



Rejoice

118 N. Washington St. ✠ Alexandria, VA 22314
www.HistoricChristChurch.org ✠ October 2011

Archbishop Daniel Will Visit Us October 23

By Russ Randle

Our old friend, Archbishop Daniel Deng Bul, the Archbishop of Sudan, will be visiting Christ Church this month, renewing old ties now that South Sudan has become independent. Archbishop Daniel will offer a blessing at our 9:00 and 11:15 AM services and will lead a forum discussion in the Meade Room between those services.

Archbishop Daniel has been our mission partner since our vestry entered into a covenant with him and his diocese in May 1997, a covenant repeatedly renewed by our vestry since, to pray publicly for each other, to exchange visits, and to work together for the spread of the Gospel. Christ Church and the Archbishop have worked together steadily through the turmoil of the Sudanese civil war and subsequent independence of South Sudan. Our rector was made an honorary canon of St. Matthew's Cathedral in Renk when the Archbishop of Canterbury consecrated it in 2006. Christ Church and other Virginia parishes paid to build it.

continued on page 4



KRISTI THOMAS PHOTO



KRISTI THOMAS PHOTO

The Rev. Ann Gillespie commissions Mary Beth Baylor as the new Children & Youth minister. See page 7 for an update on the children and youth programs.

YOU Make the Difference

By Linda Dienno, Director of Stewardship

I used to think of stewardship as “that time of year to make my pledge.” Now I understand that stewardship is taking care of the gifts and resources God gives us and then giving part of those gifts back to God in the ways we use our time (the ways we feed ourselves spiritually), our talent (the ways we feed others through participation in ministry), and our treasure (the way we feed the well that feeds all of us by making a financial commitment to our church so that we can continue God’s work).

Starting this summer, members of the stewardship committee wrote articles for *Rejoice* about taking care of ourselves and taking care of others. Melissa Capers urged us to pursue happiness in July by taking time for simple pleasures. Janet Osborn echoed the theme in August encouraging us to take deep breaths and enjoy the last days of summer. I wrote in September about the need to feed ourselves with a variety of spiritual practices before feeding others through our ministry work.

In September, we completed three ministry fairs and we had people

sign up for more than 100 ministry positions. I can remember past years when the Open House ministry fair would reap 20 sign-ups at most. I like to think that the stewardship committee’s goal of putting time and talent first in the program year and offering three fairs to consider ministry opportunities made the difference.

continued on page 4

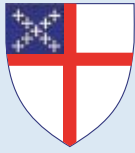
Giving in an Uncertain Time? When Wasn't it Uncertain?

By Janet Osborn
Stewardship Chair

How can I pledge to give while the economy is bad and my situation is so uncertain? When I hear that question, I am astonished and wonder if those asking grew up in a different world than I did. Did others experience an idyllic period of stability and certainty that I missed?

I was born in the early '60s, a time of great change; came of age in the late 70's when the country was suffering from oil shocks, runaway inflation and a crisis of confidence from

continued on page 4



Rejoice is the official monthly publication of Christ Church, Alexandria, Virginia, a parish in the Diocese of Virginia.

The Rt. Rev. Shannon Johnston
Thirteenth Bishop of Virginia

The Rt. Rev. Edwin F. (Ted) Gulick, Jr.
Assistant Bishop of Virginia

The Rt. Rev. David Colin Jones
Bishop Suffragan

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Joe Walsh, Brian Wommack, Steve Vajs

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The Rev. Pierce Klemmt, Rector

The Rev. Ann Gillespie,
Senior Associate Rector

The Rev. Heather VanDenventer,
Interim Associate Rector for
Faith Formation and Evangelism

The Rev. Dr. Diane Murphy,
Priest Associate

Director of Music

M. Jason Abel

Seminarian

Melanie Mullen

Christ Church embodies God's unbounded love by embracing, liberating, and empowering people, whoever they are and wherever they find themselves on their journeys of faith.

The *Rejoice* deadline is the third of the month preceding the publication. Please send proposed articles to membership@ccalex.org. Those accepted are subject to editing for length and content.

Carol Donlan gives her time and talent to edit *Rejoice*, Craig Keith provides design and layout, and Linda Dienno is the staff liaison.

Spirit-Filled Unity Walk Built Lasting Bridge

By Brian Wommack

“God has many houses.”

This simple truth, uttered by Brendan, age 8, after a very intense and spirit-filled day, is an excellent way to explain the message of the 9/11 Unity Walk that a dozen parishioners recently experienced.

