



Hickory Neck Nuggets

Hickory Neck Parish Episcopal Church

February 2007

Inside this Issue

Historic Hickory Neck	4
Meet the Tanners	5
Lent Begins With Ash Wednesday on February 21 st	6
Youth Corner	7
February Celebrations	7
Williamsburg Area Faith in Action Thanks Hickory Neck	7
Episcopal Church of Sudan Protest Letter over Attack on All Saints Cathedral	8
Vestry Highlights	9
Lenten Soup and Supper Series	10
A Happy Treasurer	10
The Secret Message of Second Hand Books	10

To Know the Way Forward

The Reverend Michael L. Delk

Over the next few months, you will be reading and hearing more and more about a parish-wide strategic visioning process I mentioned last November at our Annual Parish Meeting. Right now, the draft plan includes a series of small group meetings, perhaps punctuated by a few large group gatherings. These small groups (I suspect there will be at least a dozen of them) will meet multiple times over a several month span to pray, study scripture, and reflect. I also hope these small groups will provide an avenue for us to pool our wisdom by sharing our insights and listening deeply to each other.

The general topic of conversation will involve how we feel God is leading us forward into the future. Specifically, what sort of ministries should we focus on over the next several years, and how might we best do that ministry, so that our mission of spreading the Gospel and sustaining each other can be fulfilled in greater measure.

At the outset, let me empha-

size that I have no preconceived notions about how the Spirit may move among us in these deliberations, nor do I have much idea of what the end “product” of this process may be. There is no hidden agenda behind this project. What you see is what you get.

Some may question that, but in truth, if the leadership of the parish (including me) had

*Catch the Excitement!
Witness the Joy!
Shape the Vision!*

some agenda we wanted exercised, we’d get on with implementing it, because it would spare us the considerable trouble of a vast and complex process of soliciting views from a large and ever growing parish. Our top and singular priority in this process is to gather people so that together we can listen to God’s Holy Spirit and discern who God wants us to become as a community over the next several years.

As I’m sure you can already

sense, this process will require a significant level of commitment from everyone in the parish, especially the core leadership of it, but I believe the effort will be worthwhile. At the time of this writing, I am eagerly anticipating the Vestry retreat on the final weekend of January, where the strategic visioning process will be refined. After that retreat, we can publish more details about the schedule and other structural aspects of this massive project. In the meantime, though, something has occurred to me.

Before a person or a people can know where they’re going, they must first know where they are, and often the best way to identify where you are is to give some thought about where you’ve been most recently. By retracing that path, we often get a fresh set of bearings that place both the present and the future in a broader context. So the purpose of this article, apart from introducing the visioning process that lays ahead, is to pause and con-

sider what's been happening at Hickory Neck for the past five years.

Looking back over the last half-decade, I hardly know where to begin. In January 2002, Stephanie and I were living in Atlanta with our then one-month-old baby, Benjamin. Both Hickory Neck and I were in a search process, each with multiple candidates. I was nervous, and I imagine the search committee was, too. Such a risky venture choosing a new Rector, and contemplating the prospect of becoming one, while appealing, had my stomach tied in knots. Long story short, Stephanie and I fell in love with Hickory Neck, and were overjoyed when that affection was reciprocated in mid-February 2002, and I was called to serve as Rector.

I started work on the Wednesday before Holy Week, which was hard yet at the same time a great blessing, because nothing accelerates the get-to-know-you process like 11 services in an eight-day stretch. Within a few months, I had learned a lot by listening to various people. I learned about the extraordinary growth that had been occurring for over a decade. I learned about how difficult yet helpful the two year interim period had been. But most of all, I learned that Hickory Neck was a wonderful group of people – intellectually and spiritually hungry, compassionate beyond measure, hospitable, and extremely capable.

I also learned that the huge crowds at our 9:30 a.m. Sunday Eucharist was not a manifestation of curiosity at the new arri-

val, nor did those overcapacity crowds abate in the summer, when attendance in most congregations drops precipitously. It occurred to me that finding a place for people to sit was going to be a significant challenge, so we restructured our Sunday morning schedule, in an effort to give our 11:15 a.m. Eucharist a chance to thrive.

