



St. Michael's Episcopal Church

4000 Lees Summit Rd, Independence, MO

816 373-5333



St. Michael's Sword

April 15 through May 31, 2010

Thoughts from the Vicar.....

Easter Resurrection

Alleluia, Christ is Risen! The Lord is risen indeed, Alleluia! Those are the opening sentences in our Easter worship. We are reminded over and over that Christ is risen and we too have this new life. The Easter season has some unique features just as each liturgical season of the church year. We finished Lent with its focus on discernment and repentance so that we are prepared for the resurrection.

The resurrection is not the end, but the beginning of our spiritual pilgrimage with Christ. In this season we walk with the risen Christ as we find ways to share the good news of the resurrection with everyone we meet. The early disciples could not wait to tell the world the good news, he is not dead - he is risen! What are we waiting for? Perhaps we believe that everyone already knows that God mysteriously raised Jesus to new life, yet if it is true that everyone has heard the good news; then what are we supposed to do as Jesus' loyal disciples?

As followers of Jesus Christ, we are to live our lives in such a way that others see Christ in us. We don't simply tell people that he is risen, we show them. The actions of our lives tell the world what we believe and who we claim as Lord and Savior.

The resurrection is not an event in history to be remembered, but the on-going action of God. Jesus invites us to live as his disciples by continuing his ministry in the world with the help of the Holy Spirit. So how do we live the resurrected life?

There is a story of a group of Trappist monks who invited a Zen Buddhist Master to their monastery. They wanted this Zen Master to share with them his understanding of meditation and contemplation. Trappist's are contemplative monks - silent except for common worship and occasional exceptions in the year. Their lives are spent in silence, work, and prayer.

The Zen Buddhist Master who was invited to this Trappist Monastery hated Christians because he could not abide the idea that God could be incarnate in humankind. He simply could not accept that God would come and be fully human and fully divine. But he accepted the invitation to come to the monastery because he wanted to show them they were wrong; and he also felt his Zen Buddhist experience was valuable to share.

He arrived and in his first meeting with the community told them that they each had to meet with him individually for spiritual direction. As he met with each of them, he gave each individual a "kona" - a task to reflect on - which would give them insight into themselves and help them grow

in their contemplation and mediation. A common *kona* in the Buddhist tradition is something like - reflecting on the sound of one hand clapping. That sort of thing. (Continued next page)

As the week progressed, the visiting Zen Buddhist Master became more and more agitated and upset. At last it came time for the Abbot of the monastery to meet with the Zen Master. As the Abbot sat in front of the Zen Master in silence, the Zen master became even more upset. On each side of him were new testaments - one in English and the other in Japanese. The Zen master picked up one and then the other becoming more and more upset as he read them. Finally he stood up, grabbed the Abbot by the collar of his habit and jerked him out of his chair! Now in the Trappist tradition, this is just not done! However, the Abbot did not resist. Standing in front of the Abbot, the Zen master yelled, "Your *kona* is to show me the resurrection in you!" (Source unknown)

Your *kona*, is to *show me the resurrection in you*. That is the *kona*, the task, the calling and vocation of all of us. How do we show the resurrection in our lives? That is the way we are to live and that is our ministry.

It seems a daunting task, but we can begin by remembering that each of us **is** to be Christ to others; and we can look for Christ in each other. A pleasant word of encouragement, a smile, or a gift of our time all show Christ's love to others. The disciples did not "get it" in a day or even a week or a month - living a life which *shows the resurrection in us* takes a life time. Begin today. Alleluia the Lord is Risen! The Lord is risen indeed, Alleluia!

From the Deacon

Christian Education

Christian education has been a part of my life for many years. Not only did our family attend Sunday School together, my father and mother had Bible studies in our home in the middle of the 1950s. Even when I was not directly involved in those home Bible studies, I heard what was shared. It certainly impressed on me how they thought it was important to read and learn from the scriptures. Later, I attended a small liberal arts college founded on Christian principles, and they required students to take some Bible-related courses. Some of the students found this requirement challenging. For me it was a joy to learn more about the accounts of the Patriarchs, kings, and prophets in the Old Testament, and about Jesus, disciples and the early Church in the New Testament. People's lives with God written over two millennia ago in a region of the world so distant were fascinating. Christian education has been a part of my life for many years. It led me to attend a Bible College, graduating in 1965. I believe that learning about the scriptures is important for Christians. My parents saw to it that I was in Church and went to Sunday School at an early age. When I had children, I saw to it that they were in Sunday School, and the pattern has not been broken. My children are seeing to it their children are trained in Christian beliefs on Sundays. I realize how much of a challenge it is to get everyone up, especially on the weekend. I know because I have been there, done that, and I still do get up at 6:30 on Sundays. I still remember my father calling my name and telling me it was time to get up and get ready for Church, and my Christian education. And I did my share of moaning. (Continued)