Many of us have witnessed the unfortunate increase in religious intolerance in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. And just as many of us are often unsure how to make a witness of not just tolerance—but to go beyond to real understanding and appreciation.

The 9/11 Unity Walk on September 11 was a perfect opportunity to demonstrate in a tangible way our connection as children of God. We joined hands, hugged, and rubbed shoulders with those from many different religions—and those who espouse no religion at all. We asked questions, built bridges, and entered into relationships.

Symbolism was all around us on the walk. It began at Washington Hebrew Congregation with the beautiful and holy Muslim call to prayer and concluded with a gospel choir rockin' out *Amazing Grace* on the steps of the Washington Islamic Center. Between those two destinations, we were invited into many sacred worship spaces, learned practices (such as tying turbans or doing chants), and shared food with our brothers and sisters.

We met others who traveled from as far

as Chicago just to take part in this historic gathering on Massachusetts Avenue, and those who joined us on the spur of the moment. Several of us had the chance to share our observations with media in attendance (some from as far away as Japan), amplifying our message of unity and peace.

At the close of our day, after we posed for some final pictures, our group decided to share several cabs back to the walk's starting point. At just that moment, a limousine-sized cab large enough for our entire group pulled up. We enjoyed reflecting on our day during our ride, and chatted with our Palestinian driver about what we witnessed that day. The huge turnout, beautiful weather, and amazing experiences filled us all with hope for the future on a solemn day of remembrance.

Our group intends to walk again, and we'd love to have you join us and bring your friends. For more information on participating next year, feel free to contact me at wommackjb@gmail.com.

The Rev. Ann Gillespie, supported by several parishioners, proudly holds the Christ Church banner during the 9/11 Unity Walk.



BRIAN WOMMACK PHOTO

Don't Forget, You Make The Difference

By the Rev. Pierce Klemmt

Imagine what Alexandria would be like without church steeples on its horizon. Think of all the ways churches, synagogues, and temples contribute, helping this city flourish: supporting social service agencies, hospitals, schools, and clinics, and providing community meeting space and aesthetically pleasing sacred sites. In the spirit of jobs and commerce, congregations also act as engines for the local economy. (It is estimated that Christ Church provides more than \$5 million annually to the Alexandria community.) These valuable worship communities are easily discounted and increasingly marginalized by movers and shakers. But they are silently potent in the health and transformation of the communities where they are located.



CAROL DONLAN PHOTO

Congregations are difficult to value. Most of what they do is invisible and we only make the headlines when there is a contentious issue. Even church, synagogue, and temple volunteers can be siloed from the broad impact houses of worship make in improving the wellness for the communities they serve. Moreover, our work on Capitol Hill supporting social services legislation, our mission reach abroad on four continents in clinics, schools, hospitals, and refugee camps

are testaments to the breadth of our ministry with significant funding and committed volunteers. This impact has come to be known as the *Halo Effect*. Congregations radiate goodness, sanctuary, and help to those in need. Thus, they are worth more to their communities and the world than any one member, commentator, or public policy maker may ever be able to estimate.

What makes all this happen? Your pledge and your gift of service. Signing a pledge card in October and putting it in the offering plate makes all these things possible. We cannot do it without each of you helping to make this difference. We count on your generosity to be able to witness to Jesus' love in these broad and deep acts of ministry and care. Pray and fill out a pledge card so you can join in being part of God's redeeming love.

Tanzania: A Welcoming Country With Humbling Generosity

By Melanie Mullen
VTS Seminarian

"Why do you come here to learn, don't they have churches in America?" This question was hurled at me on my first seminary visit this summer to Tanzania, a thriving country on the East Coast of Africa, just south of Kenya on the Indian Ocean.

The seminary sent just two students to see major Dioceses in Tanzania. Our first stop was in the large coastal city of Dar Es Salaam. During my visit to the Anglo-Catholic seminary, I met puzzled students and teachers who had never met American seminarians, much less two women seeking ordination, but they were eager to hear that we considered their classes and worship a vital part of the Anglican Communion.

For the rest of our stay we traveled to the semi-desert region in central

Tanzania to visit the evangelical Diocese of Central Tanganyika. This region maintains a vibrant partnership with the Diocese of Virginia, which pays school fees for hundreds of orphans every year. Nothing prepared me for a place that was both modern with MTV and CNN everywhere, and also a rustic desert town with only periodic running water and limited hours of electricity.

