



The Spire

Christ Church, Ithan

Summer issue

June– 2000

From The Rector's Desk

From May 24th until June the 4th 13 people from this parish joined 15 amicable people from The First Presbyterian Church of West Chester for one of the most memorable experiences of our lives.

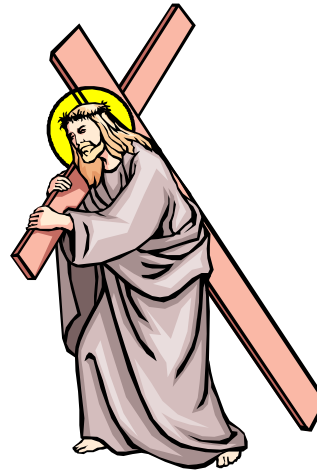
The highlight of the trip was the world famous "Passion Play" of Oberammergau. The origins of this event can be traced back as far as the 17th century when the village being further spared of the black plague celebrated the answering of their prayers by performing the Passion Play once every ten years. Since then it has attracted pilgrims from all over the world. The play was six hours long and it drew you into the crucifixion in a way I have never experienced before. I am not ashamed to say I wept and I know others wept also. Just listen to our folks as

they relate how this encounter placed them into the life of Our Lord's passion. The play ended with an appearance of the risen Lord and if staged by the Divine Director, the sun rose behind the actor. It was truly more than a "special effect."

The rest of our trip just underlined the Creator's sense of beauty. No one could paint a picture more beautiful than the Alps of Switzerland or the lakes around northern Italy.

If you missed this happening, start saving! We'll try it again in the year 2010.

Fr. Ron



Passion Play of Oberammergau

Summer Youth Group

The Summer Youth Group will meet on Wednesday nights from 7:00 to 9:00 PM. Sign up sheets are posted for volunteers to bring popsicles/ water ice.

Games, basketball, cool lessons etc. Friends welcome!

The Youth Group is designed for youth who have completed grade five and up.

Call Karen or Peter Horan at 610-722-9117.

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Special points of interest:

??June 24– Spring Golf Outing.

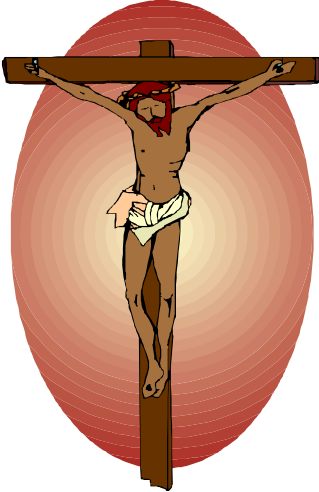
??July 9– Alter Guild Meeting after church.

??June 26– August 28

CCI office hours will be from 9:00 to noon.

Deacon's Bench

Heaven and Hell?



"The closer we become to God, through Jesus Christ, the closer we become to Heaven"

June 1 was Ascension Day, and in the collect for that day it says, "Almighty God, whose blessed Son our Savior Jesus Christ ascended far above all heavens that he might fill all things...." When we think of Heaven and (Hell), what comes to mind?

The ancients envisioned a three-story universe, with heaven as the top layer, hell as the bottom layer and the earth in between. To the ancient Hebrew mind, heaven was the firmament, the transparent dome that covers the earth. The blue color of the sky was due to the chaotic waters that the firmament separated from the earth. Waters, above and below, surrounded the earth. The firmament was substantial; it had pillars and foundations. When the windows of the firmament were opened, rain fell.

Hell, on the other hand, is an English word used to translate the Hebrew word *Sheol*, Greek *Hades*, and Hebrew *Gehenna*. In the Christian tradition, hell is usually associated with the notion of eternal punishment, especially by fire. Jewish writing from the third century BC onward speak of places of punishment by fire and evil spirits and the wicked dead. Revelation describes a lake that burns with fire and brimstone in which the wicked will be eternally punished.

Contemporary theology admits that the concepts of heaven and hell are one of the most difficult of ideas, particularly since they are associated with so much imagery, and also because heaven has become associated with a reward and hell with punishment. This "reward" is the result of a longing on our part for compensation for a life of faith. However, heaven is not a reward for a good life, it is not added to the life of faith, hope, and love.