Some say I still moan. It is really the parents' responsibility to train their children. Children can't drive themselves in automobiles. It is good for children to see that their parents think Christian Education so important that the parents themselves also participate in it. For those that are without children or single, you need to take the responsibility to expand your knowledge about the Bible. Besides, if you come at 9:30 for Christian Education, you won't be late getting to morning worship. We look forward to seeing you at 9:30 at Christian Education. It is a period of only 45 minutes that most certainly will be a blessing to your life. God's Peace

, Deacon Larry

Cursillo News

There are Episcopalians who are not new to the Christian faith but who are willing to experience getting closer to Christ and Christ's body. About two dozen of those Episcopalians will gather Thursday evening, July 22, at the University of St. Mary in Leavenworth, KS for a three-day weekend that is to conclude Sunday afternoon, July 25. They, together with a team of about thirty Episcopalians who have already been part of such a three-day weekend, will explore living out the Baptismal Covenant and the Great Commission in community. They will listen, talk, eat a lot, sing, laugh, and worship together. It is called a Cursillo weekend, and perhaps you could be a part of it.

This weekend would allow you to take the opportunity to step back and look at your life as a Christian and assess where you would like to make changes so as to have a fuller and more vital life as a member of the body of Christ.

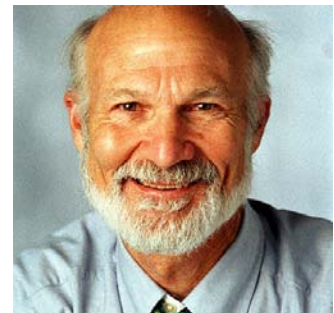
The Cursillo weekend is a different, personal experience for everyone, so ask someone who has attended a weekend about it. Talk to your clergy if you are interested in attending the weekend. The cost is \$150 per participant. Often someone else pays that cost or part of it for the participant. People attending such a three-day weekend for the first time are called candidates. Candidate applications are available at the website: <http://stmichaelschurch.org/pages/cursillo.html>

Rachel Swaney, a layperson from St. Michael's in Independence, MO and Fr. Tom Wilson, the rector of St. Andrew's in Derby, KS are leading the team. For more information contact St. Michael's Church at 816-373-5333.

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2010 Tocher Lecture

Stanley Hauerwas will present the 2010 Tocher Lecture - *Practicing Pentecost: Learning the Language of Peace* at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 20, 2010 at St. Michael & All Angels Church, 6630 Nall Avenue, Mission, KS.



Stanley Hauerwas is the Gilbert T. Rowe Professor of Theological Ethics at the Divinity School of Duke University. The focus of his scholarly work involves demonstrating the importance of the virtues for Christian life, which has led him to emphasize both the narrative shape of Christian faith and practice as well as the importance of the church.

The lecture is free and open to the public with a reception to follow. For further information, please contact St. Michael & All Angels Church, (913) 236-8600.

THE EMPTY EGG (Contributed by Mother Pat, source-Internet/author unknown)

Jeremy was born with a twisted body and a slow mind. At the age of 12 he was still in second grade, seemingly unable to learn. His teacher, Doris Miller, often became exasperated with him. He would squirm in his seat, drool, and make grunting noises. At other times, he spoke clearly and distinctly, as if a spot of light had penetrated the darkness of his brain. Most of the time, however, Jeremy just irritated his teacher.

One day she called his parents and asked them to come in for a consultation. As the Forresters entered the empty classroom, Doris said to them, "Jeremy really belongs in a special school. It isn't fair to him to be with younger children who don't have learning problems. Why, there is a five year gap between his age and that of the other students."

Mrs. Forrester cried softly into a tissue, while her husband spoke. "Miss Miller," he said, "there is no school of that kind nearby. It would be a terrible shock for Jeremy if we had to take him out of this school. We know he really likes it here." Doris sat for a long time after they had left, staring at the snow outside the window. Its coldness seemed to seep into her soul. She wanted to sympathize with the Forresters. After all, their only child had a terminal illness. But it wasn't fair to keep him in her class. She had 18 other youngsters to teach, and Jeremy was a distraction. Furthermore, he would never learn to read and write. Why waste any more time trying?

As she pondered the situation, guilt washed over her. Here I am complaining when my problems are nothing compared to that poor family, she thought. Lord, please help me to be more patient with Jeremy. From that day on, she tried hard to ignore Jeremy's noises and his blank stares. Then one day, he limped to her desk, dragging his bad leg behind him.

