

From the Priest in Charge

Dear Parish Family,

The title for the book that has been chosen as our text for three of the four mini-courses in Christian Exploration and Discovery is *The Complete Idiot's Guide to World Religions*. When I shared this news with the Vestry last month, I got a very hearty laugh in response. And why not? This is not only a clever way to get the attention of the reader at the bookstore, but also for the curious who want to know more about Judaism and Islam and Buddhism. These three religions, along with Native American spirituality, will occupy our interests throughout the year.

A twenty-first century reality is that we need to know more about the major world religions. Our world is so much smaller in so many ways and, yet, our political conflicts are deeper. While we must continue to pray for peace, we must also do more to expand our understanding. Knowledge is power and the ability to know just a little more about another's faith can provide a tremendous opportunity to have a relationship and to make hope and peace real.

The opposite is also true. In October of 2007, Pam and I were given the wonderful opportunity to take a course at St. George's College in Jerusalem on the three faiths which are connected to Abraham: Judaism, Islam and Christianity. More than one Muslim and Jew said to us in so many words during our time in the holyland that what they hoped for was dialogue with Christians who clearly understood their own faith, so that they could engage in real dialogue. Learning about the faith of the other is also the change to be articulate about being a Christian. It's a kind of spiritual "two-fer."

As we enter Lent, please consider joining us after Coffee Hour on Sundays March 8 and 22 from 11:00 a.m. to 12 Noon. We will have a soup and bread lunch as we discover together. The third session will be an Interfaith Jewish Seder, led by Karen Filler of South Bristol. We are still trying to work out the date and will make it known shortly.

Continued on page 4



ON Sunday February 15, St. Giles saw the baptism of its newest member, Daniel Jones, son of Liz and Eric Jones.

Save the Date for Pentecost Sunday

The Praise Dance Company of New York City will be the focal point of the May 31st Pentecost service, thanks to funds made available from the Arlene Van Deventer Memorial Fund. The featured poet will be Brad Davis, who was an Episcopal priest for 25 years and now teaches at the Pomfret School in Connecticut. Brad sees himself in the lay order for "service as an artist." Martin Steingesser and Judy Tierney of Portland will perform e.e.cummings's poem, "i thank you God for most this amazing day". Many St Giles worshippers will be participating also.

The five dancers will need places to stay. We will need two or three homes. If this interests anyone, please contact George Van Deventer, at church or at gvan@midcoast.com or 677-2840.

Notes from the Senior Warden: A Visit to Haiti

In late January, I travelled to Haiti to volunteer at a hospital in Cap Haitien and to check on a Rotary project I've been working on. This partial account of the trip may be of interest because my experience there has a connection, albeit an indirect one, to the nature of our parish.

First a bit about the country and Cap Haitien, "The Cap". Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere and the fifth poorest in the world. Unemployment is 85% and the average Haitian lives on less than a dollar a day. The country has been denuded of trees, cut down for the mahogany trade or burned for charcoal - the only fuel available to most Haitians. Cap Haitien is one of Haiti's major cities and is, by national standards, somewhat more prosperous and peaceful than the rest of the country, although UN forces patrol the streets on armored personnel carriers to keep the peace. The city of Cap Haitien has no water or septic system and only an intermittent electrical power, provided by a new Cuban-built gas-fired power plant.

The organization for which I volunteered, Konbit Sante, ("Health Partnership" in Creole), is headquartered in Portland and is dedicated to building a sustainable health care system which will meet the needs of the people of The Cap and its environs. Its base in Cap Haitien is Justinian Hospital, the principal health care facility in the Northern District which services a population base of over 500,000. Like the city, Justinian Hospital has no septic system, no reliable supply of potable water and inconsistent electrical power. [Konbit Sante has no formal relationship with the Episcopal dioceses here or there, but often facilitates travel arrangements for Maine Episcopalians to visit this part of the country.]

In preparing for this trip, I was aware that I was visiting a third world country with profound, deep-seated problems that affect every aspect of its people's lives. I was not prepared, however, for the personal experience, the seeing, hearing, smelling and feeling of the many elements of deep poverty which affect this nation. The space here does not permit to report fully on the circumstances I observed, so I will emphasize the positive and the familiar.

