



The Trumpet

*Our Mission: To seek and serve Christ in others,
loving our neighbors as ourselves.*

Christ Episcopal Church of Cedar Park • 3.5 miles west of Hwy. 183 on W. FM 1431 • www.cectx.org

October 2008

What is "Ripe for the Harvest?"

Dear Friends,

I have heard many ask: "What is Ripe for the Harvest?" Well, it is a very simple program that will strengthen and support our church. Ripe for the Harvest is basically a parish wide program that we will hold over the course of several weeks to promote better communication and ideas among our community and leadership. As we are transitioning and growing in size and shape, Ripe for the Harvest will help us offer a voice and spiritual direction for us all. The most important question we need to know right now is what is God calling us to become? We are no longer Cedar Park's best kept secret located in a hide away spot off of a winding farm to market road outside of the city limits. Very soon from now we will be located immediately off of a busy boulevard with lots of traffic and high visibility.

Your vestry and I have been working on the immediate plans concerning what will happen when the new road will be completed. Repaving our parking lot -- including all of the gravel area -- is a priority. Adding beautiful and inviting landscaping along our new road frontage and displaying a new sign at our new and improved (and safer) entrance is another priority. Connecting to city sewage and discontinuing our septic system of disposal is also being planned. We currently have over \$100,000 saved in an investment account to pay towards some of these improvements. These are all important and immediately needed maintenance items. *But what about our mission to serve God? The vision of Christ Church is not just my vision, it is our vision together.* Therefore as your pastor I need to know what our vision can become! *That is what Ripe for the Harvest will provide for us.*

I am asking for as many of you as possible to participate in our Ripe for the Harvest program. We will kick it off on Wednesday, October 8th with dinner beginning at 6:00pm. I know that many of you might have a difficult time reaching the church by 6:00pm from your evening commute. However, please feel free to come when you can! If you cannot stay for the full two and half hours please feel free to stay as long as you can! It is important to have as many of us as possible to learn and understand how Ripe for the Harvest will work for our church. The Rev. Steven Rottgers will be our speaker. He has over 25 years of church life experience and he will explain our program and answer any questions you may have. Then the following three Sundays from October 12, 19 and the 26th, we will be participating each week for our Ripe for the Harvest program. It will be a reflective time for writing down our thoughts, concerns and what we would like to see happen for Christ Church; what we do not like and what we would like to see happen for the future.

The Holy Spirit will move among us and we will begin to unfold God's vision for what our church will become. With the information gathered we will be able to set priorities for our budget for the next couple of years and set goals to accomplish them. This program will also grow and strengthen our many ministries. I believe Ripe for the Harvest will transform our church! I am asking for your prayers, support and your dreams. Please begin to pray with me as we look forward to the spiritual process of stepping towards the future.

Peace,
Bruce†

Faith Partners Update

A NEW BOOKCASE

Faith Partners now has its own bookcase in the church library. Please take any leaflets or books you want. You will notice that the 4 team members have business cards on one of the bookshelves. The cards are there so you will know how to reach us. (We're also in the church directory.) All inquiries are confidential. And if you have any suggestions for us, please let us know.

AN EVENING FOR EVERYONE

A special program for youth will be held on Wednesday, November 12, at 7:00 p.m. It will include a video and a participatory exercise on physical and legal aspects of underage drinking. The same video will be shown at the same time for all adults, with a question and answer session in place of the exercise. The Travis County Attorney's Underage Drinking Prevention Program is bringing us these events.

Even if you are not a young person or a parent, these events can help you to be a better informed influence on others at an opportune moment. You never know when regardless of your age – youth, adult, or older adult – you may have an opportunity to influence someone else in a positive manner.

If you are available to help with set-up, refreshments, clean-up or telephone calls, please contact Elizabeth Burba or Tish Rogers.

DO YOU KNOW YOUR ALCOHOL IQ?

Here are just a few of the questions that have been frequently received by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA). The Institute states that these answers are not meant to provide specific medical advice. Please consult your physician or other health care provider if you or a loved one has an alcohol problem.

1. Are specific groups of people more likely to have problems?

Alcohol abuse and alcoholism cut across gender, race, and nationality. In the United States, 17.6 million people - about 1 in every 12 adults – abuse alcohol or are alcohol dependent.

In general, more men than women are alcohol dependent or have alcohol problems. And alcohol problems are highest among young adults ages 18-29 and lowest among adults ages 65 and older. We also know that people who start drinking at an early age – for example, at age 14 or younger – are at much higher risk of developing alcohol problems at some point in their lives compared to someone who starts drinking at age 21 or after.

2. What is a safe level of drinking?

For most adults, moderate alcohol use – up to two drinks per day for men and one drink per day for women and older people – causes few if any problems. (One drink equals one 12-ounce bottle of beer or wine cooler, one 5-ounce glass of wine, or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits.)

