



ON EAGLE'S WINGS

CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST

Trinity, June 2009

WARDENS' CORNER

Of the many concerns currently on the "To-Do" list of the wardens, the upcoming Vestry Meeting is certainly the most important. The reason for this Vestry Meeting is to enable us to meet the financial commitments we made in our budget at our last annual Vestry Meeting. As most of you know, we began this year with an outstanding debt in our line of credit and this has reduced our borrowing capacity to the point where we have recently been unable to pay some overdue bills. Of course, we aren't sanguine about taking moneys from our investments, and we are only doing this after some very helpful discussions with our investment team of David Whitfield, Mark Ewald and Kerry Long. We have put a special notice in the bulletin for this week and next and we hope for your support on June 21.

We are also concerned that we are now without the services of a parish treasurer. Our former treasurer, Nathan Packyanathan, has resigned. We are grateful for the good service that Nathan has been able to provide all of us as our treasurer since February, and we are very sorry that he is not able to continue to serve in this role. A parish treasurer is essential, especially when there is also a need for another deputy warden. Our Parish Executive needs six voting members. We currently have only four.

The need for help is particularly pressing not only for the above reasons, but also because our church (and not only St. John's, but also our Deanery, our Diocese, and in fact, the entire Anglican Church) is entering a time of great change. On Monday June 8, a final report of the study done by Myrlene Boken, "Who Is Our Neighbour" was presented at All Saints in Waterloo. Ms. Boken addressed the entire Deanery, but also made specific reference to St. John's. We are considered to be in a strategic location and have been recognized as having many great strengths, but we also need to make some difficult decisions. This will be addressed in as many forums and ways as practical, beginning with some important information that will be given by the wardens at the Vestry meeting on June 21.

We are very grateful for the work of the Stewardship Committee and all the responses that have been sent in as a reply to our stewardship mail-out and the telephone calls from members of the Parish Council. We are especially thankful to those of you who sent in commitments of time, talent and pre-authorized givings through electronic transfers of funds.

Parish Council is working on a number of initiatives for the coming months. **We are particularly pleased that Brian Smith as volunteered to undertake the role of webmaster for our parish website.**

CLEAN-UP SATURDAY

On Saturday, May 30 a group of over 40 members and friends of St. John's worked together from 9am until noon in the Sanctuary, the Upper Parish Hall, and in a few other rooms and corners of the church where few have gone before. Led by Susan Rollo and the Altar Guild, about half of the workers swept, scrubbed and dusted the entire sanctuary, including the choir, the reredos, the rood screen, and all the pews. Ronald Bin-Edward was particularly helpful when it came to reaching the high woodwork and Laurie and Eric Jones made for an impressive team when a ladder was needed.

In the Parish Hall, another team, led by Allan Coughlin and Alfred Durichen, were engaged in another line of work. Allan and Alfred, with the assistance of Ray Cloutier, had spent the previous week excavating not only the stage, but also the storage area beneath the stage. In addition to a large number of broken and rusty chairs, they discovered the long-lost supply of commemorative books from our 125th anniversary. Some of these books had been ruined by water damage but over 100 were still in good shape and after consulting with the Rector, they were made available to everyone after the Sunday service the following day. Many of the chairs were taken by the Working Centre to be repaired or painted. The remainder of the equipment, moldy mats, obsolete stage equipment, and broken shelves, etc. was carried out to a dumpster which we had rented.

The work crew then went down to the boys' shower room (did you know that there was such a place?) and moved out all the old pews that had been stored there. They also climbed up to the "Fan Room" and removed the oak woodwork and furniture that had been stored there. All this wonderful old woodwork has been carefully catalogued and is currently on the stage.

The entire cast of cleaners and clearers were treated with a delicious snack at 10:30 which was provided by David and Enid Emery. The event was organized by Al Coughlin and John House. A general sense of good fellowship and a satisfaction of achieving some much needed work made the morning a success, and it was generally agreed that we should do this every year.

