

# the Joyful Noise

NOVEMBER 2008

Of St. James' Episcopal Church

## A Shelter Under Those Wings: Quam dilecta

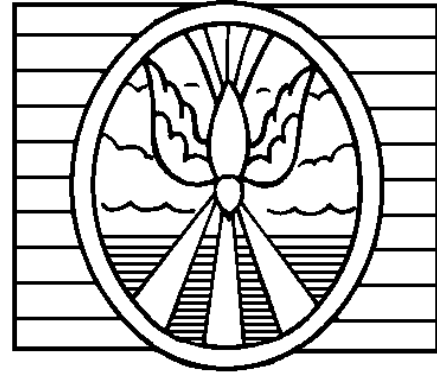
By Joe Messner

Between September and November, migrating birds leave Ohio and wend their way to balmy nesting grounds. Paul Kerlinger, in his book *How Birds Migrate*, notes birds use the position of the sun, magnetic fields, and stars to find their way. Congregating for safety, researchers once counted up to 1,000,000 songbirds passing through a mile-wide corridor during a single period of nighttime migration.

When Hurricane Katrina swept through the Gulf Coast several years ago, migratory birds were blown off their courses. Clouds covered natural sources of light. Southern nests were thrown from trees and winds shook the foundations of these birds's safety. The storm was so wide that some birds could not escape their demise.

Hurricanes also pummel the shores of the human soul, disrupting our navigation systems, slowing our journey, and bringing down the nests we have so carefully constructed.

The Dow Jones fluctuates wildly, depleting retirement and savings accounts. Veteran institutions close their doors. The Anglican Communion struggles to determine what is right and true. Our country splits into blue and red. If we're not careful, we can live in fear.



It's no wonder that I find consolation in the psalm that we frequently read from our prayer book:

The sparrow has found her a house and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young; by the side of your altars, O Lord of hosts, my God and my King.

Words such as these possess strength, not in a talismanic sense, but because they invoke something greater than themselves. The science fiction writer, Ursula LeGuin, stated that when you name something you begin to have power.

Words soothe a gash as with a balm. Words allay the fears of a troubled heart. Words calm storms and troubled seas.

As Christians, we look to Jesus as our Savior and for our safety. Both Matthew and Luke attribute the following words to him:

Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock.

Several Sundays ago, we sang John Newton's hymn *How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds*. He writes in the third verse:

(cont. p.4)

### In This Issue

- 1 A Shelter Under Those Wings
- 3 Evelyn's Epistle Millennium Goals
- 4 Matt's Musings
- 5 Anniversaries and Birthdays Toy Drive
- 6 Brown Bag Series Every Woman's House Adult Forums St. Nick's Cookies
- 7 Scriptorium
- 8 Speaking of Movies
- 9 Holy Humor
- 10 Calendar
- 12 What's Happening?

## 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@ssnet.net](mailto:astolat@ssnet.net)

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November 2, 2008, will be the UTO Fall Ingathering Sunday. By contributing to the UTO we unteie our thankfulness with that of others throughout the Episcopal church. The offering is turned into grants that address the needs of many in the world-wide community

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.

*Joyce Roe, Parish UTO Coordinator.*

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## Saint James Episcopal Church

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

E-mail: [saintjameswooster@embarqmail.com](mailto:saintjameswooster@embarqmail.com)

*Holy Eucharist Services*

8:00 am and 10:00 am Sunday (10:30 from Sept. 14), 7:30 am Wednesday

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When there is no priest available, call Senior Warden, Peggy Hockett at (330) 345-7825, or Junior Warden, Roger Kienzle, at (330) 262-4262 in case of emergency.

*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 sevring 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.



## Evelyn's Epistle

Dear Friends,

The week before Thanksgiving I'm heading down to Cincinnati for a few days to go on retreat to the Convent of the Sisters of the Transfiguration. Usually when I go on retreat, I go to Cambridge, MA to the Monastery of St. John the Evangelist, where I have a relationship with the community. On more than one occasion, I've been asked why I'd rather go on a silent retreat than hang out on a sandy beach. Let me try to explain.