Heaven, then, is neither mythological nor egocentric. It is simply the goal of human existence. Heaven can be thought of as the upper limit and every attainment of this upper limit would disclose further possibilities beyond it.

What is hell in contemporary theology? If heaven is the fullness of being and the upper limit of human existence, then hell may be taken as the loss of being and the lower limit. Hell, like other "end-time" ideas, can be experienced here and now. To speak of hell as punishment is just as unsatisfactory as speaking of heaven as a reward. Hell is simply the working out of sin, considering that sin is a destroyer of one's being.

The closer we become to God, through Jesus Christ, the closer we become to Heaven. Separation from God results in "hell."



Summer Picnic

Kudos to all the chefs and cooks who braved the heat on Sunday June 11 to prepare a feast for the Summer Picnic. As can be attested by the turnout, Episcopalians love their food.

It was another great event with good food and fellowship.

What a lovely way to kick off the summer!



Above and Beyond

Dear Ron:

I have intended for some time to write to you in order to let you know how very helpful one of your parishioners, John Prodoehl, has been in helping St. Barnabas Mission for the Homeless. As you may know, St. Barnabas became a program of ECS effective July 1, 1999. I can't begin to describe to you all the issues involved in dealing with the community church

which purchased the "old St. Barnabas" buildings, thereby becoming our landlord. John gave generously of his time to assist St. Barnabas and we are now in a newly rehabilitated building, the "St. Barnabas Mission of ECS."

We could not have accomplished this without John's faithful assistance, as well as

considerable patience, in dealing with a tangle of legal issues. He deserves warm thanks (which we have given) and recognition. I thought, as his rector, you would like to know this.

Rev. Robert H. Betts
Executive Director

Episcopal Community Services

Altar Guild Meeting

Jane Parker

A brief meeting will be held in the Vestry Room after church on Sunday July 9th. You are encouraged to bring your refreshments with you. We need to confirm a new schedule and to update members on procedures and activities. All church members are welcome to attend the meeting, particularly if you think you may be interested in participating in this rewarding service. I look forward to seeing

Cape Cod Cottage

Cape Cod "Super Saver"- Comfortable cottage on Brewster Edge Resort available June and August. Two bedrooms with baths; sofa bed; sleeps seven. \$950.00/ week, \$3600.00/month. If interested, contact Ev Borghesani at 610-687-3113 or 610-688-6682

Church Summer Hours

The office of Christ Church will operate under summer hours from June 26 to August 28. The office hours will be from 9:00 AM to noon.



The Candle



"I wear this ribbon to honor my wife"

A handsome, middle-aged man walked quietly into the cafe and sat down. Before he ordered, he couldn't help but notice a group of younger men at the Table next to him.

It was obvious they were making fun of something about him, And it wasn't until he remembered he was wearing a small pink ribbon on the Lapel of his suit that he became aware of what the joke was all about.

The man brushed off the reaction as ignorance, but the smirks began to get To him. He looked one of the rude men square in the eye, placed his hand Beneath the ribbon and asked, quizzically, "This?".

With that the men all began to laugh out loud. The man he addressed said, As he fought back laughter, "Hey, sorry man, but we were just commenting on How pretty your little ribbon looks against your blue jacket!"

The middle aged man calmly motioned for the joker to come over to his table, and invited him to sit down. As uncomfortable as he was, the guy obliged, Not really sure why.

In a soft voice, the middle aged man said, "I wear this ribbon to bring awareness about breast cancer. I wear it in my mother's honor."

"Oh, sorry dude. She died of breast cancer?"

"No, she didn't. She's alive and well. But her breasts nourished me as an infant, and were a soft resting place for my head when I was scared and/or lonely as a little boy. I'm very grateful for my mother's breasts, and her health."

"Umm", the stranger replied, "yeah".

"And I wear this ribbon to honor my wife", the middle aged man went on.

"And she's okay, too?", the other guy asked.

"Oh, yes. She's fine. Her breasts have been a great source of loving Pleasure for both of us, and with them she nurtured and nourished our beautiful daughter 23 years ago. I am grateful for my wife's breasts, and for her health."

