

The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd  
64 University Terrace  
Athens, Ohio 45701

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Good  
SHEPHERD  
News

*The Episcopal Church of The Good Shepherd*

January  
2007

We have seen his star.

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*Seeking and Serving Christ in all persons*

## Epiphany: A Season for Mission

During the twelve days of Christmas, we celebrate the birth of Jesus with great joy. Christmas is the feast of Emmanuel, God with us in flesh. In the flesh of Jesus, the “dignity of human nature” is “wonderfully restored.” God gives us new life, through the innocent, trusting, vulnerable love of a child. Christmas is also the feast of the humility and poverty of God. God’s holy child is found where we might least expect—outside the inn, with unclean animals and shepherds.

Christmas ends with the Epiphany of our Lord. “Epiphany” means manifestation. The season which follows is a time when we hear about the various ways in which God is made known in the flesh of Jesus, beginning with his baptism in the Jordan and ending with his transfiguration on the holy mountain. As the preface puts it: “Because in the mystery of the Word made flesh, you have caused a new light to shine in our hearts, to give the knowledge of your glory in the face of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.” Epiphany is also a season for mission. After the Gospel proclaimed to God’s people Israel, the Magi come from the East to see the newborn Messiah, signifying that the Gospel will soon spread to the whole world. Epiphany marks the spread of the Good News of Jesus to unclean Gentiles—sinners like us.

It is quite significant that the two great feasts of the Christian year, Christmas and Easter, are immediately followed by seasons of mission (the great fifty days of Easter lead to the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit gives the companions of Jesus power to proclaim his resurrection to all nations). These two seasons, which have in common the liturgical color green, are often called “ordinary time,” but there is nothing “ordinary” about either one. As Eucharistic Prayer B reminds us, we are living “in these last days.” For Christians, there is always a sense of urgency about sharing the Gospel in word and deed. The basic mysteries of our faith lead inexorably to mission. To quote a famous missionary bishop and teacher, Leslie Newbigin, “the Church that is not in mission is no Church at all.”

Mission is always lived out in a local context. It is incarnational in its basic structure. Filled with the Holy Spirit, the Church takes on flesh and blood in a particular place, as we strive to bear witness, by word and deed, to what God has done, is doing, and will do among us. This Epiphany, Good Shepherd will have three important opportunities to engage the mission God has set before us. All mission is God’s mission,

and we participate in it, because we have been baptized by water and the Holy Spirit.

The first such opportunity is our annual meeting, which will be held on January 28, after the 10:30 Eucharist. (There will be no 8:00 service that day.) This will be a time to take stock of our new partnership in the Gospel. I will have been with you for eight months. We have accomplished much (my primary goal has been getting to know you and the present state of the parish and its ministries). There is much, much more to be done. The annual meeting will help us shape strategies for mission consistent with the five goals set by the parish during the interim. (See insert.) It will also give us a chance to begin discerning where God might be calling each of us to serve. The Vestry has adopted a mission-minded budget, choosing among other things to fully fund most of our new spending priorities, including outreach, even though we did not meet our ambitious goals for the fall stewardship campaign.

There is a lot of good news coming out of that campaign. Pledged income is higher than it has ever been. (We now have 69 pledges for \$135, 494. The average pledge is up \$113 to \$1967. We have received increased pledges totaling \$23,992 from 42 households. Of these, \$14,970 represents pledges from 12 households who have pledged for the very first time.) Even though the 2007 budget is technically a deficit budget (as is any budget that spends down endowment principal), if current trends continue, we will soon be living within our means.

This is a time when we will need to step out on faith and embrace calculated risks in order to be true to our calling as a parish. Remember, that “money follows mission.” We have fully funded priorities in Christian education, new member ministry, and outreach, because these priorities will help us to grow, in numbers hopefully but also in discipleship. (Ultimately, faithfulness to God is what really counts.) As we are all aware, growing is a matter of considerable urgency, but there is no a cause for panic. We have a plan, and what we are doing is working exceedingly well so far. To sustain the effort over time, however, we will need an infusion of new commitments of time and talent to continue to “build on our strengths, do the basics well, and practice the ministry of active hospitality.” This will be especially important as we begin to experience growing pains. It is here that we need to stay focused on Jesus and the Gospel, which provide our reason for being together. Jesus is the light that darkness did not overcome, and he is the star that guides us.