First, retreats are not just for clergy. They are wonderful opportunities for any person of faith who wants to literally get away from the demands and routines of the day to day and focus completely on being in the presence of God. I started going on retreats when I was 24 years old. Until a few years ago, I attended program retreats where there was a leader, a group, and a program of instruction and conversation. It has only been in the last four years that I have had the courage to go on silent retreats. Now, they are an absolute gift to me. I go on retreat to pray in a community throughout the day, to pray privately, and to, become very aware of what the Psalmist wrote, "Be still, and know that I am God". Taking the time to refocus myself, to silence the non-stop noise around and within me, and to put aside all the things I do just to "be" with God, renews and refreshes me and I find my commitment to the Christian life strengthened.

There are numerous places to go on retreat. This is from the National Church website: *The Episcopal Church canonically recognizes 16 traditional orders and 11 Christian communities for men, women, or both. Religious Orders and Communities serve the greater church in several ways. Many offer retreat houses and individual spiritual direction. Each community has a rule of life and is committed to prayer, life in community, and hospitality.* There are also many Roman Catholic Retreat Centers that welcome people of other denominations. Retreats can vary in length from a day to weeks. Even in an individual silent retreat, you can have a spiritual director who you meet with once a day and who helps you discern God's voice and movement in your life.

Between retreats, I meet with a Spiritual Director monthly. My Spiritual Director for the last few years is a Roman Catholic Franciscan Nun. Prior to my relationship with her, I met with an Episcopalian lay woman. Spiritual Directors can be lay, ordained, or religious. They are all trained in Spiritual Direction and most are certified. Finding a spiritual director right for you is like finding a good therapist... not everyone is the right match. I met with four people be-



fore I found the right spiritual director for me when I first came to Ohio.

Spiritual Direction is an important part of my health as a Christian first, and then as a priest. This is the person to whom I am absolutely honest about my prayers, my struggles in living faithfully, and my desires for my relationship with God. There is a great resource online for finding a spiritual director: SDI.org (Spiritual Directors, International). Or, if you're like me, you like personal recommendations from people you trust.

The spiritual life is not a static thing... it requires attention and care, like physical or mental health. I know I can distance myself so far from God just by keeping busy, even when I'm doing good things. For me, retreats and spiritual direction are not just a nice break, they are essential to my life. If you have any questions about retreats, spiritual direction, or prayer disciplines, I'd be happy to talk with you.

In God's peace.

Evelyn

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## Millennium Development Goals

*From Susan Figge*

On September 25, the United Nations met to review global progress toward the Millennium Development Goals. It seems an appropriate time to carry out our own update on the MDGs—what has been the progress toward them? What evidence is there that commitments to the goals by national governments around the world, by international organizations and by humanitarian aid and development programs have made a difference?

But we also want to ask another question: in that progress, where are *we*? Not just "we" as a global community, or as a nation, but "we" as a worldwide church, as a national and local church, as a community of people of faith, as individuals? Where are *we*—in our minds and hearts, in our gifts and service, in our advocacy, and in our prayers?

In the next several issues of the *Joyful Noise*, we will answer some of these questions, beginning here with a quick overview of the goals and their origin.

The eight goals with their overall objective of reducing extreme global poverty in half by 2015, were adopted at the UN Millennium Summit in 2001 as part of the UN Millennium Declaration. They provide specific and measurable targets for improving social and economic conditions in the world's poorest countries, with a focus on reducing child mortality, controlling epidemics of disease such as AIDS and malaria, providing universal primary education

*(Cont. P.11)*

## A Shelter... (from p.1)

Dear Name, the rock on which I build,  
my shield and hiding place,  
my never-failing treasury, filled  
with boundless stores of grace!

During Katherine Jefferts Schori's inaugural homily as Presiding Bishop, she referred to Mother Jesus, immediately drawing the ire of some conservatives. Though I consider myself an orthodox Christian, I draw strength from this view of God through Jesus. Using the language from several psalms, Jesus calls us to safety under his wings:

How often have I desired to gather (you) as a  
hen gathers her brood under her wings. . .  
Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying  
heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.

Some writers suggest that we will not find calm outside of a spiritual home. Henry Chadwick translates the following words of St. Augustine from his Book 1, *Confessions*:

You have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in You.

