



Reaching Out

News from the Missions Committee
of Emmanuel Episcopal Church

Spring 2011

Companions in Mission

Note: While the mission of the church has not changed over the centuries, the circumstances of time and place have influenced the way Christians have carried out that work. In earlier editions of *Reaching Out* Dan Appleyard has presented perspectives on those circumstances over the past 150 years—especially, colonialism and modernization. This article presents a contemporary perspective about how we can think about our mission.

The Episcopal Church, in recent years, has placed a fresh emphasis on the church's mission. Likewise, in his Diocesan Convention Address this year, Bishop Smith focused on the centrality of mission in the life of the diocese, when he said that we all could be challenged "to make the work of mission an organizing principle in (our) life together." We, at Emmanuel, have articulated that claim in part of our Core Values when we say that we will strive to be Bold in Mission.

Because
we are all
children
of the one God,
we may call all . .
. . our brothers
and sisters.

I believe that we, as a community, are doing just that! The mission activities of young and old, some of which you will read about in this issue of *Reaching Out*, are proving to be ripe environments for re-energizing our individual commitments to our Baptismal Covenant. Our dedication to mission is shown through our Food Pantry, our environmental stewardship projects, our seasonal outreach efforts to serve our brothers and sisters on the streets of the city of St. Louis, other places beyond our region (Arkansas, Oklahoma, South Dakota), and in our more global efforts to serve in Guatemala and Lui. In all, Jesus' model of reaching out to heal a broken world is touching the faith of individuals and our community.

With that re-energized focus, I believe that many people in our parish are finding a new appreciation for the variety and vitality of cultural and religious worldviews among the human family. We are opening up to new understandings of the world and God's deep longing for a kingdom of peace and reconciliation. Time and time again, our young people have said how they have been powerfully moved by the people they have encountered in their mission trips. Likewise, adults serving the poor on the Rosebud Reservation have returned to Emmanuel transformed in their faith, seeing themselves with new eyes and understanding their ministries with new vision because of the people they encountered.

I believe that part of the reason that this understanding occurs is because there has been a shift in our self-understanding as Christians of what it means to be a "missional" people. We have come to believe that the Church's relationship to people of other cultures and religious traditions begins in the recognition of God's many gifts to us, including that of relationship. We have a fresh understanding of the idea that all are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). When we meet another human being, regardless of her or his difference from us, we are meeting a unique creation of the living God. More and more we are coming to the awareness that we are bigger than just ourselves, and our particular cultural/societal worldviews. We have come to believe that we are, in fact, a community of all peoples and that God made the whole human race to live in harmony on earth. All are equal in God's sight; and, each is equally the object of God's love. Because we are all children of the one God, we are all related to one another. It is in this sense that we may call all men and women our brothers and sisters. Thus, we really are companions in community on this "fragile earth, our island home." (BCP p.370) This companionship is itself a divine gift which we are called to make real in our lives.

This powerful sense of being companions with global partners is tangible. Recently, I traveled in the UK, where I gathered with lay people, clergy and bishops who are from Nigeria, the Philippines, Barbados, Malawi, Switzerland, the UK and US, all for the purpose of supporting the Anglican Observer to the UN - Hellen Wangu, who is from Uganda. Her sole mission, and that of our Advisory Council, is to create avenues where the Church's mission to reconcile humanity to God and one another (BCP p. 855) can be realized. One of the ways this will be seen is in the coming days when thousands of women from around the world, including more than 50 representing the Anglican Communion, will gather in New York for the 55th session of the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women, the oldest U.N. standing commission. Their sole purpose is to join hands with global partners for women's empowerment, and justice and human rights for women and girls near and far. Another is through our Geneva office's commitment to various health, education and peace efforts and through our Environmental Officer's work with the Anglican Communion Environmental Network. As Rector of Emmanuel, I am a companion (and so - you are, too) with all of these sisters and brothers who by word and deed are seeking to serve Christ and our global neighbors.

All of the above represent our refreshed and transformed theological claim for the central place of mission in the life of the church. In each of these efforts we are seeking to make "incarnate" - to make flesh - the belief that we are companions with our brothers and sisters around the globe as we seek a commonwealth of peace and reconciliation. Whether it is our missionaries out in the "field" or worshippers in the pews, we find ourselves committed to reach out to be the hands, heart and feet of Jesus with a deep desire to serve the world in his name. In doing so, we are also finding that the purpose of this kind of "companionship" is to create the space for encounters with others who differ from us. Just as God relied upon the incarnation to become more fully known, these places where we encounter diverse and differing people found in our mission journeys call for us to be with them in the flesh. We can't "donate" mission alone: we must rely upon our incarnate place in the world with them to be known by one another.