"I love you, Miss Miller," he exclaimed, loud enough for the whole class to hear. The other students snickered, and Doris' face turned red. She stammered, "Wh-why that's very nice, Jeremy. N-now please take your seat."

Spring came, and the children talked excitedly about the coming of Easter. Doris told them the story of Jesus, and then to emphasize the idea of new life springing forth, she gave each of the children a large plastic egg. "Now," she said to them, "I want you to take this home and bring it back tomorrow with something inside that shows new life. Do you understand?"

"Yes, Miss Miller," the children responded enthusiastically-all except for Jeremy. He listened intently; his eyes never left her face. He did not even make his usual noises. Had he understood what she had said about Jesus' death and resurrection? Did he understand the assignment? Perhaps she should call his parents and explain the project to them.

That evening, Doris' kitchen sink stopped up. She called the landlord and waited an hour for him to come by and unclog it. After that, she still had to shop for groceries, iron a blouse, and prepare a vocabulary test for the next day. She completely forgot about phoning Jeremy's parents.

The next morning, 19 children came to school, laughing and talking as they placed their eggs in the large wicker basket on Miss Miller's desk. After they completed their math lesson, it was time to open the eggs. In the first egg, Doris found a flower. "Oh yes, a flower is certainly a sign of new life," she said. "When plants peek through the ground, we know that spring is here."

A small girl in the first row waved her arm. "That's my egg, Miss Miller," she called out. The next egg contained a plastic butterfly, which looked very real. Doris held it up. "We all know that a caterpillar changes and grows into a beautiful butterfly. Yes, that's new life, too."

Little Judy smiled proudly and said, "Miss Miller, that one is mine." Next, Doris found a rock with moss on it. She explained that moss, too, showed life.

Billy spoke up from the back of the classroom, "My daddy helped me," he beamed.

Then Doris opened the fourth egg. She gasped. The egg was empty. Surely it must be Jeremy's she thought, and of course, he did not understand her instructions. If only she had not forgotten to phone his parents. Because she did not want to embarrass him, she quietly set the egg aside and reached for another. Suddenly, Jeremy spoke up. "Miss Miller, aren't you going to talk about my egg?" Flustered, Doris replied, "But Jeremy, your egg is empty."

He looked into her eyes and said softly, "Yes, but Jesus' tomb was empty, too."

Time stopped. When she could speak again, Doris asked him, "Do you know why the tomb was empty?" "Oh, yes," Jeremy said, "Jesus was killed and put in there. Then His Father raised Him up."

The recess bell rang. While the children excitedly ran out to the school yard, Doris cried. The cold inside her melted completely away.

Three months later, Jeremy died. Those who paid their respects at the mortuary were surprised to see 19 eggs on top of his casket, all of them empty.

If this blesses you, pass it on.

Happy Easter!

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Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine as children do. It's not just in some of us; it is in everyone. And as we let our own lights shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others. Nelson Mandela

LADIES (ages 13+) - Ever want to connect with other women for some crazy fun and friendship? Well, now is your chance!

OFF on Friday (Oh, For Fun on Friday) is a **NEW** ministry at St. Michael's especially for you and the women you know. This is an awesome opportunity for you to connect with other women for a couple of hours of fun and fellowship. The plan is to host an OFF on Friday each quarter. We will enjoy a planned program, some fine food and a fun time just being together. So, all of you women - invite your daughters, mothers, sisters, grandmothers, neighbors, co-workers and friends.

The first **OFF on Friday is APRIL 23rd!** Please join the Women of St. Michael's as we grow and connect with our **Circle of Friends...**

WHAT: OFF ON FRIDAY - Program - Circle of Friends

WHAT: Friday, April 23rd
7PM - 9PM

WHERE: St. Michael's Episcopal Church
4000 Lee's Summit Road
Independence, MO 64055

COST: \$ 5.00 - BUY ONE TICKET/BRING A FRIEND FREE

CHILD CARE AND TRANSPORTATION WILL BE PROVIDED IF NEEDED

CALL PEGGY CHMELICEK @ 816.795.7019 FOR INFORMATION and to RSVP

Tickets available Sunday mornings

FAMILY CELEBRATIONS

(April 15 through May 31)