I hear the call of Jesus and they are the words of welcome. As a chick, I snuggle under those wings where I am soothed, allayed, and calmed. When finally at peace, my heart recalls the conclusion of John Newton's hymn:

O Jesus! Shepherd, Guardian, Friend,  
O Prophet, Priest, and King,  
My Lord, my Life, my Way, my End,  
accept the praise I bring.

Reminded of the phrase I heard growing up, "Then let the storms come and the winds blow," I can now pray the words of e e cummings:

i thank You God for most this amazing  
day. . .

(i who have died am alive again today,  
and this is the sun's birthday; this is the birth  
day of life and of love and wings: and of the . . .  
great happening illimitably earth)

Amen. And so it is.

## Matt's Musings

We began this month with a tradition which predates Christianity—even though the subjects of that tradition (death and resurrection) are very much at the core of our Christian faith. I'm speaking specifically of All Hallow's Eve (Halloween), All Saints Day and All Soul's Day. While the most well known of these is, of course, Halloween, all three have lost some of their significance to us and have become more cultural celebrations.

I won't go into all of the history and traditions that have gone into making these feast days what they are today—but mention how they are deeply rooted in our faith, culture and connected to our lives.

When we think about these days, we are called to remember those who have died, and how their lives have affected us. And it seems only too appropriate to remember the dead on the threshold of Fall and Winter, seasons which are so reminiscent of death. But, we mark the transition not hopelessly, rather with the promise of the life to come in the Spring, much like our Baptism. Just like entering into the Baptismal Waters of Christ's death, we are drawn up into his resurrection with the promise of new life. So it is the nature of our faith to understand death as a passage into the resurrected life. And if God is the God of the Living, then those who have died are alive to God, and pray for us at the throne.

This understanding of the saints praying for us is not a strictly Roman Catholic thing, nor is it superstition. It is related to our confession in the Nicene Creed that we believe in "the Communion of Saints" and is connected to our belief in resurrection. But we also draw this belief from Revelation 5:8 where we see that the saints continue to offer prayers for us in the Presence of God.

Now, I don't want anyone to think that this is weird or spooky; I think it is encouraging to know that there is an immense crowd cheering for us—a crowd of people who have already crossed the finish line, if you like. When we consider that once we leave this life, and enter into new life, we should be comforted and excited that we are never far from those we love. And who would we want in our cheering section more than those we love?

So, the point of all of this is to say that we should be encouraged that we are not alone in our Christian journey, and these feast days help remind us of that. Not only are we a part of the "Communion of Saints" in the present, but we are also invited to extend that understanding to those people who have died, and crossed the finish line, and cheer for us as we continue the journey. Hopefully we can continue to remember those who have died, and be comforted that we are all alive in Christ. In the end, we should keep our eyes set on the hope of resurrection, and the promise of rejoining our loved ones in the presence of the Living God. After all, that is what this whole business of faith is about.

## Birthdays

### November

1	Donna Blough
5	Merlin Peterson
6	Janet Calhoun
9	Al Burger Madison Culver
10	Gloria King Louise Plusquellec
20	Eddie Kurzenberger Violette Bonvallet
24	Pat Zoller
26	Marilyn Tanner
27	Janice Miller Pat Watson
28	Troy Schmidt
29	Jane Richardson

## Anniversaries

### November

3/51	Dwight and Maxine Hayes
27/82	Matt and Robin Sharp



For those people who don't have a computer and would like to be added to the telephone tree, please call Jill Hockenberry at (330) 988-0209

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.



## People to People: Toy Drive 2008

*From Janice Miller*

**People to People Ministries** is getting ready for those special projects that reach out to Wayne County families needing assistance. The fall food drive, Thanksgiving food boxes and the Christmas Toy Project all require support to be successful. A holiday schedule, description of the holiday food drive, a four-part Thanksgiving food list and a list of suggested toy donations can be found on the churches' bulletin board. Because their toy supply is very low, parts of that list are being included in this newsletter.



For teenagers: Skate boards with pads, personal CD players OR MP3 players, safety-tip dart boards, basic tool sets, small sports bags (Nike, Adidas), sports balls-basketball or football, Ohio sports' teams items, NASCAR items, make-up sets, overnight duffel bags, room décor items.

