



## ✠ Bishop's Corner

### READY OR NOT!

Remember the game "Hide and Seek"? The fun part was scurrying for a good hiding place before the dreaded cry – "Coming – ready or not!" often caught us unprepared.

Advent is the season that warns us of the imminent coming of Jesus – ready or not. No matter whether we are safely hidden behind a lifestyle – or out in the open between changes. Here he comes! Whether we have just said a prayer or broken a promise. The cry has gone out. It is certainly time for us to wake up from dozing. The day of salvation is near – and the response is Come-as-you-are.

Just like life itself, our Christian Faith is a risky business. The stakes are high – life and death. The path is narrow. The discipline is daunting. Turn the other cheek. Love your enemies. Do good to everyone. Take up your cross daily. Lose your very self.

Advent signals the end of the Christian Year and a new beginning. The end, because of the promised Second Coming of Christ. The beginning, because we are looking also to his coming at Christmas. And in a mysterious way – Advent also announces the truth that Christ is born *within us*.

And this is the mystery – we can only possess the Christ by giving him away. We cannot possess him just for ourselves. We must share him with others.

May God bless you and help you to use this time to advantage – and then enter fully into the joy of the Christmas celebration.

+ Frederick



## Continuing Education - Hope Explored

**O**n Thursday, November 6th, I attended a Pastoral Care seminar at one of the local hospitals in Tulsa on the topic of hope. The speaker, Dr. Duane Bidwell, is an assistant professor at Phillips Theological Seminary in Tulsa, and teaches Pastoral Theology, Care, and Counseling. With a much-varied audience: from lay-ministers, certified counselors, hospital chaplains, clergy, to simply interested laity, Dr. Bidwell presented the material extremely well and with the ease of a veteran teacher. Beginning with the theological foundation of hope, we did a "helicopter tour" of the classical understanding of hope, highlighting Aristotle, St. Augustine, and Thomas Aquinas. Hope, in the classical view, must be properly ordered, and its end is the "kingdom" or "union" with God. Next, with another "helicopter tour," Dr. Bidwell explored the contemporary understanding of hope, which is based more on the active role that creation plays.

After laying the groundwork of the theological understandings of hope, Dr. Bidwell then moved on to the psychological theories. Naturally, the psychological theories were void of mention of God; however, they also offered keen insight into the workings of hope in the brain. While hope was expressed in tests as both affective and cognitive (brought about by both emotion and thoughts), it was ultimately the thoughts that led to positive feelings of hope. For pastoral counselors, Dr. Bidwell asserted, we have an opportunity to help people focus on the hope that they already have. And just because people are feeling despair does not mean that hope is absent--both are present--but it is up to the pastoral counselor to help identify and fortify the hope already within the individual.

Lunchtime provided the class with an opportunity to mingle with each other and enjoy a complimentary buffet-style lunch (quite good for hospital food!). We delved into the most important part of the session--putting the understandings of hope into practice.

Hope does not begin with us. Hope does not end with us.

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Hope begins and ends in God. Therefore, as ministers, we try to help people see how despair, anger, anxiety, control--can get in the way of hope. With this in mind, Dr. Bidwell had the group of around 100 people break into pairs and do an exercise. On one sheet of paper, there was an example of an "internalizing" conversation. On another, an example of an "externalizing" conversation. The internalizing conversation did not separate the vice from the person. Indeed, in our culture, we automatically do this in our use of language: "I am a controlling person... I am too intense... I am an anxious person... etc." Dr. Bidwell showed that by using language that externalizes the problem, a counselor can help the person more readily think about the issue in new ways. So instead of saying, "How did you become anxious about your illness," the caregiver could say "What makes you vulnerable to anxiety so that it is able to dominate your identity sometimes?" In doing this, the "sin" is separated from the "sinner" and the individual is able to speak more freely about the problem without feeling as personally attacked. This enables and empowers the individual to change their behavior in an easier way. They are not the feeling of despair. They are not the anger. It is the anger or despair that inflicts itself upon us. So by separating it from the identity of the person, pastors can help them deal more effectively with the problem.