THE OAK FURNITURE

The stage is currently full of oak furniture including pews, kneelers, screens and other lovely old woodwork that has for one reason or another, been removed over the past decades from our places of worship. This furniture has been stored in places like the boys' shower and the "Fan Room", and has in some cases suffered water damage from leaks, and has accumulated a heavy coating of dust. The decision to move this material onto the stage was to (a) allow us to make an inventory of what we had, (b) assess it's condition, (c) remove it from places where it was liable to be damaged (d) begin to free-up spaces that were intended to be used for another purpose.

Al Coughlin and Alfred Durichen have made a detailed inventory of all this woodwork and we hope to post it on our website but if you'd like a copy just ask Doug Woodley for one. The plan now is to discuss with everyone interested the obvious question: "What shall we do with all this oak?"

Would we ever again have use for these things? Should we keep all of it or some of it? If so, what should we keep and how do we determine that? If we do keep it, where is the appropriate place to do this? If we aren't going to keep it, where should it go? The answers to these questions are up to us. Currently, Doug Woodley is looking after this matter, but he could use (a) some advice and (b) some assistance. We can't leave the old oak where it is now for long. If you are interested in this project, please speak to either Doug Woodley or Al Coughlin.

COFFEE HOUR

The Coffee Hour Team is in need of volunteers to host Coffee Hour once every few months. Please contact Anne Cloutier at (519) 743-9987 if you are able to help.

NURSES NOTES

Allergies

Spring is a time of year when people are especially aware of allergies. An allergy is a type of sensitivity that involves the body's immune system which protects it from invaders such as bacteria and viruses. An allergic reaction occurs when the immune system mistakenly identifies a harmless substance (such as pollen or food) as harmful. The body produces chemicals to fight off the substance as if it were a disease-causing invader.

Symptoms of allergies vary greatly from person to person. Allergies fall into the categories of contact, respiratory and food allergies.

Contact allergies manifest themselves in various ways simply by touching the allergen. The most common symptom, **hives**, are red, itchy swollen areas on the skin which can last anywhere from an hour to a couple of days. They can be the result of certain foods, drugs, venom, increased body heat, fever, emotional stress and sunlight. Another symptom is **atopic eczema** which appears as itchy, inflamed skin. Flare-ups can lead to open sores from scratching. Common triggers are soaps, plant allergens such as poison ivy, food, animal dander, skin infections, dry skin, sweating and emotional stress. Treatment for hives and atopic eczema involves avoiding trigger substances and use of antihistamines. **Insect stings** can cause local, generalized or severe reactions. A local reaction involves tenderness, itching or swelling around the sting. Treatment involves removing the stinger, washing the area with soap and water and placing an ice pack on for about 10 to 15 minutes. A generalized or severe attack may include nausea, wheezing, pain, difficulty breathing or dizziness. These symptoms require immediate medical care.

Respiratory allergies occur when the body comes in contact with such substances as pollen or grass. Symptoms are similar to a cold (stuffy nose, sore throat, watery eyes, headache) but last weeks or even months. The allergy can be seasonal or perennial as in the case of house mites or animal dander. Treatment involves pinpointing the allergy by keeping an allergy diary to record symptoms when they occur and allergy testing. Other treatment includes allergy proofing your surroundings and using medication including allergy shots.

Food allergies occur when the body produces chemicals to fight off a food as if it were a disease causing agent. The most common foods causing reactions are shellfish, peanuts, tree nuts, milk, soy, wheat and eggs. Common symptoms are stomach pain, vomiting and diarrhoea but may also include hives, swelling, runny nose, sneezing, difficulty breathing, or an asthmatic attack. Most food reactions occur within minutes but some may be delayed up to

an hour. The only way to manage a food allergy is to identify the foods that trigger the reaction and avoid them (check food labels and ask food providers). Allergy shots are not effective in preventing food allergies.