Also, this relational dynamic in mission calls for us, as God's daughters and sons, to actually reflect the very nature of God. As Father, Son, Holy Spirit (Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier) is the ultimate model of creatively giving and receiving, we are to imitate this Triune God by having the courage and will to give and receive from each other in deep and abiding relationship. Like the offering of the Christian virtue of hospitality when we welcome people into our midst, Christian companionship in mission embraces those places where the reconciling love of God is easily understood and received, so that our eyes, ears, hearts and minds are open to fully relating to each other.

I once heard the image of Southern women at a family/community meal used to describe Christian hospitality. As hosts in a southern kitchen, we don't sit or rest. We hover attentive to the needs of those we encounter. Plates are never empty, and we continually ask if something more or different is needed. The work is never done. The mission is never complete. Like good southern cooks and hosts we continue to serve everyone throughout the feast. And, as in such a wonderful meal, in the midst of all, we engage in deep conversation with each other, sharing our stories, and laughing and weeping as our lives are brought ever closer. This is perhaps the most divine gift that we are to cherish: being drawn into closer relationship with each other which is marked by God's love and reconciliation. This image strikes a chord in me, as I reflect on the transforming relationships that we experience, when we encounter others in mission as companions in God's kingdom making.

So, I say come, join the mission, join the feast! Be ever more bold in mission! Be drawn ever closer to God and our neighbor. For in such places, the kingdom of God comes near.

Faithfully yours,

Daniel

EMMANUEL COMPANION MINISTRIES

DESTINATION: ANTIGUA

Hello, I am writing to you on behalf of the Young Adult Missions, a new service group founded by members of the parish of Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Saint Louis. The members of our group performed service work at Emmanuel during high school. Now that we have graduated, we are looking once again to serve. This summer, we are planning travel to Antigua, Guatemala, to build houses for the severely impoverished, and to work in children's nutrition centers. Our work will be done through the God's Child Project dedicated to the relief and the education of the citizens of Guatemala. This trip is significant to us because most of us have done service in Antigua before. Now, with experience, we are eager to build on our previous work. We are a new group that is still trying to establish ourselves, and therefore we are asking you, if you would be willing, to make donations to help our project. Your contributions will allow for more participants and help fund future work. You can support our mission by sending checks payable to Emmanuel Episcopal Church and including "Young Adult Missions" on the memo line. Thank you so much for your time and help.

Sincerely,

Walter Buhro

Note: Since Walter submitted his letter for *Reaching Out*, the Missions Committee wrote him that it had voted to contribute \$500 "as a token of our support for your project. Please know that we are very proud of the work you all are doing. You all are in our prayers, we are behind you, and we wish you God speed." This gift was made in the hope that individuals will also contribute to this effort. Upon receiving this news, Walter responded, in part, "Your generosity and faith in us is very encouraging."

DETENTION CENTER BIRTHDAY PARTY

On Friday, February 12th, a few members of the Missions Committee gathered at the City Juvenile Detention Center for its monthly birthday party. Once a year, for many years, Emmanuelites have served cake and ice cream along with bringing joyful fellowship. Each time we join the young people, usually with a magician to entertain the kids, we are always moved anew by the experience. Mary Jane Kuhn tells the story of a young boy who approached her some years ago at one of these events and said, "I recognize you." When Mary Jane couldn't figure if he knew her from her neighborhood, or if he knew one of her girls or their friends, he said, "No, I remember you being here before" at the center. When she said, "Well, I'm sorry to see you back here again," he said, "You don't understand. I feel safe here." This small ministry, like most, speaks as much to those who go, as to those who receive. For a brief moment in time we are together and the memory sustains us.

DESTINATION: ROSEBUD RESERVATION

Members from Emmanuel and Christ Lutheran churches will travel to South Dakota for their 11th time this summer, June 11–18. They will continue working on a home under the auspices of Habitat for Humanity to which Emmanuel has contributed 25% of the 2010 Christmas offering. If you are interested in supporting or participating in The Adult Mission Trip, contact Donna Erickson. You can learn more about past work and about connections with the people of Rosebud at the AMT blog: <http://emmanuelamt.blogspot.com>

LENT 2011 AT EMMANUEL



more
fervent in
PRAYER



more
generous
in WORKS of
CHARITY



more
eager in cele-
brating the
MYSTERIES
by which we
are reborn

ALMSGIVING

This Lent we again embrace the traditional Lenten custom of almsgiving. "Almsgiving" is a word that has pretty much dropped out of our vocabulary. If you visit old churches in England, there is a good chance you will see an alms box by the front door requesting donations for the relief of the poor of the parish. We still call the receptacles in which we receive our monetary offerings "alms basins," referring back to the days when such moneys went for the poor rather than the upkeep of the buildings and the paying of salaries, etc. Some time ago we substituted the word "charitable contributions" for "almsgiving" and more recently changed that to "outreach funds." Something has been lost in these translations: the God connection.