Finally, Dr. Bidwell left us with one more tool to use in our "pastoral toolkit:" helping others achieve their "agency" (self-rule or power). Oftentimes, people who have "lost hope" or are feeling despair feel like they do not have control in their lives. But, by helping them regain their agency, caregivers can open another pathway to hope. Agency does not mean total control, but rather, simple and realistic goals in the future that they can achieve. One example that Dr. Bidwell gave was of a woman who had terminal cancer. All she wanted to do was to live long enough to eat clementines (those little mandarin-orange like citrus fruits) again. Her husband, unbeknown to her, froze a bunch of them in the freezer, and would randomly give her clementines, telling her, "You've lived long enough to have your clementines!" This was a wonderful way to reach her goal in a realistic way, and because she never knew when her husband would give her a clementine, she was always surprised and filled with hope when he did.

This continuing education seminar was well worth the time and effort for me. Not only did Dr. Bidwell give a well-educated and balanced approach to the foundations of hope in theology and psychology, but he also gave us useful tools to take back in our ministries. Hope, at the end of the day, is the message of the Gospel: hope in the Resurrection, hope in Christ's love for us. If we can learn to live in true hope, we can learn to experience that

"union" and "kingdom" now--lived amidst our faith communities. Surely our hope lies in God, and in Him is our strength and salvation.

*Father Gideon Seaman*

## Pastoral Counseling –Strong Families



**Think about it for a moment. If you faced a situation----a disease, a house ablaze, a tornado----that created within you the fear that you were about to die, what would be your thoughts? Your job? Bank account? Prestige? Dirty dishes in the sink? Your upcoming vacation?**

Probably not! You would be like many others in concluding that, next to your relationship with God, the bottom line of life is family. Our family is our most important responsibility, achievement, and legacy. We are confronted daily with evidence that the quality of family life is crucial to our happiness, emotional well-being, and mental health.

Healthy, happy families have six common characteristics:

**Commitment** - This creates the warm, loving environment in which family members grow. It offers a harbor that shelters family members from the destructive forces of fear, anxiety, and loneliness. At the heart of commitment to the family unit is dedication to the marriage relationship. God sees the commitment of husband and wife to each other as so crucial to families that He robustly condemns any violation of that marital commitment. Commitment means to be there and not abandon each other. But it goes further. It says, "We will do whatever it takes to love each other as we should."

**Appreciation** - Expressions of appreciation and affection permeate relationships in strong families. God has made it known that He wants to be appreciated and told of that appreciation (Remember the story of Jesus and the ten lepers?). Members of strong families express appreciation to each other by thanking each other for everyday things (as well as the big stuff), by seeing the good qualities in each other, by encouraging each other, and by sharing gentle humor and affection. They are sincere and lavish in their affirmations of each other.

**Communication** - No one wants to feel all alone in the world. Feeling all alone carries a mixture of terror and despair. Elijah felt all alone but God assured him that he was not alone (1 King 19:10-18). Every person needs to know that he or she is part of a whole. Communication is the process through which this sense of belonging is related. Communication helps us feel connected to other people through the exchange of information. It also helps

with solving problems and resolving conflicts in constructive ways.

**Time Together** - Chances are, our best memories are of simple times shared with our family and friends---times that probably did not require lots of money or elaborate preparations. Read in Ecclesiastes and hear Solomon's view that most of us waste time. Solomon tried pleasure, riches, fame, sex, and all other pursuits common to mankind. He finally concluded that we should live simply, concentrating on those things that are truly important. Members of strong families spend much time together playing, working, talking, having fun, and just hanging out together. They have resolved the current debate over quality time versus quantity of time. Families need both: Families need large quantities of good quality time to flourish. Many things demand our time, therefore, that time becomes a precious gift we give to our loved ones.

**Ability To Cope With Stress And Crises** - People in strong families still live in a real world. They encounter the same daily strains and frustrations as everyone else; they also experience the major crises of life such as serious illness, loss of a job, death, or natural disaster. They have an ability to deal with both stress and crises in ways that are effective. They manage to make it through. People in strong families call on their commitment to each other and their good communication skills to help them work out ways to get through their difficulties. They pull together. They manage to see some good in the situation--no matter how bleak it may be. Sometimes, the only good in the situation is that they have each other to rely on. They rely heavily on their faith in God in difficult times

**Spiritual Well-Being** - The importance of a spiritual center can not be overstated when it comes to strong families. Reliance upon a power above and beyond themselves is the glue that holds families together and makes them strong. Jesus talked about the importance of building our "house" on the right foundation (Matt. 7:24, 25). Spiritual foundations give meaning and purpose to life: freedom from anxiety, guilt, fear, and low self-esteem as well as a hopeful, confident outlook. Connections with other people who share our religious beliefs give support and encouragement during difficult times. Spiritual foundations offer many guidelines for daily living. Forgiveness, patience, kindness, honesty, and helping others are all taught as virtues. Families with strong spiritual well-being know that God is there watching, caring, loving, and guiding. They know they can turn to God at any time for guidance (James 1:5). When people believe in these basic truths and abide by them, their lives have direction and they can know what is right and what is wrong. They have learned the value of putting God's Word into prac-

tice. As James said, "Be doers of the word, and not hearers only" (James 1:22).