Anaphylaxis is a potentially life threatening condition for certain people who have severe allergies to certain substances. When someone experiences anaphylactic shock, various body systems are affected causing the immune system to overreact to the allergen that has entered the body. Symptoms can occur rapidly from mild to severe and include flushed face and body, itchy eyes, numbness in face and tongue, difficulty swallowing, swollen eyes, lips, tongue, hives, wheezing, difficulty breathing, weakness, drop in blood pressure, unconsciousness and death. Treatment requires immediate medical assistance and use of an epi-pen. A person with a severe allergy should carry an epi-pen that has not expired at all times and inform others of their condition and where to find the epi-pen. We can all help prevent anaphylactic reactions by becoming informed and aware of the people, including children, in our communities who have severe allergies. Preventative measures include washing hands before and after eating, reading food labels, educating others, no sharing food or utensils with someone suspected of food allergies, and learning how to give an epi-pen.

To show love to people with allergies in our parish community, let us be sensitive to their needs. Substances such as aerosol sprays, perfumes, pollution, cold air, humidity, fumes, smoke and wind make allergies worse. Let us avoid exposing others to these irritants.

If you have any questions about allergies, please contact me.

Swine Flu Precautions: With the swine flu scare last month it was good to see that our bishop has now put into place some precautionary practices to be followed during liturgies. Intinction of the wafer in the common cup is now forbidden during communion. People are encouraged to either drink from the cup or touch the cup to indicate their communion in the blood of Christ. We are also encouraged to use ways of greeting one another and offering the peace of Christ which do not require hand shaking. Change is often difficult and takes some time to accept. I encourage everyone to be patient with these changes knowing that it is always better to be safe than sorry when it comes to illness prevention. Best wishes for a safe and healthy summer. Elsie Millerd, Parish Nurse.

A.C.W. CORNER

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY SUPPORT

This summer and fall Habitat for Humanity Waterloo Region will be building the final four homes for the planned 19 unit condominium complex on Cherry Street in Kitchener. It is the same complex where the Waterloo Deanery built last summer.

We have been asked once more to provide refreshments. We are scheduled to provide lunch and two snack breaks for 25 volunteers on Thursday, July 23rd. We need your help by providing supplies or donating funds or helping prepare the food or delivering it. A sign-up sheet is on the table in the narthex to indicate how you can help, or contact Jennifer Uttley (519-578-6052) or Maureen Lichti (519-886-7342) for more details.

Many thanks for your past support. It is a great way to reach out to our neighbours.

MILK BAG MATS

The ACW has begun a project to crochet mats from milk bags. It takes 50 bags to make a mat so we are appealing to the congregation to save your milk bags and place them in the basket in the narthex. Please make sure that the bags are clean and dry.

The mats will be given to Canadian Food for Children who ship the mats overseas with food and other supplies, using them for packing material. Consequently, they are delivered to their destination without cost. The mats are softer than the ground people sleep on, they buffer them from damp, dirt, bugs and parasites. They are durable, washable, dry easily, light weight, mildew resistant and they don't disintegrate. The mats have a reduced carbon imprint than traditional recycling that is transported and processed.

If you would like to be involved in making the mats, please contact Stephanie Airey at 519-742-7299 or Jennifer Uttley at 519-578-6052.

STAMPS

In May the A.C.W. was able to deliver a large package of used stamps to the K-W representative from the Leprosy Mission. Many thanks to all those who carefully saved all their foreign and Canadian stamps. Please keep them coming!!!!!! Last year \$13,000 was raised from stamp donations.

There are no longer any Leprosariums in Canada, however there are about 200 people in this

country who receive medical attention for the disease. It is now realized that Leprosy is not nearly as contagious as was once believed. The disease is fairly inexpensive to treat and if discovered early enough is completely curable, without leaving any ugly scars or lesions.

The box for stamps is still on the shelf in the cloakroom.

Thank you, Enid Emery A.C.W. Outreach.

HURON CHURCH CAMP

Thanks to everyone who donated items for Huron Church Camp. The Rector will be taking three boxes to London on Thursday.