The word "alms" is an Anglo-Saxon shortening of the Latin and Greek word *eleemosyna*. (Anybody still remember the old word "eleemosynary," which was used instead of "charitable" and was a favorite in spelling bees?) The Latin and Greek word is closely linked to that of "righteousness"—the nature of God. God in the Hebrew scriptures is portrayed as one who deeply cares about the poor, about widows, orphans and strangers dwelling in their midst.

Because of God's utter generosity in providing for our needs and in forgiving our misdeeds, the Old and New Testaments call us to imitate such "righteous" or God-like behavior. The prophets thundered against those who thought that they could please God with a multitude of animal sacrifices and yet neglect the needs of the poor. Jesus carries on this prophetic tradition and in Matthew 25 suggests that on Judgment Day that *eleemosyna* will be the criteria for judgment.

The basic idea of Lent is to take some time out of our busy schedules to open our lives to a closer relationship with God. My experience is that to draw closer to God is to be overwhelmed by God's graciousness towards me. The more that feeling grows on me the more I want to share my gratitude with others. One way to do that is almsgiving, which allows me to be an extension of God's graciousness to others.

Increasingly I sense that how we as Christians respond to the deepening "welfare crisis" will shape the opinions of a growing segment of the population that questions the value of organized religion. It is not primarily a question of the amount of money that we are able to raise, but the spirit in which it is raised. I seriously doubt that the churches can handle all the needs of our nation's poor, but to care deeply about them and to do whatever we can is what we are being called by God to do. There are no easy answers to the welfare crisis and there is much room for debate and disagreement on strategies. But, we must begin to put our minds, hearts and actions to these matters. There is no better time than this Lent.

Please look into your hearts to see if you are being called to get involved in this great challenge. If so, one way to do so is to engage in Lenten acts of self-denial to provide alms. During Lent you can put your alms contributions in any one of three small wooden **alms boxes** placed around the church—one in the center aisle, one in the dining room and one in the chapel.

Warren+

DOING LENT 2011

It's not about chocolate anymore!

It is about what you are **DOING** for Lent. Note that "doing" is not "giving up". Self-denial certainly hasn't gone out of style, but this year you are encouraged to "pray through service". It seems that time is our most valuable commodity. It is the most prized and guarded of our resources. Giving the gift of one's time for the benefit of others during the next forty days could make a change - even a small one - in the life of someone. It is also an opportunity to receive a blessing from God's favorite people: the poor, the meek, the lonely, the marginalized. So what might you do?

Call Webster-Rock Hill Ministries (314-961-5082): ask about how you might volunteer: participating in the Yandell Tutoring/Mentoring program; working as receptionist one morning (open 9a.m. - noon); filling food or hygiene-bags; repairing a bike.

Network with friends to see how many diapers, wipes, packages of sanitary products you can gather for hygiene bags at WRHM. (One cannot use Food Stamps for such items.)

Choose a Saturday in March (5th, 12th, 19th, 26th) for work in the City's 4th Ward to repair damage from the January tornado. Meet at church at 8:30 for car pooling to drive to Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. at Whittier to join others. Bring tools (rake, hammer, chainsaw), gloves, hat, water; lunch may be provided so check with Deacon Burnell. Please sign up at the Big Bend Bulletin Board.

Kids: Draw pictures or make cards for shut-ins. I will share them with those the Caring Committee visits.
Take a friend and visit a senior.
Play your recital piece or sing the song you learned in choir for a senior citizen.
Make cookies for a person mentioned in the Prayers of the People on Sunday (or named in *Angelus*).
Babysit one evening for free.

I will help you find just the spot you are looking for! Together we can find our way to a Holy Lent!

Deacon Burnell

LENTEN SELF-DENIAL: ELECTRICITY

Here are the challenges; **RETHINK** your use of electricity and how it is generated; and, **REDUCE** your reliance on electrically powered things. In order to begin addressing these challenges, the Emmanuel Environmental Stewardship Committee and the Missions Committee ask you to participate in this year's **Earth Hour** and in a prelude to it by turning off non-essential lights and appliances. Begin on Sunday, March 20, continue for the week, and know that you are being joined by others around the world during Earth Hour on Saturday, March 26, in our time zone from 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. This endeavor can help all of us increase our awareness of our use of electricity at our homes. In addition, this self-denial during Lent can help us appreciate our place and our role as stewards of God's bounty.