For children ages 6-11: Variety Pack Art/Craft Projects, Dora the Explorer doll clothes, simple science kits, small jewelry boxes, CD players/Clock radios, Fun/mod jewelry/Fun hair accessories, bulletin boards, Lego sets, Nerf sport sets, doll beds and doll strollers

Donations of unwrapped new toys and gifts may be dropped off at their office Mon-Fri. from 8:00 am-5:00 pm (454 E. Bowman St.) by the end of November.

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



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 **second** service



2	Joan Stanford in thanksgiving for family
9	Jim and Celia Smart in celebration of their son Jeff's birthday
16	Janice Miller in thanksgiving for the St. James family
23	Hank and Mary Murray in memory of Mary's brother, Nathaniel Bradley
30	Jane Richardson in celebration of her son Bill's birthday

The 2008 flower calendar is posted in the North Street entrance, if you would like to provide flowers for the Sunday services

## Brown Bag Concerts

Thursdays, 12:05 p.m. to 12:35 p.m.

**November 6** Karen Bricker, piano

**November 13** Wendy Barlow, harp  
Bob Bellamy, dulcimer

**November 20** College of Wooster Brass Choir  
David Lueschen, conductor

Donations benefit Viola Startzman Free Clinic

Complimentary Coffee and Tea Provided

## Thank You from Every Woman's House

Dear Friends:

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

During the past year, we provided crisis support and counseling services to cover 650 individuals. Our community education programs served students in EVERY school in Wayne and Holmes Counties. Hopefully, these programs help to reduce and prevent abuse in our communities.

The Every Woman's House Staff and Board of Trustees are committed to assuring that every available dollar is dedicated 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.

Bobbi Douglas,  
Executive Director



## Adult Forums

Many thanks to the October presenters of Adult Forum:

*John Hockett*

European and American influences in our current church music

*Rev. Dwight Hayes*

His personal faith journey

*Matt Sharp*

AED training and information

*Ned Brooks*

All about the service of Evensong

## November Adult Forum Schedule

**November 2** An update of the Natural Church Development information presented by the Health Team.

**November 9** Damon Hickey: All about Icons. Damon will talk about his experience making a Byzantine icon in 1989, and what he has learned since then about Eastern Orthodox iconography. Damon will show the icon of the Archangel Gabriel that he made, along with photo-reproductions of icons he has collected.

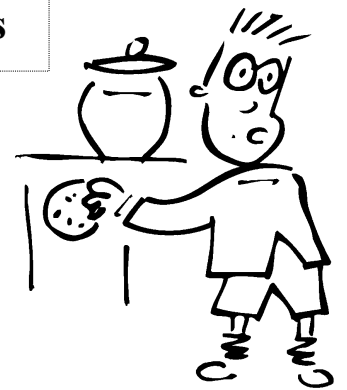
**November 16** A report from the Annual Diocese Convention: Cameron Maneese, Dick Figge, Celia Smart and Evelyn

**November 23** Ned Brooks: The new church service music and congregational participation as part of the liturgy.

**November 30** First Sunday of Advent, fifth Sunday, one service. No adult forum

## St. Nicholas Cookies

We are baking St. Nicholas Cookies again and we need your help. We need people to make dough as well as bake, ice and bag the cookies. There will be a sign up sheet on the bulletin board. We'll be baking on **Friday, December 5<sup>th</sup>** at 7:00 pm at my house at 422 Barrett Circle. Icing and bagging will take place in the parish hall on **Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>** at 10am and 7pm. We had a great time last year so come join the fun. Please contact me with any questions.



## How Green is God?

*The Green Bible. NRSV: New Revised Standard Version*  
HarperOne, 1312 pp., \$29.95

When I saw the ad for *The Green Bible*, my first thought was, “Another gimmick.” Everything and everyone, it seems, want to be seen as “green” these days. Now even the Bible publishers have jumped on the bandwagon, I thought. Instead of having Jesus’ words in red, this new version of the Bible has environmental passages in green! (It is also printed with “soy-based inks” on paper made with “controlled sources and recycled wood or fiber” from “well managed forests” and “post-consumer content,” and bound in an “all-natural 100% cotton/linen cover ... produced in a green friendly environment ...”)