I was hosted by a family of two young priests in the rectory of Mwaka House, a church named after the first native Tanzanian priest, and I was honored to spend time with Rev. Mwaka's descendants. The parish was one of the first in the country to have a woman rector. On my second day in town, I preached at the Sunday morning service in English, while she translated into Swahili for the congregation. Word soon spread



PHOTO COURTESY OF MELANIE MULLEN

Melanie helps with daily living chores at Mwaka House.

that there was a American at the church—after that every pew was filled!

I did everything that a priest in Tanzania might do: visit the sick, teach Bible studies, and sit and eat with lots of neighbors. Of all the lessons I learned the incredible hospitality of the Tanzanians topped

continued on page 8

Giving in an Uncertain Time?

continued from page 1

Viet Nam and Watergate. I remember the anxiety of the Cold War, the unforeseen one-day stock market crash in 1987, sudden illnesses and deaths among friends and family, destabilizing base closures, tsunamis, and election results that drove companies out of business. To paraphrase Ecclesiastes, to every season, there are anxieties and uncertainties.

So, if we know the world is uncertain, yet we are committed to supporting the work that a church community does, we have to make a plan to manage our resources so that we can ride out the waves and honor our commitments. Without a plan, we are buffeted, fearful, and never able to realize our dream of supporting the church and its mission to uphold the way of Christ. We cave in at every adversity and repeatedly are unable to commit to charitable endeavors in a meaningful way. It feels awful. It separates us from God and from our own highest self.

When I was getting divorced (legal bills every month) and had purchased



CAROL DONLAN PHOTO

Pledge Sunday 2010

a house that needed a new repair daily (and did I mention that my job was also under threat?), I was feeling powerless and baffled as to how to commit to giving.

One of my friends was listening to me whine and he said, “Don’t you have a rainy day fund?” I said “of course.” He said “well, it is raining.”

That was a chance to remember that there are seasons when things are unpredictable and everything seems to be going wrong, and that this is when stewardship actually pays off. Having been a good steward, I could go to the reserves, sustain myself, and meet my charitable commitments.

It was hard to see my savings dimin-

ish and I was scared; however, joy and gratitude washed over me as my life went forward.

Sure enough, the seasons changed, it stopped raining, and I was able to get back to building up the reserves for the next time. I have no doubt it will happen again. If one of you hears me complaining about financial adversity, please remind me that I knew it would rain and that I am more ready than I realize.

It’s not too late for a plan. With one, you cannot fail and without one, you cannot succeed. And success will mean far more than a pledge to Christ Church—it will mean your own *deep* joy in personal stewardship.

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let all men know your forbearance. The Lord is at hand. Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
—Philippians 4:4 –13

Bishop Deng Bul

continued from page 1

St. Matthew’s has one of the few female cathedral deans in the Anglican Communion, the Rev. Martha Deng Nhial.

Two additional Sudanese bishops, the Rt. Rev. Joseph Garang Atem Zorial and the Rt. Rev. Ezekiel Kondo, also will visit in October. Bishop Joseph succeeded Archbishop Daniel as Bishop of Renk in 2008; Bishop Ezekiel is Bishop of Khartoum. Our rector has known both bishops since meeting them in Khartoum in 1998 as part of our mission trip there.

Watch for information on the times and places the Archbishop and Bishops will be in northern Virginia for us to meet and renew our ties of friendship.

YOU Make the Difference

continued from page 1

Now we turn our attention to the third T of stewardship—treasure. This newsletter offers a message from our rector, a stewardship primer from Melissa Capers, and a personal story about giving from stewardship chair Janet Osborn. Together, they offer different insights into the stewardship of our treasure, what it means to give, and at this time, to give specifically through a pledge.

Last year, a parishioner explained pledging perfectly, saying “When we all pull together, we can do so much more than we can individually.”

On Sunday, October 2 at the fall all-parish meeting, the Rev. Ann Gillespie and Janet Osborn will kick

off our appeal with a stewardship liturgy. The next week invitations to pledge will be mailed to the parish.

Then every Sunday in October, members of the Stewardship Committee will be at a table outside church, available to answer questions.

Sunday, October 30 is Pledge Sunday and on that day, we will bring our pledges up to the altar to show our support of the work we do in God’s name through this church.