In October 2002, after a lot of help from the parish's lay leadership, we shifted the 9:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., and carved out a roughly one-hour slot for the Christian formation of children, youth, and adults at 10:15 a.m. We launched a new version of the 11:15 a.m. Eucharist, a relatively "high-church" experience, and two-dozen parishioners graciously volunteered to "seed" that Eucharist for one year, so that newcomers would arrive in a place where people were waiting to greet them.

That 11:15 a.m. service grew quickly. Within a year, it too would be at capacity in our tiny historic chapel. Something had to be done, in order to facilitate the continuation of the type of hospitality so characteristic of Hickory Neck. As I said repeatedly at the time, "the first gesture of hospitality a Church can offer someone is a place to sit down for worship." Frequently, though, we couldn't do that very well, and I often went home sad at the memory of people peeking through the door, and finding no room, returning to their cars (and hopefully to another Church, rather than home).

Our need for more space was obvious to everyone, but how could we accomplish that? Because of the historic nature of our chapel, and especially because of the marked and unmarked graves surrounding it, expansion of the historic chapel

didn't make much sense. However, we didn't have enough acreage to build anything new either.

You see, the county requires a certain proportion of parking spaces relative to the combined capacity of the buildings on any given property. In 2002, we had 2.5 acres of land, not enough to both construct a new chapel and have the requisite parking. So we approached the adjacent landowners about giving and/or selling us land.

They did both, offering five acres for free, and selling us another five acres for \$140,000. This transaction was completed by mid-2003, but while we were waiting for this initiative to be finished, we had already assembled a group called Team Genesis to look at a long-term facility plan for our campus. This group also worked on the initial design stage of the new chapel we now inhabit.

As Team Genesis labored, we increasingly felt a need to consult with the congregation in a more comprehensive way, so we held a series of eight meetings over an eight-day period in May 2003. An astonishing array of ideas emerged from the nearly 100 people who participated in the Mission and Ministry meetings. Those 100 people represented about 70% of our active families at that time. Another small leadership group, called the OnStar Team, distilled what was heard at those meetings into a special Mission and Ministry report. This document was, in essence, our first strategic plan, and it has served as an effective guideline for leading the parish in the way God wanted us to go.

Design work on the new chapel continued on into 2004, involving an ever-widening group of parish-

ioners, and despite our overcrowding (especially at the 9:00 a.m. service) people just kept coming, defying the conventional wisdom that chronically overcapacity churches stop growing.

By fall of 2004, we were ready to share the new chapel design with the entire parish and to ask each member to make a sacrificial gift toward its construction. Together, we went on a special Journey of Faith, helped along the way by a consulting firm that told us Hickory Neck would probably receive about \$400,000 in pledges. That was much less than we needed to build any chapel worth having, but we went forward anyway, realizing that even the best consultants probably didn't have a good handle on how generous Hickory Neck could be.

As it turned out, though, none of us expected the parish to do what it did. At the end of the campaign, the people of Hickory Neck had pledged almost \$880,000 toward the construction of a new chapel. Before it was all over, that number would swell to more than \$1.25 million. The rest has happened so recently, I hardly need recount it. We built the new chapel, worshipping in it for the first time in June 2006. Over the past few years, our growth has continued to accelerate. In fact, within the last five years, our worship attendance and our membership rolls have both doubled.

What we've accomplished together at Hickory Neck, in such a relatively short span of time, is to say the least, unusual. Looking back on it now, I marvel at how gracefully we took significant risks and overcame great challenges together. And as I remember these events in our life as a parish, the most vivid

memory is of the abiding presence of Jesus in our midst through it all.

Of course, whenever we look back to the past, we often focus on tangible, quantifiable things, like the number of people who came to worship, or the amount of money that was raised, or the structures that were built. We can see those items on a spreadsheet. We can touch a building with our fingers. But if all we had accomplished together over the past five years were these tangible, quantifiable things, our parish would be lacking so much, for a Church is first and foremost a body of believers on a spiritual quest – not a fundraising or a building machine. These latter aspects of a parish's life, while necessary and sometimes exciting, merely provide the means to achieve our true end of exercising ministry that transforms people, of helping establish the Kingdom of God more and more on this Earth.

We are a people of faith, hope, and love – priceless gifts of grace which cannot be measured or even easily defined. We are a gifted people who have increasingly found a role in the broader community beyond our parish. That role has been manifest in many forms: from the individual evangelistic efforts of some to the outreach activities of others and in myriad ways that could not possibly be catalogued completely.