CAMPBELL'S SOUP LABELS

We have received a newsletter from World Mission to the Deaf indicating how many label points were received in 2008 allowing them to redeem 3 Yamaha Flutes, 5 Bach Trumpets, and 2 Latin Percussion Shakers, 20 Pocket Art Smocks, 5 Rubber Chickens and a set of Cobra Two Way Radios. These items were sent to Immanuel Christian School in Oshawa and the Evangelical School for the Deaf in Puerto Rico. These items assisted them in their respective programs, made possible by our continued participation in saving labels. WMD sincerely thanked us for our support.

ACW AUTUMN PRAYER RETREAT

The Sisterhood of St. John the Divine are hosting an Autumn Prayer Retreat, Praying Along the Way, Friday and Saturday, October 30th and 31st, 2009 at the Michaelite House Retreat Centre 2751 Sunningdale Rd. W., R. R. #41 London, Ont. The Retreat, accommodation and Meals is \$75. Saturday sessions only, \$40. or \$15 for Saturday only. If you are interested please see Jennifer Uttley.

UPCOMING EVENTS

OMA SISKONA NEWS

We continue in our efforts to plan and hold events to raise both money and awareness to help our sister grandmothers in Africa. The Stephen Lewis Foundation funds and continues to monitor over 300 various projects there. These funds are making it possible for the children to go to school by supplying school fees and uniforms. They are also supplying and staffing health clinics and aid support groups, providing hospital care and supporting shelters for women who have been sexually brutalized and now have AIDS.

Further, these contributions are helping the grandmothers to start up and continue running their own businesses and growing their own vegetables, and to continue allowing The Foundation to supply FOOD,---that is the greatest need ---while the biggest business there is making coffins!

As well as individual money making projects, in May, as a group we were invited to the rehearsal of The Wedding Singer, with half the ticket price donated to the SLF. On June 13 we ran our first garage sale at 269 Normandy Ave from 8:30am to 1:00pm. The June 17 meeting will be in the evening from 7:30-9:30pm and will be held in Christ Lutheran Church at 445 Anndale Road. Waterloo. We will have 2 guest speakers from the SLF so as to learn more about the foundation and their projects. We will be pleased to have you join us.

One of our Omas speakers will be coming to the ACW meeting in October at which time she will be able to share much more about the SLF, their projects, and the lives of those dedicated grandmothers. Our big event "Good Words For Africa" scrabble benefit will be held in Parkminster United Church on Sunday Nov.15 from 2:00-4:30pm. Pledge sheets are already available. I will be happy to take pledges any time. If you wish to join us in this fun and beneficial afternoon, either as a player or a supporter, contact Penny Cressman at pcressman@sympatico.ca or phone-519-744-2984. May we make this year even more successful than the last in "Turning the Tide" on AIDS in Africa! **Thea Parker**

You are welcome to become a Friend of the Memorial Garden, a suggested annual donation of \$25. in favour of the church and designated for the Memorial Garden will help to cover the costs of the regular maintenance of the garden. The Annual Garden Tea will take place on Saturday June 20th from 2 – 4 pm at the home of Inga and Andrew Beamish. Please pick up an invitation on the Narthex table for directions.

Following our 10 o'clock service on Sunday June 21, there will be a short but important Vestry Meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to deal with some urgent financial concerns and to share information about our neighbours plans for redevelopment.

On July 18, the annual jaunt to see the amazing BlueJays play at The Sky Dome has been organized by the Youth Group and they hope that many other members of St. John's will join them on that excursion. The cose, including ticket and bus there and back is \$20. Please see Steph Hatcher if you are interested.

On September 23, we will be hosting a Fish Fry Fundraiser. Frank Millerd is currently coordinating the organization of this, but he would welcome all the help that anyone can offer. If you're interested in helping with this, please speak to Frank .

On October 2, the well-known Waterloo group, "Stealing Dan" will perform a concert here in our Parish hall as a fund raiser . This will be a cabaret style evening (similar to the one we had two years ago). Of course, we'll need lots of help organizing and setting this up. Please see either Lynda Smith, Marlin Nagtegaal, or Doug Woodley if you able to help.

FAITH JOURNEYS

Cecilia Linton - Part II

Continuation of Cecilia's faith journey.