Certain people should not drink at all, however:

- Women who are pregnant or trying to become pregnant
- People who plan to drive or engage in other activities that require alertness and skill (such as driving a car)
- People taking certain over-the-counter or prescription medications.
- People with medical conditions that can be made worse by drinking
- Recovering alcoholics

3. Does alcohol affect older people differently?

Alcohol's effects do vary with age. Slower reaction times, problems with hearing and seeing, and a lower tolerance to alcohol's effects put older people at higher risk for falls, car crashes, and other types of injuries that may result from drinking.

Older people also tend to take more medicines than younger people. Mixing alcohol with over-the-counter or prescription medications can be very dangerous, even fatal. In addition, alcohol can make many of the medical conditions common in older people, including high blood pressure and ulcers, more serious. Physical changes associated with aging can make older people feel "high" even after drinking only small amounts of alcohol. So even if there is no medical reason to

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CEC Pet Blessing October 5 gives us all a chance to return the favor to our furry, feathery, scaley friends

They greet us excitedly when we come home as if we are the greatest creatures to ever walk the earth. They play with us, comfort us and they ground us when we get all worked up. You want to knock the pretension right out of a room, just let the dog in. A few wags of the tail, a few excited sneezes, and some playful milling around and even a \$700 billion financial crisis starts to seem a little silly.

We have a German shepherd dog who has made it her career to keep her pack together and she takes her work seriously. She runs counter-clockwise circles around us to keep us all under her watchful eye. She nips our heels if we try to stray. She barks a warning when an outsider tries to infiltrate the herd. Her instinct is to serve and to protect. She has even tried to herd our cats (unsuccessfully). And yet, what does she -- and your pet -- expect in return for their unconditional love and service? Some food, some water and a place to rest. Everything else, to them, is gravy.

Well, now is your chance to give em some gravy. October marks the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals, and as usual, Christ Episcopal Church will have its annual Pet Blessing. Dogs, cats, pigs, birds, reptiles, amphibians -- ALL of God's creatures are welcome at this event at 5 p.m. Sunday, October 5 on the CEC grounds.

The humans who may accompany their animals might also take this opportunity to learn more about CEC's ongoing Pet Ministry, one that focuses on the blessings that our pets bring to us and what we can do to give back to them. Even if you don't currently have a pet, this ministry works closely with the local chapter of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) and provides many opportunities to help these creatures great and small.

For more information about this unique ministry, come to the Pet Blessing or contact Jill McDonald at 248-1938.

Preaching to the birds, baptizing a wolf and making a donkey cry *The legend of St. Francis*

Many of the stories that surround the life of St Francis deal with his love for animals. Perhaps the most famous incident that illustrates the Saint's humility towards nature is recounted in the 'Fioretti' (The "Little Flowers"), a collection of legends and folk-lore that sprang up after the Saint's death. It is said that one day while Francis was traveling with some companions they happened upon a place in the road where birds filled the trees on either side. Francis told his companions to "wait for me while I go to preach to my sisters the birds". The birds surrounded him, drawn by the power of his voice, and not one of them flew away. Francis spoke to them:

My sister birds, you owe much to God, and you must always and in everyplace give praise to Him; for He has given you freedom to wing through the sky and He has clothed you...you neither sow nor reap, and God feeds you and gives you rivers and fountains for your thirst, and mountains and valleys for shelter, and tall trees for your nests. And although you neither know how to spin or weave, God dresses you and your children, for the Creator loves you greatly and He blesses you abundantly. Therefore... always seek to praise God.

Another legend from the Fioretti tells that in the city of Gubbio, where Francis lived for some time, was a wolf "terrifying and ferocious, who devoured men as well as animals". Francis had compassion upon the townsfolk, and went up into the hills to find the wolf. Soon, fear of the animal had caused all his companions to flee, though the saint pressed on. When he found the wolf, he made the sign of the cross and commanded the wolf to come to him and hurt no one. Miraculously the wolf closed his jaws and lay down at the feet of St. Francis. "Brother Wolf, you do much harm in these parts and you have done great evil..." said Francis. "All these people accuse you and curse you...But brother wolf, I would like to make peace between you and the people." Then Francis led the wolf into the town, and surrounded by startled citizens made a pact between them and the wolf. Because the wolf had "done evil out of hunger", the townsfolk were to feed the wolf regularly, and in return, the wolf would no longer prey upon them or their flocks. In this manner Gubbio was freed from the menace of the predator. Francis, ever the lover of animals, even made a pact on behalf of the town dogs, that they would not bother the wolf again. It is also said that Francis, to show the townspeople that they would not be harmed baptised the wolf.

Legend has it that St. Francis on his deathbed thanked his donkey for carrying and helping him throughout his life, and his donkey wept.

(The preceding excerpted from Wikipedia entry on St. Francis)

Keeping Your Commitments

I'm sitting in the bleachers of Burger Stadium watching the Class A Marching Bands compete in the Capital City Festival. Watching these high school bands gives me an opportunity to think about commitments. I know the bands have been working hard, and spending hours (upon hours) practicing in preparation for half-time shows and for this competition. Today they will be ranked and rated not just by their friends and families, but also by a panel of judges. This may result in a trophy that can sit in their school's display case, a reflection of their accomplishment.