Over the past five years, as the parish has grown bigger and wider, it has also matured in spiritual depth. A lively discipline of prayer at Hickory Neck is the backbone that supports and strengthens all we do, and the acts of mercy and kindness extended one to another – especially in times of crisis – have continually exhibited the loving pres-

ence of Christ in our community. Perhaps most important, more and more people have found a faith home at Hickory Neck, a place for learning and healing that hosts a people of peace and great joy.

I could go on and on, and perhaps I should, but I think you get the picture. The last five years here at Hickory Neck have been extraordinary. We have endured great change, not all of it pleasant, but we have seen new thing after new thing arise in our midst, revealing the power and the glory and the purpose of God. The once fresh faces have quickly become familiar friends. What once was deemed impossible by some has now become reality for all, thanks to the efforts of countless persons inspired by a vision of what could be and what should be.

I won't pretend that my little "history" of Hickory Neck's most recent five years is definitive. Each of us has a story to add; each of us prioritize events differently. But for those who are new, and for those of us who have been around for a while, I hope this article will serve as a helpful primer and *aide de memoir*, respectively.

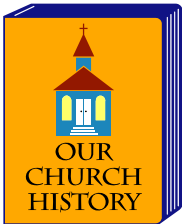
This, by and large, is who we have been as a dynamic community of faith over the past five years. But who are we now, and who is God calling us to become in the future? These are questions I leave for you to answer, beginning in just a few months, as we invite everyone to participate in prayerful conversation with their brothers and sisters in

Christ at Hickory Neck.

But don't wait until then. Please start praying, start remembering, start thinking, start dreaming, start talking now. Get ready. I look forward to this time together, and I am hopeful that we will learn much, and that what we learn will enable us to live together as faithfully as possible in the years ahead.

Historic Hickory Neck

Martha McCartney



During the past few months, several people have asked questions about what historic Hickory Neck Church was like during the 18th century. Some have inquired why don't we reconstruct it, and others have asked about the view of Hickory Neck that artist Sidney King portrayed in his painting.

What do we know about what colonial Hickory Neck was like?

Hickory Neck's colonial vestry records reveal that the main body of the church, which was brick and was constructed between 1734 and 1738, was oriented on an east-west axis and measured 26 feet by 60 feet. There were three arched windows on each side and two at the east and west ends. Overhead soared a compass (or arch-

ed) ceiling. The interior walls of the church were lathed, covered with plaster, and whitewashed. The floors of the box pews were a foot from the ground and the aisle was paved with white Bristol stone. The main entrance was in the west end toward the main road, now Route 60. The altar, in accord with Anglican tradition, was at the east end of the church. It was set off with a curved railing and banisters and furnished with a table and font. The box pews, pulpit and reader's desk (or lectern) were wainscoted and had raised paneling. A gallery was at the west end, over the main entrance. The church was unheated and in winter would have been cold and dark. Lewis Deloney, one of the contractors involved in building Hickory Neck, was instrumental in the construction of Bruton Parish Church.

Walnut trees were planted in 1738 and in 1742 a brick wall, 100 feet square, was built around the church, probably to enclose the cemetery. In 1774 a north transept measuring 25 ½ feet by 25 ½ feet was added onto the original church building. It had two windows in each side and was the first arm of what presumably was intended to become a cruciform structure. When the north transept was built, the pulpit was shifted from south to north and placed at the corner where the transept intersected with the nave.

During the 1930s and again during the 1970s, archaeological excavations uncovered the foundations of the main body of the church. Afterward, bricks were countersunk to demarcate its corners. One of those corner markers is situated on the west side of our historic church, near the base of a large walnut tree overlooking Route 60. Another marker lies directly to the north.

Parallel corner markers are situated on the east side of the historic church.

Why don't we rebuild?

If we were to rebuild the main portion of historic Hickory Neck, anyone exiting the traditional main entrance would tumble down the embankment onto the westbound lane of Route 60! Moreover, reconstruction would require us to tear down the southern end of the north transept, which was extended and bricked up in 1825, with the addition of a window on each side. Thus, to rebuild we'd have to destroy architecture that is more than 180 years old, part of historic Hickory Neck Academy.

What was artist Sidney King showing us in his painting of Hickory Neck?

When King tried to recreate Hickory Neck as it would have appeared around 1774, he made use of our colonial vestry records and the visual and archaeological information that was available to him. King assumes that we are standing with our backs toward Anderson's Corner, viewing the north transept's northernmost end. He eliminated the extra windows added during the Academy period, showing us how the north transept would have connected to main body of the church.