"Uh huh. And I guess you wear it to honor your daughter, also?"

"No. It's too late to honor my daughter by wearing it now. My daughter Died of breast cancer one month ago. She thought she was too young to have Breast cancer, so when she accidentally noticed a small lump, she ignored it. She thought that since it wasn't painful, it must not be anything to worry about."

Shaken and ashamed, the now sober stranger said, "Oh, man, I'm so sorry, mister".



The Candle

Continued from page 4

"So, in my daughter's memory, too, I proudly wear this little ribbon, Which allows me the opportunity to enlighten others. Now, go home and talk to Your wife and your daughters, your mother and your friends. And here.."

The middle-aged man reached in his pocket and handed the other man a Little pink ribbon. The guy looked at it, slowly raised his head and asked, "Can Ya help me put it on?"

This is breast cancer awareness month.

A CANDLE LOSES NOTHING BY LIGHTING ANOTHER CANDLE



Biking for the American Cancer Society

On July 16,2000 Ellie Stewart and her brother Michael will be participating in the 68 mile Bike Ride sponsored by the American Cancer Society, from Philadelphia to Mays Landing.

wards cancer research in the greater Delaware Valley Area. Checks can be made out to the American cancer Society.

Help support cancer research!

"This is breast cancer awareness month"

If you are interested in supporting them, you can make a contribution directly to Ellie. All money raised will go to-

Jazz Vespers

"The Main Line's Original Jazz Vespers" held its last performance before summer break on May 7th. Tony Miceli on vibes was the featured performer. As always, this was a fantastic way to spend an hour listening to great jazz.

See you in September?

Congratulations

On June 19th at 9:46 AM at Bryn Mawr Hospital, Brandon Boggs was born to Heather and Matt Boggs. The 8 lb 8 oz baby and mom are doing well.



Congratulations to Heather and Matt on the birth of Brandon!

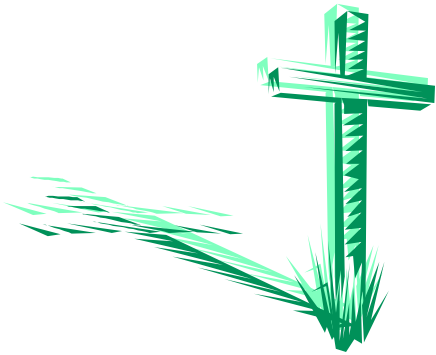
Christ Church, Ithan

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Villanova, PA 19085
Telephone: 610-688-1110

A growing community in Christ

The Rev. Ronald W. Parker, D. Min., Rector
The Rev. Winfield Richardson, Deacon

Everett Borghesani, Rector's Warden
Mary E. Prince, Organist/Choirmaster



Pentecost

Feast of Barnabas the Apostle

(from CQOD)

Let songs of praise fill the sky!
Christ, our ascended Lord,
Sends down his Spirit from on high,
According to his word.

The Spirit by his heavenly breath,
New life creates within:
He quickens sinners from the death
Of trespasses and sin.

The things of Christ the Spirit takes,
And shows them unto men;
The fallen soul his temple makes,
God's image stamps again

Come, Holy Spirit, from above,
With thy celestial fire:
Come, and with flames of zeal and love
Our hearts and tongues inspire.

... Thomas Cotterill (1779-1833)

Kids Humor

When my son Tobey was nine years old, he wanted to surprise his older sister Vanessa with a homemade birthday cake. We bought her favorite cake mix with brightly colored sprinkles baked right into the cake.

I periodically checked on the young chef's progress. He was following the directions and using the mixer carefully. But when I checked on him a few minutes later, I was horrified to find Tobey wrist-deep in batter!

When he saw my face, he assured me that he'd washed his hands first. Then he gestured toward the empty packet of sprinkles and said, "Can you believe it? The instructions said, 'Mix by hand.'"

During a weekend visit with my sister, I read to her granddaughter Adrienna from her children's Bible story book. After our story time, I quizzed Adrienna on what we read.

"Who was the man with the big boat?"

"Noah," she piped right up.

Then--I don't know why--I asked, "What was his last name?"

"Zark!" she replied with authority.

