



Reaching Out

News from the Missions Committee
of Emmanuel Episcopal Church
Fall 2009

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Mission - The Heart of the Church

As some of you know, our Presiding Bishop Katherine Jefferts-Schori in a sermon during last summer's General Convention said: "The heart of this church *will* slowly turn to stone if we think our primary mission work is to those already in the pews inside our beautiful churches, or to those at other altars... The heart of this body is mission - domestic and foreign mission, in partnership with anyone who shares that passion... Jesus has already given this body a new heart. Every time we gather, the Spirit offers a pacemaker jolt to tweak the rhythm of this heart. The challenge is whether or not we'll recognize and receive that renewed life, whether the muscle will respond with a strengthened beat, sending more life out into the world. So, how will this heart push more lifeblood out into a languishing world? Can you hear the heartbeat? Mission. Mission. Mission."

The Presiding Bishop's challenge about the centrality of mission in the life of the Church dovetailed nicely with the theme of the 76th General Convention: Ubuntu. This theme was chosen because *ubuntu*, a Bantu word rooted in the culture of sub-equatorial Africa, means "I am because you are." It reflects the core Christian belief that communities make individuals--not the other way around. We are formed and shaped by our faith community. We derive our identity from our faith--from God who creates us, from Jesus who gives us value, and from the Spirit that gives us purpose. We are who we are because we are heirs of faith and flesh--of those we have loved and those who have loved us. I know who I am because of who they were and are. Note that *ubuntu* does not negate the importance of our individualism. Personal discipline, stewardship, self-reflection, and responsibility are still pivotal points of the compass that guide our religious lives. But *ubuntu* is wise because of its broader community perspective. It contains richer and deeper truth. It points to the wisdom of knowing that it is only when those around us are made whole that we have the capacity for wholeness.

When I accepted the call to be Priest-in-Charge of Emmanuel Church, I was truly excited about the commitment this parish has to the wholeness of others and so to Mission. I am still learning about the many ways the people of our

(continued on p. 2)

Mission *(continued from p. 1)*

parish reach out to others. Like our Presiding Bishop, I am convinced that it is when we reach out beyond ourselves to serve the world in Christ's name that we fulfill our Baptismal Covenant and the hope that Jesus has for us. When we live in Ubuntu, we live in a global community. This is why I think the Millennium Development Goals have found their way so wonderfully into the Church's life and mission: (1) eradicate poverty and hunger, (2) achieve universal primary education, (3) promote gender equality and empower women, (4) reduce child mortality, (5) improve maternal health, (6) combat epidemics and disease, (7) ensure environmental sustainability, and (8) develop global partnerships for development. That is also why I made the personal commitment a year ago to serve as Chair to the Advisory Council to the Anglican Observer to the United Nations (<http://www.aco.org/ministry/un/>) - a voice for the powerless in the councils of the world.

Within the pages of this edition of *Reaching Out*, you will find information about our Outreach Ministries at Emmanuel and why Mission is a core ministry for our parish. You will also find invitations to engage in ministry and to imagine new ways of reaching out to the world. Can you hear the "heart" of your faith and our community at Emmanuel beating? Mission. Mission. Mission.

Peace,
Dan

Weatherizing

We are trying to re-establish an Emmanuel tradition of helping to weatherize homes for those who need help. Emmanuelites worked for many years with Webster-Rock Hill Ministries on this project, and we hope to begin again soon. We have contacted WRHM but have been told they have no one on the list seeking help at this time. We believe this will change over the next weeks and months, and we are also working to include other agencies. So, if you think this is something you'd like to be involved in, please contact a member of the Missions Committee, and we will put you on the list. As this project develops, we'll let you know.

Habitat for Humanity

Habitat House Completed

The Habitat house that parishes of the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri had been working on has been completed, with the final landscaping recently done. The house was dedicated Oct. 16, and the family is settling in. Our parish volunteers bought a tool kit as a housewarming gift for the family. This was at their request and is certainly an auspicious beginning for the new owners. Thanks to everyone for their participation in this project. We'll let you know as plans for the 2010 build take shape. Consider getting involved in an experience that can be life-changing for everyone.