In this regard, it is encouraging that so many people and organizations from around the world are devoting considerable resources to help the Haitian people and its econ-



*Sant' Esprit Episcopal Church
in Cap Haitien*

omy. Our diocese is a leader in these efforts as we pursue our relationship with the diocese of Haiti as our sister diocese. [Indeed, as this is being written, Bishop Knudsen is in Haiti and you can read about her work and experiences there by connecting to her link at the diocesan website.] Moreover, seven Maine parishes have partnered with parishes in Haiti and our cathedral in Portland has just established such a relationship with a parish in Duny.

In Cap Haitien, I found the Episcopal church of Sant' Esprit where I worshipped on Sunday morning. In some important respects, this parish is the same as ours - same Book of Common Prayer, though in French, same liturgy, even a UTO campaign underway. But there were also major differences. Sant' Esprit is a very large church which seats 300 and runs a technical high school. It has five services on Sunday! Its nave features a towering ceiling, but the walls are open on the side so that the congregants are out of the rain, but still exposed to the weather. Most who attend church get dressed up for the occasion; the men wore suits, the women dresses, and the children had on their best outfits. I was warmly greeted and was assisted in

following the service in French by my neighbors in the pew. At announcement time, I was delighted and surprised when the priest, Pere Noe, had me introduce myself to the parish. (Incidentally, Pere Noe has visited St. Andrew's in Newcastle several times and speaks excellent English.)

I must tell you that I was moved by the experience of worshipping at this church and grateful for the welcoming atmosphere and the familiarity of a church, akin to ours, but so far away from us economically and geographically. That said, we have a kinship with our Episcopal brothers and sisters in Haiti, through our diocesan relationship, through our common faith and liturgy, and, importantly, through our mutual efforts to help the least among us. Perhaps the day will come when St. Giles can forge a relationship with a parish in Haiti so we can extend our warmth and generosity to our fellows who live in this difficult land.

— John Atwood

Lay Ministry for March 2009

March 1 First in Lent
 Readers: Ken Marden & Liz Jones
 Chalice/Intercessor: Dotti Meyer
 Oblationers: Richard & Joanne Gross
 Greeter: Jean Miller
 Server: Devon Huntley
 Nursery: Anna Lee
 Coffee: Jill Huber & Linda/Jimmy Brown
 Altar: Jean Greenwood

March 8 Second in Lent
 Readers: Jean Greenwood
 & Catherine Anderson
 Chalice: Pam Van Siclen
 Intercessor: Dotti Meyer
 Oblationers: Tom & Wendy Eichler
 Greeter: George Van Deventer
 Server: Laura Lee
 Nursery: Cathi Laweryson
 Coffee: Joe & Carolyn Gray
 Altar: Nancy Saulniers & Lamar Carroll

March 15 Third in Lent
 Readers: Raymond Anderson
 & Jean Miller
 Chalice: Charlene Donahue
 Intercessor: George Jones
 Oblationers: Linda Pierpont & Jill Huber
 Greeter: Tom Eichler
 Server: Anna Lee
 Acolytes: Roberta Anderson
 & Emily Huber
 Nursery: Laura Lee
 Coffee: Cynthia White & Ken Marden
 Altar: Tom & Wendy Eichler

March 22 Fourth in Lent
 Readers: Trudi Hodgkins & Tom Eichler
 Chalice: John Atwood
 Intercessor: Wendy Eichler
 Oblationers: George Jones & Jean Miller
 Greeter: Dotti Meyer
 Server: Laura Lee
 Nursery: Kevin/Christy Rousseau
 Coffee: Brigid Gibson-Griffin
 & Betsy Lee
 Altar: Linda Pierpont

March 29 Fifth in Lent
 Readers: George Van Deventer
 & Kay Liss
 Chalice: Sidney Harvey
 Intercessor: Kay Dale
 Oblationers: The Anderson Family
 Greeter: Cynthia White
 Server: Anna Lee
 Nursery: Catherine Anderson
 Coffee: Charlene Donahue
 & Linda Pierpont
 Altar: Cynthia White & Kay Dale

Prayer List

*Please keep these people and their families
in your hearts and prayers:*

Caitlin Bazinet
Carolyn Calvin
Richard Chick
Kay Dale
Douglas Hensen
Meghan Innis and family
Diana Koldenhoven
Ryan LeClair
Judy Marden
Phyllis Miller
Edie Murphy
Margaret Pham
Mike Rice
Steven Sinclair
Allen Tait
Leon Tsamides
Anne Waugh