The Unity Centre for Practical Christianity in Mississauga bought a larger adjacent property, and with the rest of the congregation Cecilia cleaned and scrubbed, and opened it for worship the very next Sunday. Here another unplanned happening occurred. One Sunday she was hospitable to a newcomer, an elderly white haired lady. She offered to drive the lady home, and was asked to go to lunch with her. On another occasion, after church this lady invited her in to have tea, and then one night after attending a play at the Hummingbird Theatre, she stopped by to give this lady some papers from church. Little did she know, but sitting in the background was this lady's son, Doug Linton. That Sunday he came to church and asked Cecilia to "please join us for breakfast". Doug lived in Peterborough, but at that time he was visiting his mother as his wife had recently died. From that first meeting he did everything he could to spend time with Cecilia, later telling her it was "love at first sight".

Following his wife's death Doug's daughter had been very concerned about him, and his family saw Cecilia as the answer to a prayer. They were married and bought a lot in Waterloo, where they built a home with a basement apartment for his nephew and children. Soon Doug and Cecilia were volunteering at the St John's Kitchen where they met Neil. One day Cecilia had been asked to pick up some flowers from a funeral home to decorate the church for a special occasion, and she went into the nave for the first time. She was awed by the beauty of the church, something she had missed at the Unity Church. She started talking to Gretchen who asked her if she was an Anglican. "Born and bred" she answered. Cecilia told Doug about our beautiful church and his response was "why don't we go there?" Their membership in our congregation progressed from the envelopes for giving, to attending the study "KERYGMA the BIBLE in

DEPTH" offered by Neil Carver, and with whom Doug immediately developed a warm relationship. This was when I came to know Doug and Cecilia and realized what a very special couple they were. Doug was very theologically aware, and his connection to the religious life was deep; he had three uncles who were ministers, and he even considered the calling himself. Sadly Doug died in 2004 while actually attending a Sunday morning service, and his cremated remains are in our memorial Garden.

Following Doug's death, Cecilia reluctantly agreed to swap accommodations with Doug's nephew, Cecilia to the downstairs small apartment and her nephew into the upstairs larger living space, but she was soon further pressured by her nephew and a fellow roommate to sell her home and buy a condominium. She has very unhappy memories of this situation, which resulted in her being hospitalized with a break down. So now Cecilia is living alone in a condominium, with no family to care about her. If it were not for her St John's connections she would hear from no one. Her "life lines" are people like our dedicated "Phone visitor" Thea Parker and her family who bring her to church when they can, our Parish Nurse Elsie Millerd, and Trudy Schnarr. She had a beautiful smile on her face as she expressed her gratitude to her Lord that the church of St John the Evangelist became her spiritual home.

Cecilia's life has not been easy, but she has a wonderful trust in the Lord. There is no doubt in my mind her childhood memory of that black and white procession, and the beautiful cross held high and glowing in the light, has sustained her faith through the many tribulations she has endured.

Cecilia, your journey of faith is a true inspiration for us all, and we wish you comfort in your declining years. May God Bless you and keep you safe.

Jackie Marsh

ORGAN THURSDAYS AT ST. JOHN'S – SPRING 2009

Although free mid-week noon hour concerts are not unusual in St. John's history, they have re-established a tradition over the past two years -- thanks largely to the presence of our new Kney tracker organ -- and have become a significant cultural outreach in K-W.

Performers (who all donated their services) included: Douglas Haas (Apr 16), Peter Nikiforuk (Apr 23), Barrie Cabena (Apr 30), Marlin Nagtegaal (May 7), Susan Nagtegaal (May 14), Gerald Manning (May 21), Jan Overduin (May 28).

Here is a brief statistical summary:

- * this year there were 7 concerts (6 in 2008);
- * every concert drew more than 40 (compared to an average of 19 in 2008);
- * we had nearly 300 in total attendance (an estimated 120-150 in 2008);
- * weekly Kijiji ads drew several hundred "hits" apiece (under 100 in 2008).