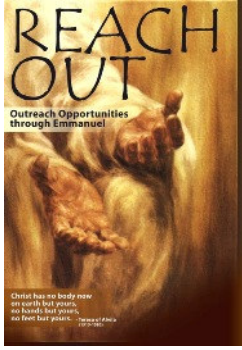
Home for the Holidays

Home for the Holidays is the theme for this year's Christmas offering. At the recommendation of the Missions Committee, the Vestry has once again designated Habitat for Humanity as the recipient of Emmanuel's Christmas offering.

Emmanuel has a long-standing relationship with Habitat. Many parishioners have participated in the building of Habitat homes not only here in St. Louis, but also in South Dakota on the Rosebud Reservation as part of the adult mission trip. This year's Christmas offering will again be divided between the two builds, with 80 percent going to our local Habitat build and 20 percent going to the one in South Dakota.

Please give generously to this year's offering. For more information about how to become more involved, contact Don Esbenshade (314-727-6780) or Duane Benson (636-326-5918).

Look Up to Reach Out



In our ongoing efforts to help you stay informed about upcoming outreach opportunities, the Missions Committee has created two “Reach Out” displays to offer timely information. One is a bulletin board in the dining room and the other is a portable easel board that sits in the narthex or on Emmanuel’s front steps. The easel board is specifically designed to reach parishioners who might not visit the dining room before or after a worship service but may still be very interested in learning about volunteer opportunities to reach out. Both displays are updated weekly. So if you’re interested in being the hands and feet of Christ through one of the many projects and activities in our area, look up the information on either of the Reach Out displays.

Food Center

The mission of the Emmanuel Emergency Food Center is to feed the hungry, and there are many more hungry people requesting help this year. The economy is slow, unemployment is high, and there are people coming to the Food Center now that have never before needed to ask for food. Most of the Food Center clients are from Webster Groves and come with vouchers from Webster-Rock Hill Ministries.

Food Center volunteers work from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, greeting clients, answering the telephone, packing grocery bags, or stocking shelves. There are about thirty volunteers who work two to four half-days a month. Due to the closing of the driveway because of construction, the Food Center bought a cart so clients could push their groceries out to the parking lot. The cart has made it much easier for clients to get three or four bags of groceries to their car.

The Food Center also funds the Brown Bag lunches prepared by three Emmanuel groups (Men of Emmanuel, Junior High Youth Group, Noonday Bunch), which are delivered to and distributed by Gateway Homeless Services. Some shelter residents need a lunch to take to work or come back to the shelter after work and haven’t had dinner. If children in the shelter bring home a note about a school field trip and they are to take a lunch on the trip, lunches are provided for them.

The **annual ingathering** of food and funds for the Center is scheduled to take place at our Thanksgiving Day service at 9:00 a.m. In the Emmanuel tradition, parishioners are asked to bring their gifts to the altar. Non-perishables, canned goods and checks are very welcome. Please make checks payable to “Emmanuel Church” and marked “Food Center” on the notation line.



Community Garden

The Missions Committee is working with the Environmental Stewardship Committee to develop a community garden for next spring and summer. Vegetables raised would be given out as part of the Food Center’s ministry. This project will be a wonderful opportunity for individuals, families, and children to “get their hands dirty” and be part of an important outreach effort. If you’d like to be involved in this, or if you have or know of a piece of land that would be suitable for such a garden, please let us know.

Advent Giving Tree and Soup Supper



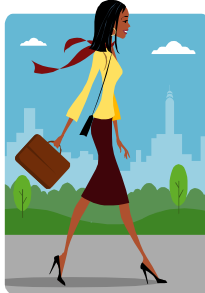
Advent is just around the corner, as is our traditional Advent Giving Tree and Soup Supper. On the first Sunday of Advent, **Nov. 29**, we will gather at 6:00 p.m. to enjoy a good meal, good company, and an opportunity to provide gifts for those who may not have what they need this season. In this always-fun event, after a delicious supper, children (and the young at heart) are invited to help decorate ornaments for the Giving Tree.

