

The Christ Episcopal Church Gazette



Christ Episcopal Church of Budd Lake
369 Sandshore Road
Budd Lake, NJ 07828
973-347-1866
christchurchbuddlake.org



Vol. 2-3

Winter, 2010

The Pastor's Nook

Meditation

By Rev. Sonia E. Waters

Suddenly, after being buried in snow for all of February, the temperature has shot up to 50 degrees and my mind is wandering to springtime.

I know, in my right mind, that the temperature will drop - that there will be frost and maybe even snow in the next month. But for a second - the hope that flows with the seasons has returned. I am dreaming of cleaning up the garden, feeling the sun on my arms, planting and waiting for those first shoots of spring. I feel alive again.

I love seasons. I feel like their rhythm reflects what is natural in our own lives - times of plenty and times of want, times when we barricade in from the cold and times when we nurture new life and dream of new growth. Church seasons are the same way. We go through times of expectation and times of joy. Times of sorrow and self-examination, and times of renewal and hope. We spend a long "green season" after Pentecost just turning over the soil around the familiar stories and teachings of Jesus. And in each church season, a natural part of our

bodies and souls is given room to be felt and expressed.

Lent is one of those cold-weather types of seasons. I love it, but I'm glad it's short! Yet this season builds our capacity to hope in all parts of our lives. It makes us practice longing for our salvation. It makes us take the Son less for granted. It helps us remember our dreams for new life, and new healing for ourselves and those we love. We prepare to see once more the power of Jesus who forgives us and makes us into a new creation. And (as I've been saying over and over at church) it puts God back into the center of our lives.

How amazing it is to hope for new life to come. Our capacity to hope - to expect and prepare and dream - is answered by the love and forgiveness of Jesus. The cold hibernation and self-examination is met by the joy and wonder of Christ. We are alive again, in the One who is alive for us! Thanks be to God.



Can't Give Up

By Elizabeth Bonker

Today is a new start
Not a man can stop me
I plan to make a change
To be the person that I should be
To prove that I am smart
It is real tough to be me
I hope that everyone realizes that
I am in here



Second Annual Christ Church Men's Group Bowling Tournament

By Ray Bonker

(Sparta) (NJ, definitely *not* Greece):
On Saturday, February 27th a dozen
manly athletes from our church put on
a demonstration of Olympian-caliber
bowling. Fortunately for the rest of the
free world, bowling is not actually an
Olympic sport. In an epic rematch of
weekend warriors, last year's
champion Mark "No Thumb" Jensen
bravely attempted to fend off strong,
semi-strong, weak, and even pathetic
challenges to his title. With artery-
hardening fried food fuel and liberal
levels of liquid libations, our denizens
of the hard floor hurled their orbs
down the alley with protean strength
displays rarely witnessed since the

bygone days of Elysian grandeur.
These graceful gladiators of the gutter
ball gave the glorious game their
penultimate effort, dazzling the
assembled masses with spellbinding
post-release delivery techniques,
often resembling a hybrid of disco
dance and vertical electrocution.

After a marathon four game battle,
Jensen was forced to abdicate his
reign due to the overpowering
performance of Ralph "NASCAR"
Robinson, who surged ahead of the
pack with an astonishing 241 final
game. "I owe it all to the fact that I
brought my own ball this year" the
gallant gentleman intoned, "or maybe
it was just the Viagra kicking in." His
grandiloquence stunned the adoring
throng into reverential silence, and
simultaneously served as the definitive
reminder why women are not invited
to compete.



Redemption, Regeneration, What a Blessing!

By Joan Mazalatis

It seems the word redemption just keeps coming up lately. I even heard it watching the Olympics from one of the athletes who said when they won that it felt it was like “redemption from past losses”. But, thank God we cannot redeem ourselves. Redemption is salvation from sin through Christ’s sacrifice, or to set free or ransom. Jesus gift of redemption is such a blessing, not to be taken for granted and especially during Lent something to be thankful for. It’s one of my favorite “R” words.

