images I have are of grimy bars, men's bus station washrooms, furtive one-night stands, and flamboyant Gay Pride parades. Those images make me uncomfortable, and I project my discomfort onto gay people themselves. How can I reconcile such images with the grandeur of the ordination of a bishop or the sanctity of the marriage ceremony?

Mary and I, along with our friend, were students at Princeton Theological Seminary, where our wedding took place. But a recent president of the seminary led the opposition to ordaining gay people in the Presbyterian Church. So it seems appropriate that a distinguished professor of systematic theology there has written what may be a landmark book to date on same-sex relation-

ships in church and state. William Stacy Johnson, the Arthur M. Adams Professor of Systematic Theology at Princeton Seminary, is, like John Calvin (the founder of the Presbyterian and Reformed tradition), a lawyer, minister, and theologian. His *A Time to Embrace: Same-Gender Relationships in Religion, Law, and Politics* was published by William B. Eerdmans in Grand Rapids, Michigan, a publisher long noted for its theological conservatism. Even the jacket blurbs testify to the respect with which this book has been greeted by readers across the theological spectrum, garnering praise from Harvard's Peter Gomes, an advocate for same-sex relationships in church and society, and the following from popular evangelical author and speaker Tony Campolo and his wife Peggy: "We are on different sides of the issue of gay marriage, but both of us feel that this book,

because of its informative and comprehensive overview, will be helpful to those good people who are struggling with this issue right now."

Johnson's title, *A Time to Embrace*, comes from the biblical book of Ecclesiastes, and makes clear his point of view. But he's careful to give every position its due. In "Section One: Religion" he lays out the spectrum of "seven theological ways of looking at same-gender relationships": (1) Prohibition, (2) Toleration, (3) Accommodation, (4) Legitimation, (5) Celebration, (6) Liberation, and (7) Consecration. He summarizes the biblical and theological arguments for each position, and then analyses it in terms of its view of Creation, Reconciliation, and Redemption. Finally, Johnson provides his own "Reflection" on each position.

At the risk of over-simplifying what Johnson takes care not to oversimplify, I understand him to reject the "Prohibition" position's interpretation of Scripture and to reject as hypocritical other positions that stop short of consecrating committed same-sex relationships. Johnson takes issue with the Prohibitionists' use of passages in Genesis, Judges, Leviticus, Romans, I Corinthians, and I Timothy to condemn same-sex relationships as contrary to God's purposes, unnatural, and sinful. None of the writers of those texts, he says, envisioned committed, faithful same-sex relationships.

(cont. p.11)



May 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 7:00 pm Out-reach Evelyn of of town	2 7:30 am HE 9:30 am Bible Study Noon Sabbatical Committee 7:00 p.m. Choir	3 12:05 p.m. Brown Bag: Voices of Wooster - Part 2 Women	4	5 10 - 4:00 p.m. Vestry Retreat at First Presbyterian
6 UTO 8:00 am Worship 9:00 Choir 9:30 Adult Forum 10:00 Sun. School 10:30 Worship 11:30 Coffee Hour	7	8 Evelyn at	9 7:30 am MP No Bible Study 11:00 a.m. Book Group 7:00 pm Choir Clergy	10 12:05 p.m. Brown Bag: Musica Felice Conference	11	12 10 - 4:00 p.m. Mission Task Force meeting
13 8:00 am Worship 9:00 Choir 9:30 Adult Forum 10:00 Sun. School 10:30 Worship 11:30 Coffee Hour	14 Noon Warden's mtg.	15 <i>JN Deadline</i>	16 7:30 am HE 9:30 Bible Study No Choir	17 12:05 p.m. Brown Bag: Steve Brown 7:00 p.m. Peace and Justice meeting	18	19
20 People to People 8:00 am Worship 9:00 Choir 9:30 Adult Forum 10:30 Worship 11:30 Coffee Hour	21 7:00 p.m. Vestry	22	23 7:30 am HE 9:30 Bible Study 11:00 a.m. Book Group	24	25	26
27 8:00 am Worship 9:00 Choir 9:30 Adult Forum 10:00 Sun. School 10:30 Worship/ Baptism 11:30 a.m. Coffee Hour	28 Memorial Day – Office Closed	29	30 7:30 am H.E. 9:30 a.m. Bible Study 3 p.m. Clericus Evelyn	31	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.	