On further reflection, it occurred to me that Christianity really has a problem when it comes to the environment, and that maybe this version of the Bible might help address it. On the one hand, some of the most vocal Christians who call themselves “Bible-believing” have been outspoken against environmental concerns and actions. They have proclaimed that the environmental movement is part of a conspiracy by the enemies of God, and that global warming is an evil lie. Some of these people believe that the End Times are just around the corner and that God’s plan for this world is to destroy it. So why not go ahead and use it up?

Sadly, these same self-styled Christian leaders have succeeded in convincing a large number of people who care deeply about the natural world but are largely ignorant about the Bible that their view is an accurate reading of Scripture. Thanks to them, Christianity is now seen as not only not part of the solution to our ecological crisis, but as a major cause of it. If the Bible really puts man at the center of creation and makes the natural world humanity’s possession, to be exploited however humans see fit for their own short-term gain, no wonder we are in such a mess. After all, Christians have been pretty much running the show for the better part of two millennia, and just look where they have gotten us!

So maybe a “Green Bible” is needed for both Christians and non-Christians to see that the Bible itself supports a deep love of the natural world and a commitment to preserving and healing it.

*The Green Bible* includes introductory essays by the likes of Bishop Desmond Tutu, Bishop James Jones, Bishop Tom Wright, Pope John Paul II, and Barbara Brown Taylor, among others. Tom Wright’s excellent chapter, “Jesus Is Coming—Plant a Tree!” should be read widely, because it addresses the widespread misunderstanding about what sort of heaven and afterlife Christians believe in. Jesus, he says, will not save us *from* the earth, but rather *to* it. All of creation will be renewed, not destroyed, and our actions now to renew creation will become parts of God’s new creation, as the stones shaped by masons under the direction of a master builder will find their places in a new cathedral, even though the masons themselves may not know exactly how they are contributing to the builder’s master plan.

The main problem with the old “Red Letter Editions” of the New Testament was that putting Jesus’ words in red did not necessarily help the reader put them together into a coherent whole. The environmental themes of the Bible can be even harder to grasp, especially since they have received so little study and attention. *The Green Bible* provides an excellent tool in “The Green Bible



Trail Guide” for individual or group study. When one goes on a hike, one often has a choice of different marked trails. Similarly, this “Trail Guide” has six themes, each of which can be explored on its own: “And It Was Good,” “Finding God,” “Connected to Creation,” “Creation Care as Justice,” “The Full Impact of Sin,” and “The New Earth.” Each theme presents several major passages of Scripture, followed by a brief exposition and a series of questions for reflection and discussion, concluding with a section on “Walking the Trail,” with suggestions for outdoor activities related to the theme. A Bible study series or a retreat could easily be built on these themes. There is also a topical “Green Subject Index,” as well as a concise “Concordance.”

With all this new edition has going for it, it is unfortunate that the editors chose to exclude the “apocryphal” books, since they are accepted by Anglican, Catholic, and Orthodox Christians and include even more support for environmental concern. Perhaps the editors were afraid of alienating evangelicals, but if so, why did they choose the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) translation? Although it has the widest acceptance among “mainline” Christian denominations, including Episcopalians, the New International Version (NIV), published by Zondervan, is far more popular among evangelicals and does not have the “liberal” associations of the NRSV. Perhaps Harper and Zondervan will

(cont. p.11)

## Tell No One

Oliver Stone's new film *W.*, I am told, was rushed through post-production in order to open before the November election. That suggested it was going to give us an urgent and important message that would stir our thinking afresh in the last days of this interminable presidential campaign. At the least it would be memorable and discussible, like his earlier presidential films *JFK* (1991) and *Nixon* (1995), perhaps even prophetic, like his 1987 film *Wall Street*.

The new release is consistently entertaining, often fascinating, and skillfully acted, but hardly the bold, hard-hitting kind of picture we have come to expect from the man who gave us *Natural Born Killers*, the 1994 film about the media's exploitation of violence.

The film, with a script by Stanley Weiser, chronicles George W. Bush's erratic early years, his rise to power, and his presidency into 2004, two years into the Iraq war. The thematic focus of the narrative is already suggested in the film's trailer when Dubya says, "I'll never get out of Papa's shadow." Fair enough, but this conflict is hardly breaking news at this point and has already been the subject of books, articles, and television and radio discussion shows.