*Source: The Soul Care Bible, Dr. Tim Clinton, Executive Editor, Thomas Nelson Publishers — Submitted by Father Robert Rawson*

## Good Fellowship and Good Food



*Sunday, October 26<sup>th</sup>, the ACW of St. Nicholas Anglican Church hosted the annual Church Picnic. It was held at the home of Don and Karen Baird. There were approximately 20 people in attendance. It was a gorgeous day, about 94 degrees with a small breeze. Photos taken by Kathleen Brulc. Information supplied by Don Baird*



## Father Jones Honored

### by St. Mary's

**O**n Sunday, November 9, the people of St. Mary's Anglican Mission hosted a Farewell Party for their priest and friend, Fr. Edward Jones. Fr. Jones is retiring after a combined number of nearly 20 years as the parish's priest.

Throughout his ministry Father Jones acted with great love and care for the people of St. Mary's. He had been an integral part of the lives of so many – baptizing, preaching and teaching, administering the Holy Communion, visiting the sick, praying for and being with his parishioners in times of trouble. He has been a true shepherd and he will be greatly missed!

Succeeding Father Jones will be The Reverend John Hines, former rector of All Saints' Anglican Church in Chicago, Illinois. Father Hines says that he is very humbled and honored to become the vicar of St. Mary's, and he hopes that he may continue the great work which his predecessor started.

## Holy Cross Sunday School Thankful for a Great Year

**T**he Holy Cross Sunday School students are very thankful for a wonderful year. Now, we are getting excited about the Season of Advent, and Christmas Day. We are reviewing our stories, worksheet activities, movies, arts, and crafts to recall what we have learned this church year. Making Advent Wreaths, and Cone Calendars will help us to understand the story of Christ, and how he died on the cross for us. As you can see, we have been very busy learning and having fun.

We celebrate the Fourth Sunday in Advent, after Mass, with a Christmas Program. A sketch, "Christmas Spirit 2008" was presented. The bell choir perform carols, three of our students performed on stringed instruments, and everyone enjoyed the wonderful recitations. Our little drummer boy, was a seven year old girl this year. She was determined to play her part with metronomic timing.

Thanks to all of our parish family for their support during the year. A hearty thanks to Father Miley for all of his help, and guidance. Sometimes, unexpected and unplanned circumstances arise and he and his wife have been there to help, without hesitation, when we needed them. We wish everyone a Happy New Year, and a Merry Christmas.

*Yvonne Carpenter*

## DIOCESAN YOUTH NEWS...

**T**his past Spring, the Anglican Youth Group at St. George's Las Vegas toured the First Choice Pregnancy Services Center. This Christian organization is located in downtown Las Vegas, near a busy abortion clinic. The clinic reaches out to the neediest women at the highest risk of abortion.

The AYG learned that First Choice is the difference between life and death for an average of 4 babies each day. The Center estimates that by offering alternatives to abortion, over 100 babies are saved each month. The youth group viewed three dimensional ultrasounds that are typically offered by the Center. Pam Caylor, Development Director, told our group that mothers who see their baby's picture on ultrasound often come to see that what is within them is their baby, not just tissue.

The Center provides support during pregnancy and after and will help mothers with adoption if they choose. They also offer counseling to those who have already had abor-

tions, letting them know that God loves and forgives them.

A member of AYG, Kristine Covert (while holding her baby brother in her arms), reported on the AYG tour to parishioners at St. George's Sunday Services. She asked all parishioners to support the work of First Choice by filling baby bottles with money. During the past two months, parishioners have donated over \$300.00 and filled bottles are still coming in.

## Christ Church Celebrating Busy Year

**C**hrist Church parish has had a successful drive for the local Foothills Food Bank and is presently helping the Sunday School collect socks for the homeless. The Parish also continues strong support for the Foothills Caring Corps, an ecumenical undertaking providing aid to the homebound and needy.

