

THE SHEPHERD'S STAFF

www.goodshepherdwv.org

The Rev. Marjorie S. Bevans
Linda Crocker, Parish Ministries Coordinator

Ginger Smith, Parish Administrator
September 28, 2011

MISSION STATEMENT: Good Shepherd is growing in: Faith and knowledge of God, ministry in our neighborhood, love for one another and support for those seeking Christ.

From the Rector

The people who settled in the land did not know what the Lord required. (2 Ki 17:26) So the king sent for one of the exiled Israelite priests to be brought back so he could teach them how to worship the Lord. Still, each group had their own gods which they persisted in worshipping. They appointed all sorts of their own people to officiate as priests of their own worship. "Even while these people were worshipping the Lord, they were serving their idols. To this day their children and grandchildren continue to do as their fathers did." (2 Ki 17:41)

We read this lesson in morning prayer last week, and as I listened to these words, I wondered how often it is that we *think* we are worshipping the Lord, the one, true God, but the worship of our own household idols is still *strong in our hearts*.

This really has to do with our personal integrity—acting according to what we believe. While our minds are telling us one thing, how often it is that our hearts are not in the same place. The evidence of this is readily found in most parishes. The moment we cease to worship on Sunday morning, we return to our most pressing earthly agendas. We might say or think negatively of someone we do not really know or understand, or make a judgment without all the facts of a situation. How uncharitable we Christians can be toward one another! As the lesson indicates, sometimes these ways have been passed down from one generation to another. So we really don't know any better. Unfortunately, these are the kinds of things that take up so much of our pastoral attention that little else gets done sometimes.

So often we say 'yes' with our lips, but 'no' in our hearts. Our actions and words reveal the truth of our spiritual health—and no one likes to be made aware of this either. But God is most concerned about the condition of our soul, and we need to know the truth. If we find ourselves stuck in a rut spiritually, often what we most need is for someone to hold up a mirror to us, so we can see the truth ourselves. Without acknowledging where we *really* are, we cannot grow spiritually.

The lesson was speaking of the resettlement of Samaria. The Israelites, those who had brought up in the ways of the Lord, had been carried off into exile. This Old Testament text is unusual in that it reveals God's concern for those who are *not* Israelites. These confused people were like you and me, non-Israelites.

Though old habits are difficult to change, they can, over time with persistence, be replaced with *better* habits. This is my prayer for all of us here at Good Shepherd; that we each may become more aware of the habits of the past that keep us from growing spiritually.

Some of us have been developing the better habit of Morning Prayer at 9:30 a.m. in the church Mondays through Thursdays. If you are in the neighborhood at that time, please seriously consider joining us. This brief service takes about 15 minutes, but it could be the *most important 15 minutes* of the day!

Faithfully,

Marjorie

Coming Attraction! The Rev. Zach Drennen and The Elewana Educational Project

Mark your calendars for **October 9th**. That is our annual visit from Zach Drennen and our parish auction to support Elewana. He'll be here for both the 8 and 10:00 services as well as adult forum. **Lunch** (soup, sandwiches, salads, and dessert) will be provided for a **donation** and that will be followed by the much anticipated auction. Don't forget to give Mark Miller a call about your items – Last year we had such things as: a dinner for six, an afternoon of yard work, leaf raking, Christmas cookies, PHS lockers, new bicycles, handyman time, babysitting, and tutoring, just to name a few. Be creative! Zach is even bringing some special items from Kenya. Let's make this another special afternoon and send him off to continue the wonderful work of the Elewana Project. If you have questions, call Mark Miller.

(Please list your donations on a card with the value of each and give it to Mark or drop it in the offering plate.) Don't forget the date – **October 9th!**

EYF NEWS

Our EYF (Episcopal Youth Fellowship) started off the school year with their annual overnight kick-off at the Pritchard's, following the church picnic. Despite the rain after the picnic the kids had a great time and we thank the Pritchard family for being such great hosts. During the overnight the kids agreed to an EYF covenant and elected officers: Andrew Cooper and Nathan Pritchard as co-presidents and Hunter Kessell as secretary.

The EYF is planning a variety of service projects and fun activities. The fun activities will include larping (live-action role playing) and visiting an indoor water park. The youth will continue to help with the toy shopping for Adopted Families and provide a Haunted House for the COPE Halloween party. They are looking for other service opportunities. If you have a suggestion call Nathan or Andrew.

Next Meeting: Sunday Oct. 2 at 12:30 p.m., lunch provided

A PATH OF FAITH

by Wendy Tuck

I attended a workshop on Civility last night, which came right on the heels of Mother Marjorie's booklet called "The Grace and Power of Civility: Lessons from the American Experience for the Coming Four Years". (She has more copies if you would like one). It was interesting to me that "civility" didn't originally mean courteous but pertained to citizenship. It's about how people make decisions and work together to improve their community. To quote the Institute for Civility in Government, it is "claiming and caring for one's own identity, needs, and beliefs without degrading someone else's in the process". Or in other words, say what you mean and mean what you say, without being mean when you say it.

Abshire's book noted that there are two elements of our political culture that appear to be contradictory: 1) a passionate, driven commitment to a cause or idea, and 2) the tradition of tolerance, compassion, and inclusiveness. While our current political climate has not resulted in the caning of one member of Congress by another, as occurred prior to the Civil War, it is at best contentious and at worst unproductive. Abshire asks "Are our country's spiritual and religious roots a unifying force for our country, or has religion itself become a wedge issue? He warns us that some religious leaders talk like they know it all and anybody who doesn't agree with them is a heretic. But he also believes "a unifying spirituality can keep us humble and remind us that we are but small parts of a greater plan". Every sensible person knows even at your best, your efforts will be laced with failure. The truth is fragmentary and it's impossible to capture all of it. But every sensible person also feels redeemed, because others may argue with you, correct you, and introduce you to elements you never thought of. Each of these efforts move things gradually forward, and there is gratitude for the political process", says author David Brooks.