Learning the Language of Stewardship

By Melissa Capers

There is a special vocabulary to stewardship that can be confusing or downright daunting to those unfamiliar with the phrases and concepts. And so, we offer this primer:

Stewardship refers to an awareness that the most important aspects of our lives—“our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life”—come to us unearned, and are on loan from God. We are merely caretakers, stewards, of the lives and resources God has put into our hands. A complete awareness of our stewardship would encompass everything we do, and is generally understood to include sharing some of what we have in time, in talent, and in treasure, as a gesture of gratitude for these gifts and this responsibility.

Sacrificial Giving does not mean “giving ’til it hurts.” The traditional understanding of sacrifice is sanctifying of a portion of what we receive or control, to bring blessings on the whole. We sanctify the Sabbath to ask God’s blessing on our time and efforts. Many of our agricultural ancestors gave some of their grain or flocks to the church to ask blessings on the full harvest. The sacrifice of Jesus redeems us all. Sacrificial giving, then, refers to both the awareness that we give in order to bless, and to the practice of setting aside a portion of what we receive.

Which brings us to **Proportional Giving**. When you practice proportional giving, you commit to give a certain portion of your earnings – anything from one to 100 percent. The idea is to share some of everything you receive, rather than meeting a particular sum. Proportional giving adjusts to your circumstances, so whether you win the lottery or lose your job, you maintain the same practice of sharing what you receive. It’s a way of reminding yourself that God walks with you through your ups and downs.

If your proportional giving to Christ Church equals 10 percent of what you earn, then you are giving a **tithe**, which is defined in the Old and New Testaments as the portion to be given by the faithful followers. Many people

CHRIST CHURCH VESTRY STEWARDSHIP STATEMENT

We, the Christ Church Vestry, call on ourselves and our fellow parishioners by our example to witness that stewardship to God is an acknowledgement that we are most blessed by God’s gifts, and we joyfully want to give back for God’s use a portion of our time, talent, and treasure.

We acknowledge the requirement of Canon 12 of the Diocese of Virginia that vestry members “shall support the programs of the Church through a commitment to service and biblically-based standard of proportional giving. Each vestry member shall also continuously encourage the members of the congregation to support the programs of the Church and to give generously towards the support of those programs...”

We have each resolved to work toward proportional giving to the Church and to others, recognizing that The Episcopal Church has established the Biblical tithe as the minimum standard to be attained. We urge your prayerful consideration of joining us in this commitment to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Date of adoption: May 24, 2011



The image shows a collection of handwritten signatures on a document. The signatures are arranged in two columns. The names are: John Lawrence, Elizabeth Thompson, Anita M. Arnes, John [unclear], Harry M. Murray, and [unclear]. There is also a signature that appears to be 'BWMM'.

use the tithe as a target. For some, it is the minimum from which they measure their capacity to share more of their resources; for others the tithe is the goal they work towards as they grow in their practice of proportional giving. Still others tithe to their church, and make additional gifts to particular causes they support.

And finally, your **pledge** is your promise of financial support to our church. After your prayerful consideration (and some mathematics, if you tithe or give proportionately), your pledge reinforces your commitment to share what you receive, and informs the vestry of what they might expect as they plan the year’s budget. Each year, some parishioners exceed their pledges, while others fall short, but each pledge is vital in tying our community together in the practices of gratitude, sacrifice, and blessing, and in assuring that Christ Church can bring blessings to us all through worship, pastoral care, outreach, mission work, and everything else that we do.



WE'RE HEADING FOR THE HOLY LAND IN OCTOBER

By Jane Gilchrist

As we settle into fall and the quiet routines that occur between now and the busy holiday season, the Rev. Ann Gillespie and I are packing our bags and heading to the Holy Land on a trip sponsored by the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem (AFEDJ).

Our group of 21 from various parts of the United States will be led by AFEDJ's president, Phoebe Griswold, and local guides Canon Iyad Qumri and the Rev. Canon John Peterson, the Dean of St. George's College in East Jerusalem and Secretary General of the Anglican Communion.

Ms. Griswold expressed her hope that this trip to Israel, Palestine, and Jordan would be "a window into our sacred texts, the role of our Episcopal Church there and the history of this part of our world, so important to who we are as Christians and a critical part of our world's story today."

Ann and I are both excited about returning to this holy and complicated region to once again follow in the footsteps of countless Christian pilgrims, including many from our

own parish. But with this trip we will also have the opportunity to meet the current reality of this region, to meet the people and visit the institutions of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem.