However, another “R” word I hold even more dear is regeneration. The word regeneration means to reform spiritually or morally. “Re” means again and “generate” means to create a new. The Father sends Jesus to regenerate us or to “male us over again” back into being who our heavenly Father created us to be to begin with – recreated, reborn. This is the process of change that Jesus makes us into with Him. The best invitation we will ever have. What a unique plan it is indeed – one so good that only God can claim it. And one we are blessed to be joined with Jesus in. Praise God.

The Transplant

By Lana Liu

The tension was palpable as the attending physicians awaited the arrival of the chief surgeon. Never before had this operating room known such horror. The accident cases with their mangled limbs were bad. The failing lungs, the raging cancers –

these were the cases they were trained to handle. At those times they, along with the nurses, would unite, making an expert team that would work in smooth harmony to make the wounded whole.

But today, today they were being asked to do the unthinkable. They were being asked to make the whole wounded.

It went against every code and every standard by which they had ever made a decision.

The diseased heart encased in the chest of its terminally ill owner was waiting. Oh yes, this team had performed heart transplants before. With great success. But never a heart transplant like this.

The great double doors swung open to permit the entrance of the chief surgeon and, on the gurney beside him, the one who would receive the heart.

The horror of what was about to happen showed on each face. But no faces were as anguished as those of the chief surgeon and the patient at his side. Nor were any faces more resolute.

With the upmost dignity and singular purpose the chief surgeon directed those in attendance to their respective positions and tasks. Some, in order to comply to this assignment, had to shut down all emotion and work mechanically. Others tried to justify their participation with scientific rationalizations. No one understood.

The incision was made. The whole, healthy, beating, perfect heart was removed and put into the preserving solution.

Then the chief surgeon reached out to receive the diseased heart

freshly removed from its owner. All in attendance gasped at the sight of it – gray, shrunken, hardened by the disease it carried.

Silently, with tears in his eyes, the chief surgeon turned back to his waiting patient. No one, not even the coldest doctor, was able to assist in this task. Still he proceeded. Into the waiting cavity he tenderly placed the diseased heart. As only his skillful hands could do, he worked his artistically scientific magic and then closed the flesh over it.

By now the room had erupted in turmoil. This surgeon, the one most respected in the entire medical community, had just for all practical purposes guaranteed his patient's death. That was bad enough. But some in the room knew it was worse than that. Some knew that the one to whom he had done this unspeakable thing was his very own son.

Now the surgeon turned his attention to the other patient. He was a nobody – at least to those in this room – one of a long line of beaten down sick people who clamored for their attention. Yet the chief surgeon proceeded to implant his son's whole healthy heart into this one as if he were the most important person ever to have lived and as if saving this life was the most important thing the surgeon would ever do.

The funeral for his son wasn't very well attended. How could anyone go there with their emotions toward the chief surgeon the way they were?

The surgeon himself couldn't leave his son's side though. He kept vigil knowing...knowing...knowing...

The others had gone about their business. Life must go on, they

reasoned. Some had nightmares. Some grieved. But the surgeon-father kept his vigil at his son's side.

And then on the third day, the father and the son emerged exultant and jubilant. For this surgery had indeed been like no other surgery, because this patient was like no other patient. This patient was named "Life."

Isaiah 53:4-6 (NIV)

Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him so stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Ezekiel 36:26 (NIV)

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.

John 14:6 (NIV)

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life."

Romans 14:6 (NLB)

...Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him.

Hebrews 2:9 (NLB)

What we do see is Jesus, who “for a little while was made lower than the angels” and now is “crowned with glory and honor” because He suffered death for us. Yes, by God’s grace, Jesus tasted death for everyone in the world.

1 Peter 3:18 (NIV)

For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit.

Acts 2:24b (NLB)

...for death could not keep Him in its grip.

Kudos to the Senior Sunday School Class

By Elena Mastroianni

Sunday, March 7, 2010, saw the unveiling of the video written, acted, directed, and produced, under the direction of the senior class Sunday School teachers Mrs. Sharon Bowles and Mrs. Vicki Robinson.