We are continuing our efforts to establish St. Augustine's Academy, a classical Christian school for children kindergarten through 12th grade.

The Anglican Youth Drama Troupe presented the play "The Wolf of Gubbio" with a dinner provided by the Anglican Church Women with the proceeds going to St. Augustine's Academy.

Our parish also had the gift of our annual episcopal visit by Bishop Morrison, who Confirmed and received new members on Sunday, November 23.



## From the Diocesan Treasurer

**I**want to thank all our churches and missions that make up our diocesan family for your faithful and generous support this year. I know that this current economic turmoil has put a burden on all of us to rethink our spending habits. As Christians we each have an obligation to show our love and appreciation to God for the talents and treasures that He has bestowed upon us. We can thank God for the many gifts He has given us by giving and sharing our talents and treasures with our home church. Making a financial pledge to your church is a serious commitment and should never be set aside or

abandoned lightly. I ask that you prayerfully consider what you can give to your church and then stand by that pledge.

**Linda Unruh**

### From DSWS Synod Coordinator:

**S**ynod 2009 will be held June 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> in Scottsdale, Arizona at the Hilton Scottsdale Resort and Villas. Our special room rate is \$99.00 per night. Reservation information will be sent later.

St. Nicholas Anglican Church is excited to host this upcoming event and is looking forward to welcoming you all to their city and their church. There have been a few changes to our normal Synod schedule owing to the current financial situations that many of us face and the difficulty arranging departure flights on the weekend. Synod 2009 will be held mid-week and is scaled back to a business format. There will be an ACW Conference as well as a Church School Conference held in conjunction with the regular meetings.

It is mandatory that all Clergy, Lay Delegates, Board of Directors and Members of the Standing Committee attend the Synod, so I encourage you all to unite in fundraising activities in order to send your Clergy and Parish Delegates to our Conference.

Looking forward to seeing you in Scottsdale,

**Linda Unruh**  
*DSWS Synod Coordinator/Registrar*

## *News from our ACW*

**T**he Season of Advent is here again, a time for anticipation and preparation for the coming of the baby Jesus on Christmas. This is the season for the glorious celebration of God who became a child.

It's the beginning of a new church year and a time to be grateful for all the women's activities and acts of Christian kindness we have been able to accomplish over this last year. Highlighting our year was the ACW Synod Silent Auction at the June Synod. It raised \$2,033. From this, we were able to make Project Outreach donations of \$1,250 to two chosen charities in the State of Texas and a separate outreach donation to St. Mary's Anglican Mission church in Plano, TX. Our Southwest Diocese ACW's have contributed to the National ACW with donations from Lent Box collections and special contributions to

our Seminary Library as a tribute to Nancy Morse, wife of retired Archbishop Robert Morse, who retired earlier this year.

Personally, I am so very thankful for the continued growth and support of the ACW's in our Southwest Diocese. The planned activities you provide in your church help strengthen friendships and extend fellowship to all your church members. You are also setting a good example to the young girls in your parishes.



May God bless us all with wisdom and grace, kindness and thoughtfulness in the coming year. Wishing each of you a very Merry Christmas.

**Lynda Volpe**  
**ACW President DSWS**

### St. George's ACW

- Hosted a reception on Sept 6 after a Requiem Mass for Ron Costin
- Sale of used books & religious items on Sept 14, Oct 5, Nov 9;
- Blessing of the Animals, including local Humane Society attending with dogs available for adoption held on Oct 4;
- Hosted a Wedding Reception on Oct 11 for Tracy Belt & Elizabeth Heramis
- Fall Bake Sale on Nov 23.

### Christ Church ACW

- Blessing of the Animals held on Oct 4
- ACW Fall Tea & Planning Meeting on Oct 25 discussing upcoming events
- Foothills Caring Corps; Sunday School Outreach, Food for the Hungry, Youth Drama Troupe
- Dinner Theatre Event, Jubilate Choir, St. Augustine's Academy

### All Saints ACW

- Hosted Afternoon Tea Reception on Aug 26 followed by Solumn Evensong;
- All Saints Choir sang traditional Evening Prayer
- ACW Fall Planning Meetings held in Sept & Oct;
- Hosted an All Saints Day Festival Luncheon on Nov 2
- Hosting a Christmas Eve Mass Reception on Dec