We follow the story of a troubled and not very bright or reflective young man (played by Josh Brolin), born into a prominent and wealthy family, who does not really know himself and what he wants, who drinks too much as a result, and resents being overshadowed by his younger brother Jeb. He fails utterly at a series of jobs and endeavors, and he brings his failures home for the inevitable dressing-down by his sadly disappointed patrician father (James Cromwell). Dubya is resentful toward his father but craves his approval and eventually, finding religion and sobriety, pursues a political career and manages to follow in his father's footsteps, ascending to the presidency under the management of skilled and crafty advisers.

Consider the climate in which this film opens in theaters: George W. Bush's approval rating is at an all-time low, his presidency generally viewed as a disaster for the country and the world. Depictions of the president on television satirical sketches tend to be extremely broad these days.

Josh Brolin's portrayal avoids the temptation to caricature. He has clearly done his homework, has read books and studied videos to perfect the intonations and body movements. His performance is brilliant. There is never the

sense we get from a *Saturday Night Live* performer at once portraying and laughing at his creation, even when Brolin repeats famous Bush-isms like "He shouldn't underestimate me" (or indeed spectacular ones of the sort that might have delighted Stan Laurel: "There's an old saying that says, fool me once, shame on—shame on you. Fool me—you can't get fooled again."). Nor is there any suggestion of insincerity in Bush's embracing of born-again Christianity. Brolin manages to take Bush from an 18-year-old frat boy to the much-aged president toward the end of his first term. Expecting a hatchet job, I saw a surprisingly compassionate portrayal. If anything, the film errs on the side of generosity, leaving out, for instance, what some consider Bush's arrogance and snorting contempt for dissenting opinion.

Stone's film tells the story of a very limited man and his unlikely path to the highest office in the land, a position where he is entirely out of his depth. He is carefully coached along the way by Karl Rove (played as a sly elf by Toby Jones) on statements of policy and how to questions. The instruction we see is largely by rote. "The swagger?"—"In Texas we call it walking." We also see Rove developing the selling point that Dubya is the kind of guy folks would like to sit down and have a beer with. (In an amusing word of caution, Bush tells him, "Just make sure it's alcohol-free beer.")

James Cromwell may not bear much physical resemblance to the elder Bush, but he does capture the man's elegance and dignity. He also conveys his bitter sadness at his failure to win a second term after the success of the Desert Storm campaign. The encounters between father and son are, of course, all Stone's and Weiser's conjecture, but they are presented credibly and with empathy.

Richard Dreyfuss makes a particularly sinister (and fascinating) Dick Cheney, manipulating Bush like a puppet, while the poor puppet somehow believes that he is in charge, calling himself the "decider." At one point he tells Cheney in private to be more deferential in public. Cheney ponders for a moment, then agrees, his look implying that this will change nothing. At no time is it suggested that Bush has any understanding of complex issues, or any kind of articulated vision or philosophy by which he would guide this nation. While Cheney speaks of controlling the Middle East for the oil, the president speaks vaguely of freedom and democracy, hoping to see "peace break out" in that whole area. In the wake of 9/11, and on the basis of inadequate and carelessly examined evidence of weapons of mass destruction, Bush allows himself to be talked into the invasion of Iraq instead of concentrating on

(cont. p.9)



## Tell No One (from p.8)

the pursuit of Al Qaeda in Afghanistan. There is an absence of the public in most of this film. Stone presents the White House as a hermetic environment of its own, where policy is formulated in isolation from the world.

A number of set pieces stand out. One of them is early in the film, where we see Dubya as a freshman fraternity pledge at Yale, surrounded by drunken, moneyed louts whose acceptance he craves. The pledges are asked to name as many of the members as they can. One fails miserably and is a victim of the abusive contempt of the brothers. Bush reveals a gift both for remembering names and for adorning the members with nicknames. They are charmed. Perhaps this man has the makings of a politician.

Again, in the countryside near his Texas ranch, President Bush takes his advisors on a walk in the blazing sun and, to their general discomfort and embarrassment, gets the whole group lost. Stone clearly presents it as emblematic of Bush's entire presidency.