Highlights:

The seven recitals covered an extensive range of traditional, contemporary, cutting edge, experimental, unfamiliar and rarely-heard music for organ and involved the use of both our fine instruments. All of the Organ Thursdays programs were enthusiastically received by audiences but the most "exciting" was Marlin's abrupt change on May 7 to an all-pedals performance, due to having seriously injured his hand less than 24 hours earlier. This kind of "excitement" one can do without! Plans for next year's noon concerts series are in progress. Marlin Nagtegaal (artistic director) and Pauline Finch (publicist)

MY AFRICAN TRIP

Christine Strack

On February 1 2009 I flew out of Toronto headed towards Harare, Zimbabwe on what would be my greatest adventure to date. The purpose of my African trip was to celebrate the 30th birthday of one of my best friends, Erica McMaster. She had lived in Zimbabwe as a child and decided that she wanted to go back and revisit old haunts. She had timed our visit so that she could celebrate her birthday at the top of Mt. Kilimanjaro with her family and myself. I had never been to such an exotic location and was exhilarated and terrified. I met Erica at the airport in Harare two days later.

The first ten days in Harare were spent sightseeing and trying to get over the culture shock. The city was suffering from a terrible cholera outbreak and the poverty that I witnessed was heartbreaking. Robert Mugabe's choke hold on his people was atrocious, however the resilience and strength of the Zimbabwean people was inspiring. I fell in love with the beauty of Zimbabwe. While we were there I had the opportunity to do some amazing things. I went to Antelope Park in Gweru, where I was able to swim with African Elephants. In a lion and cheetah park in Harare I was able to climb into a lion cub enclosure and pet 4 month old lion cubs. I walked all around Victoria Falls. I screamed my lungs out while doing a tandem zip line at 110 kilometres an hour across the falls. I held a baby crocodile. I watched tribal dances and ate a traditional African meal, and last but definitely not least I went on a sunset cruise and saw my favourite animal, the hippo, in the wild.

From Harare, Erica and I flew to Nairobi, Kenya to meet up with her family in preparation for our climb. Nairobi had the worst traffic jams that I have ever seen, prompting me to swear off ever complaining about the 401 again. The level of home security in Nairobi was intimidating. We were staying in the home of a friend who lived in a house that was behind a 12 foot security wall, topped with barbed wire. A 24 hour security guard would open the gate while the front door and windows were behind bars that were locked every night so that you were locked inside the house. It made me miss the safety of Canada.

After 2 nights in Nairobi we left for Moshi, Tanzania, driving most of the way at 20kms an hour in a very tightly packed 8 seater shuttle bus. Our climbing group consisted of Erica, her sister, brother, his girlfriend and her father and stepmother and myself, all of which are quite considerably more in shape than myself. I was terrified. We had chosen to climb the Marangu Route, the "easiest" of all the routes. It would take us 6 days round trip. I dedicated my climb to my grandmother, Uncle Philip and my parents. I knew that if I was going to make it to the top I needed them with me, so I carried pictures of all of them to give me strength. Getting to the top was definitely something I wanted, however, I had no illusions about just how hard it was going to be. Thankfully what I lacked in physical fitness was made up for with my stubbornness and determination. My goal each day was simply to get to the camp where we slept, one foot in front of the other.

Everyone in our party suffered to varying degrees from altitude sickness. The night before we were to summit I was incredibly ill and had the worst headache ever. Knowing that this was one of the signs of high altitude cerebral edema (swelling of the brain) I told myself that if I still had it when we were supposed to begin our ascent, I wouldn't attempt it. After a couple hours of light napping, I woke up and my headache was gone. I knew that it was a sign. We began our ascent at midnight in complete darkness. We were to walk single file, criss-crossing up the mountain. Looking up, all I can remember seeing is the headlamps of groups that had left before us in lines moving up the mountain. It was incredibly cold and exhausting and as a result we had to stop and rest quite frequently to catch our breath, which was becoming increasingly difficult at such a high altitude. The higher you went, the slower you went and if for some reason you forgot just how slow you had to go, you were reminded by the guides constantly repeating Pole, Pole, which in Swahili means slowly, slowly. They believe that anyone can make it up, as long as you go slowly enough.