Gale Bonker, and Cody and Taylor Robinson presented the video during the 10:15 Sunday church service. In case you missed the “screening” of this video at our church service it is available for viewing on YouTube!

Please visit the following web site to see this video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tgQep0SCN94> (0) is the number not the letter “O”.



Two Children

By Carole Zicherman

Two children...one born in Bolivia, South America and the other child from Kisumu, Africa. Both children are in need. At Christ Church our outreach to Christian Jhon Paginao Lizarau of South America began 6 years ago. We learned about this little boy from Christian Children’s Fund and started corresponding. Our Vestry voted to send a monthly check from everyone at church for Christian. This enables our sponsored child to get basic needs and an education. Over the years Christian has sent us many letters of thanks, drawings, photos, and signs his name with “mucho amour”. The Proyecto Esperanza (Project Hope of Bolivia) sends Christ Church a yearly progress report. In December 2009, we received the most recent, and it can be viewed by the entryway, along with Christians letters and pictures. The progress report also tells of Christian’s latest achievements, activities (still a big soccer fan), height, weight, medical, dental checkups and some traditions and customs of Bolivia. Because much has been given to us by God, we of Christ Church have given to Christian and his family. Bravo!

I have enjoyed writing to him, in the name of our church over these many years and sending cards from our Sunday School classes. In October of 2009 (it takes several months for Christian to receive our mail as it is rerouted) many of our congregation signed notes of love and prayers for Christmas and for his most recent 15 th birthday on January 7, 2010. I’m being nudged to say that anyone who would

like to be in communication with this dear child in Bolivia can do so. We have a complete file from joyful, friendly Christian and I know someone in our congregation has the gift of communication and encouragement for him. PLEASE consider volunteering to continue going into the world (by writing to Christian) and bringing His gospel to others as Jesus asked us to do.

Years ago some of you “old timers” might remember that at church, we all sponsored a young girl from Georgia in the USA named “Peaches.” We were encouraged by Rev. Constantinos (as he often did) to go a step further in our relationship with Peaches and actually invite her and her Mom to come and stay with us for a week. Picnics, places to go and see, a special worship was planned, and our homes were opened to welcome them to New Jersey. It was such a JOY for everyone! Years later we received a letter from “Peaches” who remembered that visit when she was a young girl and our love for her. In Peaches letter she stated that she became a doctor in Georgia. Thank you dearest Lord for the privilege of being a part of that miracle in her life!

Are there any innovative ideas out there for our sponsored child Christian? How can we, across the miles, help this young man? Anyone traveling to Bolivia?

Our second child of God, Brian of Kisumu (pronounced kissoomoo) lives with his Mom Ruth, Dad Issac, and two siblings. They also care for two cousins because the children were orphaned when their parents died. In this highly populated shanty area many people, including Brian’s family of seven, live

in poverty. His first letter to our Sunday School children told it all when he sadly said, “Sometimes I don’t eat.” Since July of 2009, we have been honored to be a part of our Lord’s plan for them. The generosity of all at church amounted to \$1500.00, which amounts to 88,205.85 Kenyon shillings, in February of 2010. Paula Ackley (and many contributions and hard working people) raised three hundred dollars of that from our September garage and bake sale. Sharon Bowles and I are also amazed by your generosity each month. BRAVO AGAIN! Where your treasure us there your heart is also. Brian’s mom just sent me another letter of thanks for the “support we have been receiving from church members.” She also said, “May Good God take care of everybody and bless you all. Truly the assistance is very vital to our lives. On behalf of my family, may God bless all Americans. I beg to remain in Jesus name and send warmest greetings to all, Ruth and family.”

To me it is such a blessing to know that we are doing a tiny portion of the Lord’s ministry and I pray that He will multiply our love and resources to expand his outreach in the world.



Christian



Brian

Editor-in-Chief Rev. Sonia E. Waters

Editor Elena Mastroianni

Due date for sending me articles, pictures, poetry, recipes for the Spring Gazette is **May 23**. **Publication date will be June 13, 2010**. Thank you for sending your pieces to me at Chalkdust423@yahoo.com