April 5 Palm Sunday
 Readers: Dotti Meyer & Ken Marden
 Chalice/Intercessor: George Jones
 Oblationers: Nancy Saulniers
 Carolyn Gray
 Greeter: Trudi Hodgkins
 Server: Devon Huntley
 Coffee: Debbie King & Carolyn Gray
 Altar: Jean Greenwood

Family Days in March
 1st — Bob & Dotti Meyer
 8th — Jean Miller
 15th — Krystyn Paules & Family
 22nd — Linda Pierpont
 29th — Brian & Rosa Redonnett

The Rev. John Van Siclen,
Priest in Charge

The Rev. Leonetta Burns, Deacon

Valerie Chipman, Minister of Music

Birthdays in March
 2nd — Wendy Eichler
 2nd — Zachary Anderson
 7th — Richard Pickering
 16th — Jill Huber
 20th — James Capper
 24th — Anne Bills
 25th — Margaret Williams
 26th — Kaleb Boucher
 27th — Gail Montgomery
 30th — Maggie Atwood

Lessons For March

March 1st	First in Lent
First Lesson	Genesis 9:8-17
Psalm	25:1-9
Second Lesson	1 Peter 3:18-22
Gospel	Mark 1:9-15
March 8th	Second in Lent
First Lesson	Genesis 17:1-7,15-16
Psalm	22:22-30
Second Lesson	Romans 4:13-25
Gospel	Mark 8:3-8
March 15th	Third in Lent
First Lesson	Exodus 20:1-17
Psalm	19
Second Lesson	1 Corinthians 1:18-25
Gospel	John 2:13-22

March 22nd	Fourth in Lent
First Lesson	Numbers 21:4-9
Psalm	107:1-3,17-22
Second Lesson	Ephesians 2:1-10
Gospel	John 3:14-21
March 29th	Fifth in Lent
First Lesson	Jeremiah 31:31-34
Psalm	51:1-13 or 119:9-16
Second Lesson	Hebrews 5:5-10
Gospel	John 12:20-33

Card of Thanks

Paul Fuller and George Jones would like to thank the parish for its prayers and visits during Paul's recent illness. Your concern has helped him make a speedy recovery.

Email changes
 Meegan Burbank
 mjurbanklaw@roadrunner.com
 George Jones
 geoinmaine@myfairpoint.net

March Calendar

Sunday, March 1
 9:30 am - Holy Eucharist

Sunday, March 8
 9:30 am - Holy Eucharist
 Christian Exploration and Discovery: Judaism

Thursday, March 12
 7:00 pm - Vestry meeting

Saturday, March 14
 Vestry Retreat

Sunday, March 15
 9:30 am - Holy Eucharist

Sunday, March 22
 9:30 am - Holy Eucharist
 Christian Exploration and Discovery: Judaism

Sunday, March 29
 9:30 am - Holy Eucharist

St. Giles' Episcopal Church

The Rev. John Van Siclen, *Priest in Charge*
 644-1132

The Rev. Leonetta Burns, *Deacon*
 622-6811

Officers

John Atwood, *Senior Warden*
 586-5557

Vestry

Ken Marden
Junior Warden
 549-4783

Betsy Lee
Treasurer
 563-2942

Tom Eichler
Clerk
 549-3869

Debbie King
 (2009)
 549-7872

Jean Greenwood
 (2010)
 549-4704

Linda Pierpont
 (2011)
 549-4663

Trudi Hodgkins
 (2012)
 549-3941

Kevin Rousseau
 (2010)
 549-4902

George Jones
 (2011)
 832-7412

Newsletter deadline: Third Sunday of every month
 George Jones, Editor
geoinmaine@myfairpoint.net

From the Priest in Charge

Continued from page 1

So, fellow "Idiots," let's open our hearts and minds for some wonderful food for thought. I believe we will be richly blessed.

Sincerely and faithfully,
 John

Knitters Needed

St. Giles' prayer shawls are traveling all over the country bringing comfort to those in need. We want to be sure that all our parish members who should receive a shawl will be given one. To meet the parish needs and the needs of our extended community, relatives and friends, we need more knitters and more yarn. If you would like to join the Prayer Shawl group, please let Lee know. If you can't knit, we can teach you. If you have yarn tucked away in a closet or attic, please consider donating it to the church. If you would like to give a contribution to purchase yarn, please give it to Lee. The group hopes to meet once a month to share our knitting and discuss how the ministry is helping the knitters as well as those to whom we give shawls. Please join us.