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

...No Straight or Gay (from page 9)

Rather, they were condemning practices that were violent, hedonistic, pagan, exploitative, or oppressive, by people who had substituted the worship of the creature for the worship of the Creator. Would they also have rejected loving, covenantal same-sex relationships? They might have, Johnson admits, but some of what the biblical authors wrote about other relationships was conditioned by the societies in which they lived, and is ignored today. St. Paul tacitly condoned both slavery and the subordination of women. But in his letter to the Galatians, he described the new reality that led to the eventual abolition of slavery and the liberation of women: "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." Might Christians be led to a new experience of the reconciliation in Christ of gay and straight? Johnson movingly describes the ways in which our current laws and social and religious attitudes have contributed instead to the degrading of same-sex relationships, damage to their families, violence against them, and all the seamy, unhealthy images that people associate with homoeroticism. The very intensity, violence, and ugliness of our "Christian" society's rejection of same-sex relationships says more about how much our society still needs redemption than it does about the sinfulness of same-sex relationships. And the refusal of church and society to celebrate and consecrate committed, faithful relationships between people of the same sex has itself promoted promiscuity and exploitation. Johnson sees the consecration of faithful, covenantal relationships as the way the church can live into God's reconciling grace and promote God's redemption of human society.

In "Section Two: Law and Politics," which is shorter and less weighty than the first section, Johnson argues for resolving the status of same-sex relationships through democratic deliberation that seeks a consensus, rather than through coercion by the courts or through referendums in which the majority denies a minority its civil rights in spite of the courts. These undemocratic actions and reactions have forestalled the evolution of social attitudes that might have changed otherwise. Although many, perhaps a majority, will continue to view marriage as a relationship between one man and one woman, Johnson predicts that within ten or fifteen years, Vermont-style civil unions of other sorts of couples will become widespread, and that legal equality for same-sex couples will come to be seen as a moral imperative.

I haven't done justice to Johnson's important book. It should be read for the clarity it brings to a difficult and deeply divisive subject, and I hope it promotes honest and open discussion within the church about what creation, reconciliation, and redemption may mean for committed same-sex relationships.

Bridges and Circles (from page 4)

"Human relationship is a sledgehammer that obliterates every societal difference," Robert Sapolsky.

Once Significant Relationships have been established, then and only then can we begin the break down the barriers that contain poverty. And that leads us to Circles.

Circles Of Support introduce people in poverty to the economic and networking advantages available to the middle and upper classes and it exposes trained volunteers to poverty at a very real and personal level.

Trained volunteers known as "allies," usually middle class folk, form a supportive relationship with a willing family or individual living in poverty. They meet once a week. During these meetings the dreams, plans, and goals of the family are sketched out. From this information they are linked up with other volunteers either in academics, economics or socialization, to help lead the family into a realistic pathway out of poverty.

So there you have it, a brief oversight into the world of *Bridges and Circles*.

Your P&J committee members have been meeting with various agencies in our community and our presentation has been received with open arms and delighted declarations of support from each and every one of them. *Bridges and Circles* was introduced to our community agencies as an adjunct for what is already being done.

Now that we know it is a desirable and doable program, we are calling out for more volunteers. Please consider joining us to bring *Bridges and Circles* to full fruition in a timely and loving fashion.

Talk to any one of us: Susan Figge, Janice Miller, Peggy Hockett, Mary Hickey, Louise and Ken Plusquellec, Terry Ling, Steve Cook, Jean Barnes

The Episcopal Church



St. James Episcopal Church
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What's Happening at St. James

- 3rd May** **Brown Bag Concert. Voices of Wooster - Part 2 Women: 12:05 p.m.**
- 5th May** **Vestry Retreat at First Presbyterian: 10:00 am - 3:00 pm**
- 10th May** **Brown Bag. Musica Felice: 12:05 pm**
- 17th May** **Brown Bag. Steve Brown: 12:05 pm**
- 20th May** **People-to-People Sunday**

April, 2007

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May, 2007

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