We have lots of “helpers” to host this year’s Soup Supper, including our Junior High Youth, but we still need a chair and co-chair to lead the helpers. If you would be willing to take on leadership of this event, please contact one of our Parish Family Life chairs: Jennifer Sisul (962-0686) or Duane and Anne Benson (636-326-5918).

Please help our hosts plan the meal by signing up by Nov. 25 on the Big Bend bulletin board. Cost is \$4 for adults, \$2 for kids, and a family maximum of \$12 with advance sign-up; or \$6 for adults, \$4 for kids, and no family rate the day of the event.

Dress for Success

We have collected about 70 interview outfits and accessories to support Dress for Success, a program for indigent women and those entering the workforce for the first time. Their reward for completing training for success in the workplace is an opportunity to shop at a boutique containing the quality clothes our parishioners have contributed. Your prayers are invited for the women who will seek employment wearing the clothes we brought.



Peace Meal



Kevin McGrane reports that about 50 plates of food were served Oct. 24 at the Peace Meal at St. John’s Episcopal Church in the Tower Grove Park neighborhood. The guests were diverse. Emmanuel volunteers reported it was a pleasant and meaningful activity, and they recommend it to others. They served all the food they prepared, down to the last bowl of peach cobbler!

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.



Alternative Giving at Christmas Time: Gift Cards to Support Your Favorite Ministry

Christmas is just around the corner. Very often, we get caught up trying to figure out the right gift for that certain individual. There are better ideas than giving in to the frenzy of last minute shopping and giving gifts that just end up on a shelf somewhere.

The Missions Committee will be selling Alternative Gift Cards on Sundays in December prior to Christmas. These special cards convey that a contribution/gift has been given to your favorite charity on behalf of someone you love. (There is a minimum donation of \$5 for each card.)

Donations can be made to: Missions Committee Outreach, Alms, Emmanuel Cares, Deep Water Wells in Lui, Emmanuel Food Center, Episcopal City Mission, Episcopal Relief and Development, God's Child, Habitat for Humanity (designate St. Louis or Rosebud), Heifer Ark Project International, Webster Rock Hill Ministries, or Any Ministry You Choose!

Honoring a friend or family member with a gift to one of the ministries gives you the opportunity to make your Christmas season more meaningful. Gift cards will be available on Sunday mornings in December in the dining room between services.

Christmas Cards by the Missions Committee

One of the joys of the Christmas season is receiving cards and returning the favor. It is also a way to give back to Emmanuel through the Missions Committee. The Missions Committee has certain commitments throughout the year that are met through the offerings at Christmas, Easter, Lenten Alms, and through the Little White Churches. However, there are numerous other activities that the Missions Committee supports, and it is the hope of the committee that the donations through the Christmas Cards will help us honor those.

Two Christmas Cards are available: one of Emmanuel's altar at Christmas and one of the baptismal font surrounded by poinsettias. . You can order all of one design or you can have a mixture of the two cards.

The cards **are \$15.00 for 10 cards** They can be ordered during Adult Education starting **Sunday, Nov. 29**, or you can contact Peg Cooper at 314-821-1012 or coopremh@slu.edu. The cards can be picked up the following Sunday. Please make the check out to Emmanuel Episcopal Church and put Mission Committee-Christmas Cards in the memo.

Sharing Emmanuel with Christmas Cards of Emmanuel is a wonderful way to support the outreach of the parish.

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

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Being God's Hands and Feet Volunteer Opportunities



Holiday Meal Delivery: Meals on Wheels

Thirty registered cars are needed to deliver on Christmas morning. That's right—Christmas morning from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Faith Beyond Walls, along with the St. Louis Area Agency on Aging, will be delivering holiday meals to the elderly. Phone 314-531-4787 to register and get details.

Poinsettia Delivery

Extra help will be needed to deliver flowers to all our homebound parishioners during Christmas. Contact Peg Cooper for information at 314-821-1012.

Adopt a Family for Christmas

Coordinate gift selection for a family in need. Contact Webster Rock Hill Ministries at 314-961-5082.