



# St. John's Episcopal Church Newsletter



2010

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## Pastor's Musings

Take a deep breath. Hold it. Let it out slowly. Yes, by the time you are reading this it will be July and less than six months to Christmas. We have passed the summer solstice and the days are beginning to shorten as the sun moves south for the winter.

What did our ancestors think of the rotation of the sun, moon and stars? For sure, they were much closer to the movement of the heavenly bodies than we are today. It was the moon and stars that told them when to plant seeds and when to bring in the crops.

No wonder the palmist said: *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows his handiwork (19:1)...The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world and all who dwell therein. (24:1)*

Now we look up at night and can barely see a star; due to streetlights, protection lights, house lights. We have so much artificial light on earth at night that we cannot see the light of the stars. It is difficult to see the wonder of the world when we cannot see the night sky. One of the things I love to do is to go as far from a city as possible, to where there are no electric lights, park the car and observe the night sky. Recently, I went to the IMAX to see the Hubble telescope. The brief journey through the cosmos showed the birth of stars and the death of others. It was fascinating to see galaxies ninety million light-years wide; it's difficult to comprehend such a distance, and yet it is there in the night sky.

Recently, in Disney World, I took a ride to Mars. Again, traveling through space, we had the wonderful experience of looking at Earth and seeing its beautiful blue color, seeing it in the distance, and coming to grips with how small we are in the galaxy.

There is something about flying and seeing the Earth far below you, to come to grips with how small we are in comparison to the galaxy around us, and in which we orbit. On Earth, we have this exaggerated sense of living in a large territory, a county within a state, within a nation, that is part of a continent. And yet, as we look at ourselves within the context of the galaxy, we are but a pinhead on a piece of paper.

The world turns, the days grow shorter, the sun relocates and life goes on. We learn to adapt to the loss of sunlight, the bright colors of fall, and then we live with naked trees for a few months till spring and a new life begins. The great "Circle of Life" as it is called, and rightly so, for it is that which fires up the imagination; helps us raise questions about how to survive, to live, and have our being as we are birthed into this life, and then into Eternal life.

From this small planet, men and women planned galactic travel, landed on the moon and returned safely, created a permanent space station, and sent space vehicles to the outer galaxies. From this small planet, the Hubble telescope was launched, placed, and repaired. From this small planet, we have come to acknowledge our small dimension in relation to the vastness of the world in which we live.

As we become consciously aware of the shortening of the days, perhaps we could take some time to reflect on the sun, moon, and stars, the stories that have been told about them in times past, reflect on their beauty and how we relate and respond to them. Take time, make time, create time, to sit and look at the vastness of creation, and breathe in all that God has created.

Séamus

Saturday, July 24, St. John's will be holding a parish-wide day for cleaning, starting at 9am.

Please join your fellow parishioners and donate some sweat-equity to your church. Think of it as that workout day you have been promising that you would fit into your schedule.



## News from the Day School

**Jackie Buxton**

July 1, 2010, begins Arkansas' new early childhood accreditation process called Better Beginnings. It consists of two major parts; the environmental ratings scale and the PAS or Program Administration Scale. Better Beginnings is early childhood education's answer to society's need for accountability and transparency and it serves as a validation of the professionalism required in the early childhood field. Quality Approval is the name given to the accreditation process that Arkansas has been using for several years. Saint John's, as one of the leaders in early childhood education, has maintained its Quality Approval rating for ten years. The environmental rating scale portion of Better Beginnings is the same as the Quality Approval rating. It involves an assessor trained by the state coming to our site and evaluating an infant/toddler classroom, a preschool classroom and our school age program. There is also a paper portion involved in the application process.

Better Beginnings is several steps beyond what was required for Quality. Each teacher will now be required to take twenty-five hours of training in early childhood education per year. Teachers will have to align their lesson plans with Arkansas Frameworks for Education. More parental involvement and education must be provided. Our budget and expenditures will be examined. Our employee and parent handbook will be evaluated. The above is a partial list of the new criteria we must meet.

Right now, less than twenty percent of the child care centers in Arkansas are Quality Approved. Better Beginnings involves a three step approach to accreditation. The Division of Early Childhood Education is hoping that this one step at a time approach will inspire more centers to participate in this process. Because St. John's has already achieved Quality Approval status, we are required to meet the third level of Better Beginnings. We have begun the process. Several of our teachers have reached their twenty-five hour training goal. We ask for your prayers in this endeavor.

It is the time of year when weddings, like flowers, are in bloom. St. John's was the setting that three brides chose for their weddings this spring. Dolly Garrison's granddaughter, Jessica Garrison, was married on May 29; Susan Chase's daughter, Kristine Chase, was married on June 5; Beverly Tomlinson's granddaughter, Krystal Kidd, was married on June 12.



### Let's Keep Up to Date

**Linda McClure**

If you have had a change of phone number, address, or email address, please let us know. We will be sending our Parish Directory out through email to those we have email addresses for, sometime during this summer. For those who don't have an email address, we will be printing up a limited number of copies, which will be available for pick-up at the church.



### Year to Date Financials

**Mike Scarsdale**

	May	Year to Date
Income	\$18,231	\$81,017
Expense	<u>13,814</u>	<u>70,524</u>
Net Income	<b>\$ 4,417</b>	<b>\$10,493</b>

**St. John's Episcopal  
Church**



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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**



**UPDATE**



**Please add to your Parish Directory:**



688-9931 Kephart, Eileen  
1401 Dawson Drive #43  
Harrison, AR 72601

Julie Cone's cell phone number should  
be 688-3711