The second opportunity of the season is the emphasis on Appalachian ministry. The diocese has designated the last Sunday of Epiphany, Appalachian Ministry Sunday, but we will be doing more throughout the season. At our Eucharists, we will be using the musical settings in Jonathan Dimmock's "Mass for Appalachia." Jonathan is a native of Appalachian Virginia and his mass echoes both the musical traditions and physical beauty of the mountains and hills. (There will be an opportunity to introduce this wonderful music at the coffee hour after our 10:30 Eucharist on January 7). In addition, the diocese will send us some educational materials that celebrate the rich culture, values, and history of the region, without ignoring the distinctive challenges for Christian ministry that it presents. I recently accepted an appointment to the diocesan Appalachian Ministries Commission, chaired by Katharin Foster. I realize that I have now lived in different parts of Appalachia for eight years and that God may be telling me something about my future ministry. Good Shepherd's location may likewise tell us something about our mission as a parish.

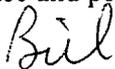
Our partnership with Rural Action, to which we have made an expanded financial commitment in the 2007 budget year, is one good way that we can fulfill God's dreams for Southeastern Ohio, and it provides a tangible way to work toward the Millennium Development Goals (see insert) with regard to economic empowerment and environmental sustainability. Another effort centers on a proposal for a Center for Rural Ministry, to be housed at Good Shepherd (though much of the work will be in rural Athens county and the surrounding counties). As I envision it, the program will emphasize experiential learning through internships with local Church-based ministries and nonprofits. There will also be workshops on the history and sociology of the region, the theology of Christian mission, rural congregational studies, different models of community organizing, grant writing, and non-violent direct action. The whole program will be framed by intentional community and Christian spirituality with attention to the connection between the Gospel and social justice. We hope to draw extensively from the expertise of Good Shepherd parishioners, other clergy and people from local churches (including our ecumenical partners), and Ohio University faculty.

The third opportunity of the season is some educational events to take place before and during the Eucharist Sunday, February 4. Bruce and Jane Ergood will be talking about their work in health education in rural Honduras. Good Shepherd's 2007 budget includes \$1000 in funding for this work, which represents half of our new commitment to overseas

development work in connection with the Millennium Development Goals. Bruce and Jane have gone to Honduras with Good Shepherd parishioners before. It is my hope that something similar will be arranged in the future, so that we start to build new human ties with this ministry that will add to our financial commitment. Both are crucial to any successful missionary partnership. A piece adapted from a letter written by Bruce appears below on this page.

May God bless Good Shepherd in this holy season, as we strive to share the light of Christ with the whole world.

Grace and peace,



**Somos Iglesia, Llamada a Servir:  
We are the Church, called to serve.**

*The following is adapted from a letter from Bruce Ergood about his and Jane's mission work in rural Honduras. Before and during the Eucharist on February 4, as part of our celebration of mission, they will share further about their ministry, which Good Shepherd helps support. The title comes from the motto of the Church in Honduras.*

“Queines de Ustedes concern los Ergoods?” Reverendo Dagoberto Chacon had just asked the congregation at San Mateo, Ojo de Agua, “Who among you knows the Ergoods?” Several people raised their hands. Then he asked, “Do any of you know what they are doing here?” After a rather uncomfortable pause, one lady replied that we were missionaries. Luis, the *Guardia Mayor* (Senior Warden) said that we had come to help the people of Honduras, and added a comment about the poverty in this area.

At that point I asked to speak. “We are all missionaries,” I said. “We all have a mission as Christians to serve our brothers and sisters.” It was my intention to communicate that our work in mission was no different than theirs. I then added that we were all called to use our talents in service to others. I sat down. Then Dagoberto dismissed us with prayer.

It was just 17 months ago that we learned of Quaker work in training local health workers in rural Honduras. We followed up on the idea, attended a NGO Conference on Honduras in Copan Ruinas, met a Honduran woman who had done a health workers training program that year—and we got rolling. We had been working in Honduras since

Hurricane Mitch. We knew the Episcopal Church clergy in several departments (states) and decided to pursue the idea of training workers from villages in mountainous southern Honduras. We discussed the idea with Rev. Dagoberto, who is the head of the deanery. Bishop Lloyd Allen also enthusiastically endorsed the idea.