At a luncheon meeting, Bush declines dessert, saying he has given up sweets as a sacrifice in honor of the fighting forces in Iraq. Cheney and Rumsfeld (Scott Glenn) shovel pie into their faces in almost overt contempt for the president.

Jeffrey Wright is effective as General Colin Powell, the only conflicted member of the cabinet, painfully torn between loyalty to his commander-in-chief and the reality of the situation he sees around him.

Elizabeth Banks brings a special warmth and spark to her portrayal of Bush's wife Laura and makes us believe her as the sustaining rock in his life. The script turns the very intelligent Condoleezza Rice into a caricature, and Thandie Newton has little to do but gravely assent to Oval Office deliberations.

Stone's film does not set up George W. Bush as a bad man; that is too easy and lets too many people off the hook. Stone's Bush is a mediocre man of privileged background jockeyed into a position and responsibilities beyond his grasp. If there is a target for Stone's condemnation, it is the schemers and power brokers that surround the president.

The director's message isn't dished up neatly at the end. The film may be a cautionary tale told in hopes that next time the electorate will go for intelligence and vision. With the story's focus on the father-son relation, however, we are left with George H. W. Bush's stinging assessment: "You ruined it—the Bush name. It took two hundred years to build, and you ruined it."

## Holy Humor

A Sunday school teacher was teaching her class about the difference between right and wrong.

"All right children, let's take another example," she said. "If I were to get into a man's pocket and take his billfold with all his money, what would I be?"

Little Johnny raises his hand, and with a confident smile, he blurts out, "You'd be his wife!"

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A little girl was sitting on her grandfather's lap as he read her a bedtime story. From time to time, she would reach up to touch his wrinkled cheek. She was alternately stroking her own cheek, then his again.

"Grandpa, did God make you?" She asked.

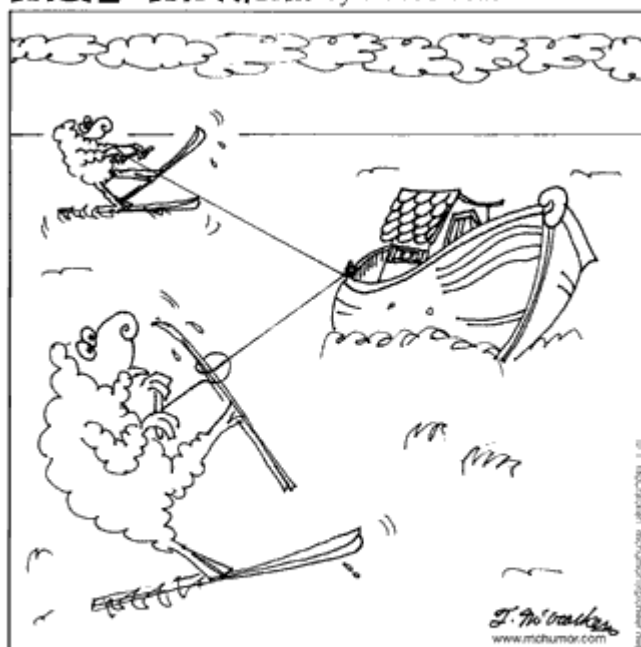
"Yes, sweetheart," he answered, "God made me a long time ago."

"Oh," she paused, "Grandpa, did God make me too?"

"Yes, indeed, honey," he said, "God made you just a little while ago."

Feeling their respective faces again, she observed, "He's getting better at it, isn't he?"

McHUMOR.com by T. McCracken



The sheep on the ark got bored and took up water skiing.



## Scriptorium (from p.7)

collaborate on an NIV edition, with more introductory essays by “green” evangelicals, and Harper will come out with an expanded NRSV edition that includes the “apocryphal” books.

Apart from the “bookends”—the introductory essays and concluding “Trail Guide”—how successful is *The Green Bible* at redeeming the Jewish and Christian Scriptures from the anti-environmentalism that some “Bible-believing” Christians have proclaimed? Many of the “green-letter” passages seem at first to be just weird or trivial. “For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light” (Psalm 36:9) may be a cool metaphor, but what does it really tell us about the psalmist’s view of God, humans, and nature? And what does “The righteous shall inherit the land, and live in it forever” (Psalm 37:29) really tell us about Hebrew environmental ethics? But the cumulative weight of these passages and others like them underscores the close relationship between the Jewish people and their homeland as a gift from God to be cherished. If one of the root causes of our environmental crisis is the common belief that land is merely a commodity to be bought and sold, denuded, and paved over if that is its “highest and best” use, then perhaps reading these passages will change our perspective.