Remember the early church was deeply divided between those who wanted new Christians to be circumcised and those who vehemently opposed this and other Levitical requirements. Paul said do not compromise the details of your belief, but "Welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you." Our religious faith can be a voice for diversity with unity, as we hold fast to the mystery of God and participate passionately and respectfully, confidently and modestly, in our life as citizens and Christians.

GRANDPARENTS' REPORT OF "E.J."

As you may recall, our grandson, "E.J." Oesterle, shared his musical talent with us here at Good Shepherd on several occasions, playing on the marimba as well as the drums. He and his lovely wife, Nicole, are now musical instructors at schools in Denton, Maryland. Recently he was invited to perform as a percussionist with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. This was a one-time performance but chances are, he will be invited again sometime. Of course he was thrilled and honored to play with all those talented musicians!

Are we proud? You BETCHA!

Gene and Ethel Poole

RUMMAGE SALE

October 6 and 7th is the basement rummage sale. Hours are 8:30am to 3pm each day. Once again I thank the people of Good Shepherd for their support.

Following the October sale comes the youth Halloween set-up of all things spooky! They transform the room for the COPE Halloween Party. During this time the basement gang won't be accepting any rummage.

Adopted Families Christmas is crunch time for the basement gang; as soon as the Halloween items disappear, we immediately begin hanging and putting out what is available for the Adopted Families free give away. **Monday October 31st will be the first day to drop off items for Adopted Families.** Workers will be in the basement that Monday from 8 to 11 am to receive items. Please look over the items you plan to bring to support Adopted Families. Make sure electronic items are clean and that they work. Sometimes we get clock radios that the clock works but not the radio. Sorry, if it only half works - it's half broken and we can't use it. Please check Christmas lights to see that all the lights are burning. Put in new batteries where needed. Dust off the knick-knacks and clean up things before you drop them off.

Christmas is a special time of year and this is where the Adopted Families are encouraged to come after shopping upstairs & picking up their new items. Please remember you are donating rummage beginning October 31st to supplement someone's Christmas.

Thank you for your support. Nelma Berry

OLAN MILLS PHOTO SIGN-UPS BEGIN THIS SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2

Olan Mills will be here November 2nd thru November 5th to take our portraits for our new pictorial directory. This leaves time for the photos to be delivered before Christmas. Joyce Haynes has agreed to be our representative. Thank you, Joyce.

You may schedule your appointment at church on Sunday mornings beginning October 2. There will be a table set up outside the office for scheduling. Please help make Joyce's responsibility easier by signing up as soon as possible.

FOOD PANTRY NEWS

We continue to see an increase in the number of families seeking food from our pantry. While we do get food from Mountaineer Food Bank, they don't have all the items we need. If you would like to help we can always use jelly, potatoes (fresh, canned or boxed), dinner mixes like Hamburger Helper, canned meat such as tuna or canned ravioli, cereal, cake and brownie mixes and any vegetables except corn. We also are out of toothpaste, shampoo, deodorant, dish soap, and laundry soap. Just leave your donations outside the food pantry door and let Ginger know if you need a tax receipt for your donation.

P.S. We also are grateful for any money you wish to donate. Thank you!

Lifting the Veil: Women of the Bible and Our Contemporary Spiritual Journey
Beth Marquart at Good Shepherd Church, Parkersburg, October 15

All women 15 to 105 years of age are cordially invited to enjoy a day at The Memorial Church of the Good Shepherd, 903 Charles Street, Parkersburg, WV. Mark this important date Saturday, OCTOBER 15, 2011 on your calendar.

Beth Marquart shares that she fell in love with biblical women as a participant in the Equipping the Saints program, "They are intriguing with every unforgivable sin, every loving gesture, every purely human act they commit. I love their moxie, their creativity, their boldness in the face of astronomical odds. I love their faith and lack thereof. I love their tambourines, dancing and singing. I smile at their absurd ideas because I recognize myself in those ideas and I am amazed and overjoyed at God pulling them - me and you, too - through! I love them with Jesus, both reverent and irreverent alike!"

Beth created a spiral using 482 individual 5X8 cards, naming and describing women of both the Old Testament and New Testament. She weaves the history of these women supported by the work of biblical scholars such as Carol Myers, Toni Craven and Ross Kraemer.

Beth is a member of St. John's Charleston where she mentors an Education for Ministry group. She has presented workshops based in the Women of the Bible in Morgantown (2008 Diocesan Convention), an extended workshop at Peterkin for the Women's Conference Spring 2011, through the West Virginia Institute of Spirituality and at both Catholic and Anglican convents.

Please plan to join us for a workshop on Saturday, October 15 to enrich your own faith journey and help set the stage as we prepare to transition from Pentecost to Advent.

Doors will open at 8:00am for those who wish to arrive early and meditate in the church.

A light breakfast for the road weary will be offered. (Sweet rolls, Yogurt, Orange Juice, Coffee & Tea) Registration at 9 a.m. Beth's presentation and workshop will begin at 9:30 and end at 3 pm. Lunch will consist of soups, salads, breads and desert. We, the Sisters of the Shepherd Chapter, Daughters of the King are preparing lunch. Please help us by registering by October 8.

There is no charge for this day, however, A Love Offering will be presented to Beth at the end of the day.

Registration & Questions may be directed to: Darlene Slusher 304-295-5390 or cell -724-678-8871. slusher@zzzip.net