From September 2005, when we began to plan the project, until April 2006, when we held the first of two workshops, we made two trips to Honduras, raised over \$6,000, and worked endless hours e-mailing and phoning and writing and gathering supplies. Several local physicians—one, a member of Good Shepherd—contributed the major part of the \$1,000 it cost to make the portable medical kits we supplied to each of the 37 *Guardianas de Salud* (Health Guardians) we trained in April and November of this year. Part of a grant from our Diocese's Faith in Life Committee paid for 40 copies of "*Donde no hay doctor*" (Where There is No Doctor), with which each worker was supplied. This excellent health, sanitation, and medical manual is like a secular Bible. It is used throughout the third world. It is truly an indispensable work (and companion) for anyone who has never had formal medical training.

The training workshops – one week in length – were held in the Deanery retreat center – a large meeting room with a kitchen. Meals were cooked on a three-hole, wood fired *comal*, and all training sessions were held in the same space we used as a dining room (where dogs seemed always to be awaiting scraps). There were double bunks, cold showers, and windows without screen or glass. After a week of lectures and practical training, we presented diplomas to our graduates, and gave God thanks for the experience.

November saw our second workshop. This round we had 17 men and women from villages located on the eastern side of the Deanery. We again supplied the books and medical kits and recruited the staff. But already another goal was being realized. Several of the training sessions were held under the guidance of *guardianas* who had graduated from our first workshop. Smart, capable Honduran villagers with training were now teaching their fellow Hondurans. But, no, they did not have the financial resources to supply the materials. Thanks to a grant from the Procter Fund, we took down 20 medical kits and 20 books.

Reverend Dagoberto is happy. We now hope to recruit trainees from village where there are no Episcopal congregations. And we are ready to assist as we can – with materials and our own presence – to “love our neighbors as ourselves.”

## November Vestry Highlights

The Vestry adopted the financial statement of mission for Good Shepherd for 2007. To bring this budget closer to a balanced budget (see the Rector's article), the maintenance budget was trimmed substantially but is still being increased faster than the rate of inflation. After discussion, the increases to the outreach budget were left in place, staying true to the commitments to the Millennium Development Goals (see insert) made by the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Southern Ohio, as well as to the Vestry's earlier decision to honor the Outreach Committee's proposals for addressing these goals internationally and locally. Christian education remains funded at \$2600, double the 2006 budget. New member ministry is funded at \$1500, \$500 lower than the trial budget but still up from \$0 for 2006. Additional savings were found in the estimated energy costs for the church building and the Episcopal house. (Our natural gas rate will be lower than previously estimated.) In general, the budget continues to be mission-oriented, funding priorities that will help Good Shepherd grow in numbers and in faithfulness. Copies will be available at the annual meeting, where the budget adopted will be discussed in greater detail.

The Vestry then considered a petition from some parishioners and related matters of personnel policy. Fr. Carroll and members of the Vestry agreed to meet with interested parishioners to discuss the issues involved. (The meeting took place on December 8.) He also wants to make himself available pastorally to anyone has concerns. One key conclusion that emerged out of the discussion is that there needs to be a single point of contact and supervision for the sexton, to insure both fairness and accountability. In the Episcopal Church, all employees of a parish are employed by the Rector. All requests for maintenance need to be made through the parish office, by means of a form provided for that purpose, so that the Rector (or, in his absence, one of the wardens), with consultation as appropriate, can evaluate whether the request should be addressed by the sexton or the Junior Warden, who does work on the building himself and who hires and oversees whatever professionals may be needed on an *ad hoc* basis. Because of financial constraints, maintenance needs will sometimes have to be deferred, or they will have to be addressed by individual volunteers or at a parish work day.