The goal is to make it to Gilman's Point in time for sunrise to see one of the most breathtaking views of Africa imaginable, so slowly, slowly, we went up.

The next 6 hours were incredibly emotional. The guides began singing to raise our morale in the darkness. Erica's father became ill and lost coordination and it was decided that he would go back down with Erica's stepmother. Jenn, Erica's brother's girlfriend became ill and began hallucinating and had to go down. The rest of us continued on. I have never been so exhausted in my entire life yet managed to keep moving. I knew that when I reached the top I would be the closest I could ever get to my grandmother in heaven, and that kept me going.

I reached the top at 6:30 am, 30 minutes after sunrise. We celebrated by having a hot cup of tea, taking some pictures, crying and thanking God for making it all possible. It was the most amazing thing I have ever done. After spending what we felt was enough time at the top, we began the climb down. It was accompanied by a different kind of pain, however knowing that the hardest part had been accomplished, we pushed through.

A day and a half later we walked back through the gates to Kilimanjaro National Park - mission accomplished. We celebrated the first day off the mountain by bathing and relaxing at our hotel. I called my parents to tell them the good news. I had done it! Back in Nairobi we did some much needed laundry and sightseeing. We went to a giraffe sanctuary where I kissed and petted a giraffe. We also went to an elephant orphanage. We toured the Kazuri jewelry factory which employs all single mothers and I bought my mother a beautiful necklace. After two days of recuperation, Erica, her aunt Carolyn and I flew to Lewa Downs for a 2 day safari. We stayed in a beautiful tented camp and spent the days in the back of a Jeep doing game drives. It was incredible to see elephants, lions, hippos, rhinos, cheetahs, giraffes and countless other wild animals, all in their natural environment.

From Lewa Downs Erica and I flew to our final African destination, Cape Town, South Africa. We spent 5 fantastic days in Cape Town. We went cage diving with Great white sharks, sampled some of the world's finest wines on a wine tour, ate the best seafood and sushi I have ever had, went up Table Mountain and planned our next trip to Africa. Our final night in Cape town we went out to dinner and came home to begin the pack for our European leg of the trip. We decided that we would pack in the morning and instead just go to bed as we were exhausted. I fell asleep and Erica was reading in bed when we were woken up by a loud yell from the living room area in our bed and breakfast. Prior to coming to our room we had said good night to Christian, a French photographer that was also a guest at the B&B. Erica and I thought maybe he had hurt himself and we were going to go out to investigate when two men burst into our room hurling Christian ahead of them. All I

remember was seeing the guns. They told us to get down on the floor and be quiet. I realized that we were in serious trouble. We all sat on the floor as they started to rifle through our belongings. They told us to give them our money. They ripped our jewelry off of us and asked us about the safe in the house. I kept telling them that we were only guests there and we knew nothing. They took Erica's camera and she bravely asked them to give her back her memory card so she could at least have her pictures and video footage. Amazingly, they gave it back to her. They told us to lie on our stomachs while they tied our hands behind our backs. I thought about how I had called my parents earlier that night and not left a message when their answering message had picked up. I wished I would have told them I loved them one last time. I kept repeating in my head "God let us get through this alive and unharmed." They kept kicking Christian and telling him he was going to die. They gagged all of us with an elastic exercise band. After about an hour they left, locking us in the bedroom and taking all the house keys. We lay there for about 5 minutes not daring to talk. Finally Christian slid his gag off his mouth and pushed it down around his neck. Due to the gags elastic nature and how hard it had been tied, he began to choke. Erica, who was the closest to him, chewed it off his neck so that he could breathe. He then chewed through the bands tying her arms behind her back and she in turn undid our hands. We had heard them coming in and out of the house and didn't know where exactly they were. Finally after it had been quiet for a while we knew we had to make a run for it. We climbed out of the bedroom window and ran for our lives across the back lawn, hopped the fence, ran down a cliff onto the road where we flagged down a passing patrol car. The police arrived minutes later. Erica managed to get a hold of her parents who are the Canadian heads of Mission in Kinshasa, DRC and within no time the Canadian Consulate was reached and arrived at the B&B. He was fantastic and made sure that we were properly taken care of. As we no longer had a secure place to stay we spent the night in his condo. The next day we were escorted to police headquarters to give our statements and give descriptions of the men. The detective assigned to our case drove us to the airport to ensure our safety and we began our long journey home. We knew that continuing onto Europe was out of the question so the ambassador arranged to have our flights changed for us. After 36 hours we arrived in Toronto, exhausted and so thankful to be home. It had been a trip I will never forget. I refused to let the robbers ruin any of my memories. They had taken my possessions, but they could never take anything else. I was so lucky that everything had worked out as well as it had. Thanks be to God! Now all I had to do was tell my parents.....