Over 11 days we will visit more than 15 schools, health care facilities, and parishes. One particular bright spot for me is the opportunity to return to the Holy Land Institute for the Deaf in Salt, Jordan, which a group of Christ Church parishioners visited in 2008 while on a pilgrimage with our former associate rector, the Rev. Steve Wilson. Some of you may also remember the Institute's executive director, Brother Andrew A. L. de Carpentier, from his visit here.

We hope this trip will enable us to continue developing strong partnerships with the people and institutions in the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem through prayer, pilgrimage, and work. Our parish's Holy Land Mission and Bishop Johnston's Holy Land initiative are poised to move forward and the time seems right.

Please keep us in your prayers as we travel and be prepared to ask us lots of questions when we return.

Rites of Passage

BIRTHS

- Isabelle Franklin Hanback, daughter of Lucas & Carrie Sue Hanback.
- Amelia (Mia) Wesley McCombs, daughter of David McCombs & Julie Simonton
- Kayla Elizabeth Scorce, daughter of Eric & Tracy Scorce

BAPTISMS

- Simon Elliott Dickerson, son of Adam & Adrien Dickerson
- Annabeth Veronica Clancy Fullerton, daughter of Scot & Veronica Fullerton
- Collins Richard Scot Fullerton, son of Scot & Veronica Fullerton
- Kelsy Marie Koontz, daughter of Mark & Pender Ellett Koontz
- Andrew Lewis Molnar, son of David & Katherine Molnar
- Anna Claire Murchison, daughter of Matthew & Susan Murchison
- Collin Livingston Parks, son of Michael & Allison Parks

WEDDINGS

- Heidi Calomiris & Robert Scott Pandis

DEATHS

- Blanche Hughes
- Robert Wyatt

A Look Ahead

Join us on November 6 for the kick-off to the Christ Child Project and the Gift Shop's Annual Birthday Bash. Watch for details in *Parish Life* and the November *Rejoice*.

Youth Group 101: Three Ways for Our Young People to Grow

By Mary Beth Baylor
Children & Youth Minister

If you think youth group is a social club that goes on ski trips to escape the pressures of adolescence, prepare to be enlightened. Youth group is meant to be a place for young people to gather in a loving community of faith where their voices can be heard and their differences celebrated.

Youth ministry empowers young people to develop their leadership skills, expand their minds, and grow in their spiritual journeys. We embrace the traditions of the Episcopal Church and strive to reflect Christ's love and acceptance—All are welcome! And yes, we have lots of *fun*!

We offer three youth programs:

Club 45 is for 4th and 5th graders. We meet monthly on Sunday afternoon to do things like watch a movie, go food shopping for the Lazarus ministry, and play in the ultimate bowling adventure. Our first Club 45 meeting is to carve pumpkins on Sunday,



Mary Beth Baylor talks with Christ Church youth at the September 18 ice cream social.

October 30, 2:00–5:00 PM.

Junior High (6th, 7th, and 8th graders) meets on Sunday evenings from 5:30–7:30 PM in the Teen Center.

Senior High (9th–12th graders) meets on Sunday nights from 7:00–9:00 PM. Junior high and senior high intentionally overlap so both groups can eat dinner together from 7:00–7:30 in McMurray Commons. Thank you to the youth group parents and other church parishioners who make this possible by providing dinners for our youth.

In addition to Sunday night meetings, junior and senior high groups

enjoy lock-ins, mission work, and ski weekends. Mark your calendar for these Shrine Mont retreats:

- 8th Grade Weekend, October 7–9
- 6th & 7th Grade Weekend, November 11–13
- Senior High Weekend (9th–12th grades), April 13–15, 2012

Watch for details in *Parish Life* and on the youth and family calendar on www.historicchristchurch.org.

If you haven't been to youth group before, I hope you'll come check it out this year. Interested? Contact Mary Beth Baylor at mbbaylor@ccalex.org or 703-549-1450 x105.

Our Summer Conversations Continue About LGBT Issues

By Melissa Capers

October 11 is *National Coming Out Day*, a day set aside to encourage lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people to acknowledge this part of their identity, to open discussion, and build awareness of our lives. The effect of individuals coming out to friends and families has been profound—as recently as 1994, only 18 percent of Americans believed they knew someone who was gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. Today, many more people have a clearer sense of who their LGBT neighbors and family members are. A recent CBS poll says 77 percent of Americans know someone who is gay or lesbian.

Coming out also refers to the pro-

cess by which a person comes to understand his or her identity. In that sense, the community of Christ Church began a coming out process this summer, as we gathered to consider *Where We Stand* on the inclusion of LGBT people in our community. The answer is a work in progress: while most who participated clearly want LGBT people to feel welcome and included, concerns were raised about what our church might do to ensure that welcome.