## January Events at Good Shepherd

	<b>1</b> Parish Office Closed	<b>2</b> 7:30 pm – Alanon 8:00 pm - AA	<b>3</b> noon – Free Lunch 5:30 pm – MW 7:00 pm - CR	<b>4</b> 7:30 pm - Alanon	<b>5</b> 6:00 pm – Nine Lessons & Carols with Potluck to follow	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> 8:00 am – HE I 9:00 am – Ad Ed 10:15 am – SS 10:30 am – HE II 2:00 pm – LI 5:00 pm – HE II	<b>8</b> 7:00 pm – Boy Scout	<b>9</b> 9:30 am – Prayer Shawl Ministry 7:30 pm – Alanon 8:00 pm – AA	<b>10</b> noon – Free Lunch 5:30 pm – MW 7:00 pm – CR	<b>11</b> 7:30 pm – Alanon	<b>12</b> 5:30 pm – Ultreya Potluck 6:30 pm - Ultreya	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> 8:00 am – HE I 9:00 am – Ad Ed 10:15 am – SS 10:30 am – HE II 3:00 pm – YG 5:00 pm – HE II	<b>15</b> Parish Office Closed	<b>16</b> 7:30 pm – Alanon 8:00 pm – AA	<b>17</b> noon – Free Lunch 5:30 pm – MW 7:00 pm – CR	<b>18</b> Sr Faith Margaret’s Visit 7:00 pm – Vestry 7:30 pm – Alanon	<b>19</b> Sr Faith Margaret’s Visit	<b>20</b> Sr Faith Margaret’s Visit
<b>21</b> 8:00 am – HE I 9:00 am – Ad Ed 10:15 am – SS 10:30 am – HE II 2:00 pm – LI 5:00 pm – HE II	<b>22</b> 7:00 pm – Boy Scout	<b>23</b> 7:30 pm – Alanon 8:00 pm – AA	<b>24</b> noon – Free Lunch 5:30 pm – MW 7:00 pm – CR	<b>25</b> 7:30 pm - Alanon	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> 9:00 am – Ad Ed 10:15 am – SS 10:30 am – HE II Annual Meeting 5:00 pm – HE II	<b>29</b> 7:00 pm – Boy Scout	<b>30</b> 7:30 pm – Alanon 8:00 pm – AA Glenda is out of the office	<b>31</b> noon – Free Lunch 5:30 pm – MW 7:00 pm – CR Glenda is out of the office			

### Key Guide:

HE I – Holy Eucharist Rite I  
LI – Lindley Inn Eucharist

HE II – Holy Eucharist Rite II  
SS – Sunday School

MW – Midweek Eucharist  
CR – Choir Rehearsal

YG – Youth Group Meeting  
Ad Ed – Adult Education

### January Birthdays & Anniversaries

	<b>1</b> Mary Culp	<b>2</b> Lauren Spero	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> Elizabeth Sayrs	<b>5</b> Gail Gault Connell Bob Shelly	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> Julie Spero	<b>8</b> Heather Sinclair	<b>9</b> Catherine Chagnot	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> Emilie Walker
<b>14</b> Geoff Buckley Gregory Proctor	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> Bobby Biddlestone Anne Chagnot
<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> Anne Walker	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> Bill Biddlestone	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> Sandi White
<b>28</b> Jim Anastas	<b>29</b> Gene Jennings Joshua & Jessica (Glass) Bergeron	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>			

**Our Five Goals as the Episcopal  
Church of the Good Shepherd  
(From the parish profile)**

- 1) Continue to build upon a strong heritage of worship and music that is eucharistically and prayer book centered and which strongly involves the laity.
- 2) Raise up and strengthen vestry and other lay ministers who can provide consistent and visionary leadership and assist the parish in understanding and responding to conflict.
- 3) Learn about and foster financial stewardship especially as it pertains to the monetary requirements of a full time priest and other personnel, and to addressing the needs and use of our physical plant.
- 4) Continue to encourage and support individual and small group ministry in the community, and establish and sponsor new programs.
- 5) Develop programs and worship for the congregation designed to attract young families, their children, college students, and other underserved groups; where possible we will work cooperatively with other churches.

**The Millennium Development Goals:  
A Framework for Global, Regional,  
and Local Mission**

- 1) eradicate extreme 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 HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases;
- 7) ensure environmental sustainability; and
- 8) develop a global partnership for development

# **The Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols**

**Friday, January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2007  
6:00 p.m.**

**Church of the Good Shepherd  
64 University Terrace**

Join us for what we hope will be a tradition of fellowship and fun on the Twelfth Night of Christmas! The service is less formal than our Advent lessons and carols, with even more congregational singing, and it is intended to be 100% child-friendly. A potluck in Nehls Hall will follow the service.

## **Annual Parish Meeting**

**Sunday, January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2007  
following the 10:30 Eucharist**

**There will not be an 8:00 a.m. Eucharist that day.**