A letter from the Rector . . .

Greetings,

Whenever I officiate at a wedding service I find one of the most meaningful moments to be that time when I ask the question of the congregation, " You are witnesses to these vows now being made. Will you do all that you can to support and uphold this marriage?" Sometimes the response is tepid, at best. Any sleeping church mice could continue to doze serenely through the murmured answer. Those are the times when I stop the flow of the liturgy and ask the question again. I also remind the congregation gathered for that service that they are not merely spectators, but they are full participants and actively involved in the lives of those whose public commitment to each other is being celebrated at that moment.

When the question, asking for support and affirmation is presented again, the rafters have been known to shake with the volume of the response. The couple standing in front of me know that the people gathered as witnesses have answered with a resounding "WE WILL!!"

Our upcoming Special Vestry Meeting mirrors the experience that I have just shared with you. At our Annual Vestry Meeting earlier this year our Parish Family voiced a commitment to a course of Mission and Ministry which was outlined in our Parish Budget. As the year has unfolded the actual support and living out of the stated commitment has allowed that sleeping church mouse to continue to snooze. Individuals who have been called to positions of leadership in the life of our Parish Family have sought to faithfully ensure that the Mission and Ministry goals which were claimed as important at our Annual Vestry Meeting, by our Parish Family, continue to be implemented.

Our experience of Stewardship Weekend demonstrated to me that members of our Parish Family are prepared to give of their time and energy to respond to one of our Parish Ministry Goals as we care for the buildings we have inherited from previous generations. At the same time we discovered in our process of cleaning out, how much of our building lies dormant for extended periods of time throughout the year. The demands our present physical structures place upon us are significant.

I invite you to set aside some time after the 10:00 a.m. service on Sunday, June 21st to attend the Special Vestry Meeting. I encourage you to be present and let your voice be heard. I believe that the rafters do indeed need to shake with a resounding statement of affirmation for our commitment to our shared Ministry and Ministry goals this year. I look forward to that moment when our Parish Family is asked, " Will you do

all in your power to support and uphold our commitment to Mission and Ministry at St. John's ?" that the resounding answer will be, " WE WILL !!"
Faithfully yours,
The Reverend Canon Christopher B. J. Pratt
Rector

WEDDINGS

April 11, 2009 Colleen Nicole Lichti to Trevor James Leaman Cleveland, in beautiful Nassau, Bahamas
May 23, 2009 Tamsin Langenhoven to Matthew Cobb

ANNIVERSARIES

Hazel and Ralph Nobes, celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary June 6, 2009, with a trip to Scotland.

PASSINGS

April 4, 2009, Frederick Arthur Locke
April 8, 2009, Gwyn R. McGee
May 5, 2009, K. Isabelle Blachford
May 26, 2009, Joan Tudor Lamb

BAPTISMS

April 19, 2009
Eve Della Woodley-Scriver,
Daughter of Charlotte Woodley and Aaron Scriver

Ruti Musa Koko
Daughter of Musa Koko and Somaya Biringi

Sadie Ives Johnston Pickwoad
Daughter of David Pickwoad and Alex Johnston
Georgia Howell Johnston Pickwoad
Daughter of David Pickwoad and Alex Johnston

Jaceyk Brilen Lippert
Son of Scott and Kirsten Lippert

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER !
Doug and Marie

The next OEW deadline will be September 6th.