The conversation will continue. In our final summer forum, parishioners developed recommendations for next steps. These will bear fruit shortly, increasing our awareness of LGBT members and visitors, and helping us to learn how we might be more welcoming. Contact me if you'd like

to help, or want a copy of the recommendations at mcapers@rocketmail.com or 703-549-2171.

I invite your prayers this October 11 for all who struggle to understand who they are, where they belong, and how they might most honestly live the life God has granted. The process of coming out is still a challenge for many, and still requires substantial courage—there have been four shootings of transgender women in DC just since July, and hate crimes against LGBT people in the District constitute most of the hate crimes reported there. Let us pray that our work and courage will promote understanding and acceptance of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people in our community, and that God's peace will prevail.

20/30 Vision Ministry Starts with Theology Uncorked

Washington is a magnet for people across the country in their 20s and 30s, many of whom have left their families, hometowns, and churches behind. Our 20/30 Vision ministry provides a special home for these folks, an outlet for fellowship, faith formation, and service. This is a place to build relationships and find meaning.

Through spiritual and social discourse we help each other become good stewards in our congregation and the larger community.

This fall we offer once again our popular *Theology Uncorked* series in which we explore meaningful questions in a relaxed environment. From

October 23 to November 13, we will offer four Sunday evenings of *Theology Uncorked* from 6:00–8:00 PM in McMurray Commons. Over potluck dinners and wine, we'll explore answers to the question: What does the Church have to say to the 21st century?

The series will kick off October 23 with discussion led by the Rev. Dr. David Gortner, Director of the Doctor of Ministry programs and Professor of Evangelism and Congregational Leadership at Virginia Theological Seminary. For more information, contact Caroline Jones at carolinefrancesjones@gmail.com.

ANNUAL FALL CAMP AT SHRINEMONT: 'DISCOVERING OURSELVES ANEW'

By Joan Woodbury

The Virginia Tri-Diocesan Council on Aging and Shrinemont invite all SAVVY seniors to the 21st annual retreat of fellowship and reflection, play and prayer, worship and rest, October 24–27 at Shrinemont.



Enjoy the beauty of the fall foliage, quiet time, getting acquainted with other participants, walks in the woods or simply rocking on the porch—and, of course, there will be plenty of workshops.

Keynote speaker will be Marcus Borg, Canon Theologian at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Portland, OR, and internationally known biblical and Jesus scholar. Chaplain will be the Rt. Rev. Edwin Gulick, Assistant Bishop of Virginia. Once again we'll be entertained by Ed Kilbourne, folk theologian, musician, composer, minister, glider pilot, sailor, and renowned storyteller.

Registration forms are available in the Parish House entryway. Carpooling may be arranged. For more information, please call Joan Woodbury at 703-768-3848.

Tanzania
continued from page 3

the list. Theirs is a culture in which you never eat alone. No matter how little anyone has, they couldn't eat without sharing it.

So day after day, I sat on stools and low chairs in house after house being stuffed full of rice and Mountain Dew soda.

As I went to visit some parishioners, a woman shouted out loudly. I asked someone what was wrong, and was told, "She's crying and thanking God because America has come to her home. All her life she never thought that America cared about people in villages far from the coastal city, but now she knows that God sees her in her little home and cares enough to send America to be her guest."

The gifts of God aren't really gifts until they are shared with someone else. At the end of my time in Dodoma I had learned much about never eating alone, and I was humbled by the generosity of the Tanzanians.

My last Sunday at Mwaka House Parish, the women punctuated the end of the sermon with singing, ululating, and clapping. They started draping cloth over my head and shoulders and



PHOTO COURTESY OF MELANIE MULLEN

Melanie learned from Tanzanian families about the generosity of giving.

told me to take it back to America to thank God and my family for sending me here to be their guest.

We Welcome Mary Jones to Christ Church

Mary is our new administrative assistant for worship. She works directly for the Rev. Ann Gillespie supporting our worship programs. She is also responsible for coordinating baptisms and weddings. Mary is a native Oregonian, a mother, and grandmother of four. Previously, she was



LILDA DIENNO PHOTO

the administrative secretary at Ascension Catholic Church, Portland, OR. She is excited about being at Christ Church to continue serving God's people and is grateful for the warm welcome she has already received. She looks forward to many years of service here.