Note: You can find ideas for "Good Conservation Habits" in *Angelus* of February 15, 2011.

LENTEN ALMS TO ECM

Alms collected during Lent 2011 will benefit the work of Episcopal City Mission. This wonderful institution and Emmanuel have a deep relationship spanning many years. But how much do we know?

In 1894, deeply concerned about the lack of pastoral care at various Saint Louis City institutions, Charles Holmes, a lay person at Christ Church Cathedral, organized volunteers from the cathedral to minister at City Hospital, the City Jail, the City Workhouse, and the Asylum. Thus was born the Episcopal City Mission. With the establishment of juvenile facilities in the city, the ministry grew to include pastoral care for children.

Eventually, other Protestant denominations joined in this important ministry to those confined in the public institutions of St. Louis. Fifty years ago, the decision was made to divide these ministries among the various denominations. The Episcopal Church asked to remain with the ministry to institutionalized children. By 1954, this ministry to youth was firmly established in the Juvenile Detention House and recognized by the Court System to provide for the ongoing spiritual needs of detained children in St. Louis.

Today ECM continues to provide chaplaincy for youth in detention. But do we really know all of the different ways in which this is manifested? Did you know ECM provides weekly worship services at all three facilities (Lakeside Residential Center and the St. Louis City and County Detention Centers). Did you know ECM provides



- Self Esteem Groups that use art activities, discussion groups and individual experiences to help build positive self images and how that improves our relationships, choices, and behaviors;
- Safety in Relationship Groups that address violence in male-female relationships;
- Loss and Grief Groups that provide an opportunity to share grief experiences and explore issues of grieving that result from such experiences;
- 12-Step Addiction to Violence Group that uses the AA model to address the linked issues of substance abuse and violence;
- Volunteer Visitor Program that provides visitors for detained youth who go without visits from family members;
- Monthly Birthday Parties for those youth who celebrate their special day;
- Outreach Programs that offer those who are detained an opportunity to reach out to the homeless women and children in shelters and childcare centers as well as to those in hospice;
- Reading Is Fundamental program that provides each young person at Lakeside the opportunity to choose one new book as his or her own every month;
- Ministry of Presence that enables chaplains to spend time walking the halls, visiting kids, and simply being there for them?

Through the programs they offer and their caring, listening presence, these chaplains and volunteers are in a very real sense the compassionate face of Jesus in the lives of the children. Please know that your offerings this Lenten season go to support this wonderful ministry.

GIVING IN THE SEASONS OF ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

MISS CAROL'S BREAKFAST 2010

Note: For many years, our Senior High Youth Group prepared at Christ Church Cathedral a special breakfast for the homeless to honor the memory of Carole Bledsoe. This past December that event was not held due to changes in the programs for the homeless. So, on the initiative of Kelsey Mitchell, collegiate Emmanuelites and the Senior High Youth Group sponsored a fund-raising breakfast at Emmanuel to aid in the on-going feeding of the homeless by the Cathedral. The event raised \$ 2,406. The coordinator at the cathedral is Tom Rogers who is the son-in-law of the late Milton and Dolores Schulze, long time members of Emmanuel. He wrote to Kelsey in thanksgiving for Emmanuel's gifts to the breakfast program.

On any given Saturday, eight or more volunteers serve 36 dozen hardboiled eggs, fifty pounds of bananas, six trays of sweet rolls, 300 cups of coffee, several platters of bagels, a half dozen loaves of bread, peanut butter and jelly. Depending on weather and other events in the downtown area, we will have anywhere from 100 to 140 guests each week. . . . This ministry flies under the radar at CCC, as it does not appear as a line item in the budget. It is paid for by individual designated gifts and long-ago fund raisers. . . . While the eggs and bakery goods are donated, all other food, serving and cleaning supplies are purchased at a cost of approximately \$ 200 per month. The space and utilities come from the Cathedral at no cost, but the ministry raised money through gifts, grants and fundraisers to build two dedicated restrooms, a food prep alcove, as well as to paint the room and install ceiling fans.

In addition to giving us a little breathing room on monthly expenses, the gift from Emmanuel will enable us to install an "on-demand" water heater in our food prep area and upgrade the utensil washing sink and faucets. The plumbing lines in the Cathedral basement are pretty archaic so this will be a real help to our hardworking volunteers. We're also going to treat ourselves to a bagel-slicing mandolin to lighten the most time-consuming task of our early mornings!