Today's effort for the Rouse HS band required them to be at the school and ready-to-go at 6:45a.m....on a Saturday morning. Needless to say, this took commitment. For those of you who don't know, Rouse is a 9th grade only high school. I am very impressed by the commitment and the performance of this young group of teenagers.

I am also struck by the impact of those whose commitment wavered, or those who had other commitments, or...well, those who for whatever reason left a void today. It is sometimes, but not always, obvious when there are holes in the formations. Missing members leave a gap in the field, and a gap in the music that is being played.

For the Class A schools, the bands are fairly small. For many of the instruments there are no duplicates. For example in the RHS band, if the tuba player doesn't show up there is no back-up. They must perform without a tuba. There is a resulting gap in the field formation and a noticeable absence of "oompah, oompah" that helps define the musical rhythm (critical for a marching band).

Another aspect of the team's performance can be readily noticed in the contribution of the color guard. Here, from the bleacher, it is easy to see the results of the individual commitment to rehearsals. A clarinet hitting a wrong note is far less obvious than a large, brightly colored flag being spun out of tempo. It's hard to know the cause, but the end results are being judged today, in this competition. The whole team is affected by the cumulative contribution of its members.

The same can be said for the church. From Romans 12:4-6 "Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us."

And in 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 "There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service,

but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men."

Regardless of your talents, regardless of your experience, you are needed. Somewhere in our church there is place for you to contribute. We are working together to fulfill God's purpose for us. The whole team is affected by missing members.

"As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called— one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all." Ephesians 4:1-6

What are you being called to do? Are you committed to a ministry? If you are, make sure you're fulfilling your commitment. If not, make the commitment! We're not in a competition, but we are participating as a team. If you're not participating, you are missed.



OCTOBER MINISTRY SCHEDULE

Oct. 5

10:30 a.m. Fran & Jim Hart: **Lectors**
Fran & Jim Hart: **LEMs**
Cindy Wells: **Altar Guild**
Elias & Tony Martinez: **Ushers**
Suzie Scanlon/Zach Holahan: **Acolytes**
Fran Hart: **Geek at the Wheel**

Oct. 12

10:30 a.m. Jobie Guzman: **Altar Guild**
Jonah & Mike Reeh: **Ushers**
Jonah Reeh/Adam Uthoff: **Acolytes**
Randall Holahan: **Geek at the Wheel**

Oct. 19

10:30 a.m. Martha McEver: **Altar Guild**
Mandy & Noah Moore: **Ushers**
Tony Alvarez/Joel Holliman: **Acolytes**
Katie Scanlon: **Geek at the Wheel**

Oct. 26

10:30 a.m. Katie & Suzie Scanlon: **Ushers**
Suzie & Emily Scanlon: **Acolytes**
Kathy Ashlock: **Altar Guild**
Suzie Scanlon: **Geek at the Wheel**

Nov. 2

10:30 a.m. Brittany Alvarez/Elena Martinez: **Acolytes**
Cathy Valusek: **Altar Guild**
Jerry Halstead: **Geek at the Wheel**

Vestry Person for Month of October: Sarah Martinez
Offering Counter for Month of September: Sarah Short

In the other gardens
And all up the vale,
From the autumn bonfires
See the smoke trail!
Pleasant summer over
And all the summer flowers,
The red fire blazes,
The grey smoke towers.
Sing a song of seasons!
Something bright in all!
Flowers in the summer,
Fires in the fall!

Robert Louis Stevenson
Autumn Fires.

DO YOU KNOW YOUR ALCOHOL IQ?

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avoid alcohol, older men and women should limit themselves to one drink per day.

4. Does alcohol affect women differently?

Yes, alcohol affects women differently than men. Women become more impaired than men do after drinking the same amount of alcohol, even when differences in body weight are taken into account. This is because women's bodies have less water than men's bodies. Because alcohol mixes with body water, a given amount of alcohol becomes more highly concentrated in a woman's body than in a man's. In other words, it would be like dropping the same amount of alcohol into a much smaller pail of water. That is why the recommended drinking limit for women is lower than for men.

In addition, chronic alcohol abuse takes a heavier physical toll on women than on men. Alcohol dependence and related medical problems, such as brain, heart, and liver damage, progress more rapidly in women than in men.

5. Is alcohol good for your heart?

Studies have shown that moderate drinkers are less likely to die from one form of heart disease than are people who do not drink any alcohol or who drink more.

If you are a nondrinker, however, you should not start drinking solely to benefit your heart. You can guard against heart disease by exercising and eating foods that are low in fat. And if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, have been diagnosed as alcoholic, or have another medical condition that could make alcohol use harmful, you should not drink.

If you can safely drink alcohol and you choose to drink, do so in moderation. Heavy drinking can actually increase the risk of heart failure, stroke, and high blood pressure, as well as cause many other medical problems, such as liver cirrhosis.

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November is Recovery Month in the Episcopal Church. Remember to mark your calendar for Wednesday, November 12.