BIRTHDAYS

Cameron Chambers	04-18
Preston Trowbridge	04-18
Ken Ireland	04-20
Ann Prettejohn	04-22
Debra Heacock	04-22
Bryant Long	04-33
Genie Kuske	04-28
Donna Meyer	04-29
Marilyn Yocum	05-01
Samantha Stewart	05/07
Ada Napier	05/12
Ronald Byers	05/08
Pat Regier	05/22
Michael Martin	05-24
Caitlin Crawford	05/25
Lee Morrison	05-28
Jacob Crawford	05/29
Jeremiah West	05-31
Jeremy West	05-31

ANNIVERSARIES

Ronald & Sandra Byers	04-17
Jim & Rachel Swaney	04-29
Frank & Mary Beth Manning	05-04
Jake & Gina Crawford	05-04
Joseph & Deborah Hogan	05-06

Baptisms

Trish Doran	04-15
Jennifer Manning	04-17
Jaelinn Dildine	04-19
Marybeth Allen	04-20
Stacey Long	04-20
Jay Kilpatrick	04-21
Adrianna Stewart	04-22
Jeremiah Long	04-26
Zechariah Long	04-26
Ciziah West	05-03
Jeremiah West	05-03
Jeremy West	05-03
Jamie Russell-Wright	05-08
David Dougherty	05-13
Delaney Russell	05-17
Terry White	05-21

Paper or Plastic: When the Bill Comes Due

By Kathy McManus

Paper or plastic? It used to be one of the dominant decisions for consumers.

But as more and more supermarkets and other stores have phased out the use of so-called disposable plastic bags, a different environmental question still lingers: *Paper or electronic?* Bills, that is.

For many people, paying bills online is a no-brainer way to save time and resources. But millions of Americans continue to receive all their bills by mail, which they pay with paper checks, send with postage, and add to the handling of even more paper mail moving around the country.

It's estimated that if every American household went paper-free for bill-paying the environmental impact would include

- Reducing solid waste in U.S. landfills by more than 800,000 tons a year
- Saving an estimated 18.5 million trees every year
- Curbing the release of greenhouse gases by 2.1 million tons a year

Did You Know?

If every American home replaced just one light with an ENERGY STAR light, we would save enough energy to light more than 3 million homes for a year, about \$700 million in annual energy costs, and prevent 9 billion pounds of greenhouse gas emissions per year, equivalent to the emissions of about 800,000 cars. Something to think about....

Vacation Bible School Needs

Thanks to everyone who brought in shoe boxes, egg cartons and tubes from your foil, plastic wrap and wrapping paper. We still need lots more, so keep saving them for us! This will keep our costs down, and a good way to recycle those items. The egg cartons need to be the paper (or cardboard) ones, and not styrofoam. Just bring them to the church on Sunday morning and give to Donna Meyer. They will be used for art projects for Vacation Bible School. If you are interested in helping with Vacation Bible School in July, contact Mother Pat.

Reduce the amount of energy you consume by replacing incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs. Although compact fluorescent bulbs are more expensive than traditional light bulbs, they use less energy and last considerably longer. Replacing your light bulbs is one of the easiest ways to go green since it only takes a few minutes of your time.

You can also save energy by washing your clothing in cold water. Instead of machine drying your clothing, purchase a drying rack and air dry your clothing. In the summer, take advantage of hot weather and hang your clothes outside to dry.

One easy way to go green is to stop purchasing bottled water. If you're concerned about the quality of your tap water, purchase a water filter that attaches to your faucet. By drinking tap water instead of bottled water, you'll reduce the amount of plastic that ends up in landfills each year.

Purchase chemical-free cleaning products or consider eco-friendly alternatives such as vinegar and baking soda

Editor's note; Deadline for the June 1 through May31 edition will be May20th. Please send your contributions to donnaraemeyer@att.net.

YOUTH NEWS From the web site of.....
Diocese of West Missouri Youth Ministry

Our theme this year.... Get Connected, to yourself, to other people, and to God.

Ephesians 2..... So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In Him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

People make life-long, faith-shaping decisions when we're young. Did you know three-quarters of people who consciously, intentionally and personally choose to embrace the Christian faith do so before their 18th birthday? There's no reason to ask why the Diocese of West Missouri has a youth ministry program – it's clear!

In the Diocese of West Missouri youth ministry is an important part of who we are and what we want to be - a diocese ready to engage people of all ages and provide every opportunity to build up our spiritual life in Christ, carry out His work throughout the world, and be in fellowship with one another!

Youth in grades 6th -12th can enjoy Christian fellowship by getting involved. There are seven diocesan-wide events, mission trips, and retreats planned throughout the year – and something for everyone looking for a place to connect with God and each other through God.

Live as though Christ died yesterday, rose from the grave today, and is coming back tomorrow. Theodore Epp

Wishing will never be a substitute for prayer. Ed Cole