We would love for you to be as involved as possible with our endeavor. . . . Again, thanks for your interest in Miss Carol's Breakfast and your extraordinary contribution to it.

TOM ROGERS

GIVING TREE

An evergreen tree appeared in our Parish Hall at the beginning of Advent. Then, it was decorated with more than 180 ornaments made by our *FaithQuest* kids. The Missions Committee Giving Tree asked for gifts—socks, scarves, sweaters, etc. At the Soup Supper served by our Junior High Youth Group, parishioners picked up the ornaments and then returned with gifts so they could be given out before Christmas through Webster-Rock Hill Ministries and the Christian Service Center.

NIGHT AT PLOWSHARING CRAFTS

On a very cold December night, hardy parishioners and their friends shopped in the warm and joyful setting of the shop in Kirkwood. They found fair-trade, unique gifts created by hands beyond our shores. This year's benefit raised \$ 140. Though significantly lower than the previous year (due to the harsh weather), the money will help fund Outreach endeavors of Emmanuel.

ALTERNATIVE- GIVING CARDS

During Advent 2010, the Missions Committee sold Alternative-Giving Cards. Donations supported many efforts such as our own Food Center, Episcopal City Mission, Episcopal Relief and Development, God's Child Project, and our work in Lui. More than 12 ministries received recognition from parishioners who contributed \$ 4,000, which is a 60 % increase over previous years.

MISSION STATEMENT

The work of the Missions Committee is rooted in the Baptismal Covenant, which states that, with God's help, we will proclaim by word and deed the Good News of God in Christ, strive to promote justice and peace among all people, and actively work in the community and in the world to respect the dignity of every human being..

The Committee will serve as a catalyst in the parish to involve every person in outreach by providing and holding up opportunities for ministry requiring various abilities and talents.

The Committee strives to bring outreach to the forefront of Emmanuel's vision of itself.

MISSIONS COMMITTEE

Ann Bain, Jerry Cooper, Peg Cooper, Tracy Crews,

Deacon Burnell Esbenshade, Don Esbenshade, Donna Erickson, Bob Garrecht,

Mary Jane Kuhn, Martha Lafata, Andy Ruhlin, John Snodgrass, Susan Thomson

PROGRAMS FOR THE SUMMER

COMMUNITY GARDEN

The Missions Committee joining with the Environmental Stewardship Committee will once again sponsor, in the coming growing season. The Outreach Community Garden of Emmanuel (OCGE). Produce from the garden (such as peas, green beans, lettuce, carrots, tomatoes, zucchini, okra) will be available to clients at Emmanuel's Food Center.

Everyone is welcome to participate in planting and tending the garden, thereby learning how to make a successful garden grow! A preparatory class will be held on March 20, after church. Please watch for announcements at the church website, in *Angelus*, and in the Sunday bulletin.



Plans continue to unfold for diocesan participation in the local Habitat for Humanity build in 2011. The goal is for the parishes of the Diocese of Missouri to raise enough funds and recruit enough volunteers to do a complete house ourselves. Don Esbenshade represents Emmanuel in the discussions and leads us in our labor. In the previous *Reaching Out*, Don hoped that Episcopal parishes "would be entirely responsible for a house from start to finish, not working with another corporate group. This means that as a Diocese we will need to raise about \$65,000." Emmanuel has collected \$ 2,625 (75% of the 2010 Christmas offerings) as part of our commitment to an Episcopal house. More information will be published as soon as it becomes available.

EASTER OFFERING FOR WRHM

The Vestry has designated Webster-Rock Hill Ministries as the recipient of this year's Easter Offering. It is a local "Christian help center" designed to

- meet the emergency needs of low income persons in the community when no other resources are available.
- act as a clearing house for churches in order to avoid duplication and to ensure that those who are most in need receive help.
- provide information and referrals to clients, churches and agencies.
- help people seeking new options and alternatives toward a higher quality of life.
- build an awareness of poverty and social problems that exist in our towns.
- build community among all the residents of the area.

**We really are
companions in
community on this
"fragile earth,
our island home."**

WRHM, founded in 1982, has been deeply involved with and committed to the mission that local churches have undertaken. Emmanuel has a long tradition of supporting that mission. Your generous gifts on Easter Sunday allow those ministries help our neighbors.

Emmanuel Episcopal Church
9 South Bompert Avenue
Webster Groves, MO 63119

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IN THIS ISSUE:

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Dan Appleyard, p. 2

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Warren Crews, p. 4