In the New Testament, aside from the obvious passages such as the agricultural metaphors in Jesus parables, the green passages focus on the earth as the context and object of God’s saving actions. In the Revelation to John, the favorite source of proof texts for many evangelicals, selfish land developers and polluters do not come off well: “The nations raged, but your wrath has come, and the time for judging the dead, . . . and for destroying those who destroy the earth” (11:16), and “But woe to the earth and the sea, for the devil has come down to you with great wrath, because he knows that his time is short” (12:12). The Revelation to John could not be clearer that the Lamb of God will come to set things right, to deal justly with those who have served the devil by destroying the earth, and to restore and heal the creation.

Clearly, the Bible is much greener than many have thought, and its environmentalism is part of its proclamation of both God’s love and care for the creation, and for God’s justice in dealing with humankind. *The Green Bible* is an important tool for Christians who are willing to take the time and effort to learn what their Scriptures really have to say about what may be the most important issue of our age.

## Millennium Goals (from p.3)

and health care for women and children, insuring gender equality, working for environmental sustainability, and, very importantly, creating global partnerships for development among governments, NGOs, and the poorest people themselves. 189 member nations, including the United States, and 23 international organizations, including the World Bank and the IMF, signed on to the goals. The intention was that progress toward the goals would be regularly monitored and that at the halfway point—2008—a more thorough reassessment and recommitment would be undertaken.

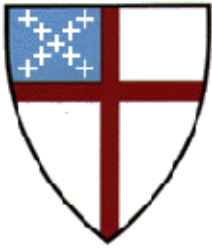
The goals were adopted immediately by the worldwide Anglican Communion. They were adopted by the Episcopal Church at its last 3 General Conventions and made a mission priority for 2007 through 2009. They were adopted by the Diocese of Ohio at its 2006 Diocesan Convention, and they have been an important focus at St. James since 2006.

At the very least, these are difficult and uncertain economic times domestically and around the world for remembering and working toward the Millennium Development Goals. Here at home the needs will clearly increase. But as World Bank president Robert Zoellick declared in mid-October, we in the wealthiest countries can’t turn away from our global commitments at a time when the spreading financial crisis may be catastrophic for many fragile economies in the developing world.

And Mike Kinman, Director of Episcopalians for Global Reconciliation, has reminded us that the MDGs represent one way in which “we can live out Christ’s call to seek and serve him in ‘the least of these.’” (Matt 25). For Mike, “we are drawn to this mission not as a secular agenda but as a way to fulfill Jesus’ words ‘that all might have life and have it in abundance.’” (John 10:10). And, he adds, as a way let Christ change us so that we can be part of God’s mission of global reconciliation—individually and corporately.” Within the Church, the MDGs are not just a set of practical goals, but a spiritual challenge.

At the Women’s Retreat, we watched singer-songwriter Sarah McLachlan’s music video “World on Fire.” In this country a music video is an ordinary item, but this one could have meant \$150,000 in production expenses. Instead, because all fees and equipment were donated, it cost just \$15.00 to make. As we listened to the words and the music, text and pictures reminded us of our comparative wealth and what in this one instance it could do: \$10,200.00 for 2 hours of film stock went to build 6 wells in 6 countries. \$3,000.00 for catering on set bought 10,900 meals for street children in Calcutta. The \$16,500, director’s fee paid the total cost of running a South African orphanage for a year. In the end, \$150,000 brought change in the lives of 1,000,000 people. (See the video on UTube.) The resources are there. So little can achieve so much.

The Episcopal Church



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

7th/8th November

Church Directory photo sessions:  
Friday 4:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
Saturday 10:00 am - 3:00 pm

14th/15th November

Diocesan Convention

15th November

6:00 pm Hors d'oeuvres  
7:00 pm Auction

30th November

9:00 am Worship followed by Brunch at 10:00 am

### November 2008

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### December 2008

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