Meet the Tanners

Doug Smith



Randy and Joy shown with their daughter Allison and granddaughter Ellianna (Megan's daughter).

One of the most stalwart couples at Hickory Neck Church is Randy and Joy Tanner. Coming from diverse religious backgrounds, the Tanners joined Hickory Neck 14 years ago.

Before becoming members at Hickory Neck, Randy attended a Southern Baptist church and Joy was Roman Catholic. Joy was one of nine children of a career Army family. Although born in North Carolina, she only spent two weeks there. She is a graduate of Fort Hunt High School in Alexandria, Virginia and Bluefield College. After a 26 year career with Anheuser-Busch, she is now purchasing manager for the Philip Morris USA Operations Center in Richmond. Randy, although born in Miami, spent four years in Georgia, before moving to Newport News where he graduated from Warwick High School. He holds a degree from the University of Richmond. From 1971 to 1991, he held several sales and management posi-

tions with General Electric. In 1991 he and three partners formed a business, Old Dominion Lighting in Richmond, which celebrated its 15th anniversary last June.

From an earlier marriage, Randy has a son and two grandchildren. Joy's daughter Megan from a previous marriage was adopted by Randy when she was five and she is married and has a daughter. The Tanners have another daughter, Allison, who now lives in Florida.

Both Tanners have been very active at Hickory Neck. Randy is the recent retiring senior warden of the vestry and has served twice on the vestry, once as treasurer. He is chairman of the Outreach Committee, a member of the choir, and a lector. He is co-chairman of the Relay for Life committee and served as a Diocesan Council delegate. Joy has served on the vestry, was chairman of the Newcomer Committee, and now serves as a lector, member of the choir, and chalice. She is on the By-Laws Committee and the Discernment Committee for OEP (Ordination Exploration program). Both are active in the Cursillo movement at Hickory Neck and have served on Cursillo teams.

The old Hickory Neck bumper sticker helped pull Randy into Hickory Neck. He says it was and is a church he feels comfortable in and that he received a warm recep-

tion and closeness to other people in the Historic Chapel. Joy believes the church has a very accepting faith, is non-judgmental and gives everyone space. Both Randy and Joy see Hickory Neck having a spectacular, dynamic growth. They list a combination of reasons for this: "Great clergy including Jim Kellett, Michael Delk and Ann Dieterle, very good lay leadership solving problems, a welcoming attitude toward new people." They also see a more important role in the community around us and a spirit of Jesus Christ alive in the church and community.

Randy is a true Washington Redskin fanatic and other recreational activities he and Joy enjoy are walking, reading, time with their children and grandchildren, traveling and "just enjoying life." Both feel Hickory Neck is a "very special place and we are grateful to be part of it. We know that it is our church home and that others are searching for the same thing."

Asked about ten years in the future, Randy predicts that the next two phases of expansion – the Christian Education and Administrative wings will be completed and the new worship facility will be the largest
(continued on page 7)

Visit Hickory Neck on the web at www.hickoryneck.org



The 2007 Hickory Neck Vestry (from the left): Bill Teale, Junior Warden/Stewardship; Nancy Geddes, Youth; Fred Boelt, Senior Warden/Treasurer; Katrina Luksovsky, Newcomers; Sue Dugan, Pastoral Care; Pastor Ann; Paula Simmons, Christian Formation; Lynn Geddy, Parish Life; Connie Kendrick, Worship; Lauris Zeni, Newcomers; Don Seeterlin, Building and Grounds, Chuck Jundt, Outreach; and Eve Butler-Gee, Register. Missing when the picture was taken: Mayes Mathews, Strategic Planning. Father Michael is not shown because he took the picture.

Lent Begins with Ash Wednesday on February 21st

**The Reverend Michael
L. Delk**

The season of Lent is just around the corner, so start thinking now about the discipline you might want to pursue during this upcoming season of penitence and renewal. Often, people focus on abstaining from food or drink as a way of self-denial. Others, instead of taking something away from life, try to add something, like a greater commitment to daily prayer or participation in one of

the many group studies that occur at Hickory Neck every Lent.

However you choose to observe a Holy Lent, we encourage you to begin it by joining us at one of our three Ash Wednesday services. Each will be similar, in that all will include the Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion. However, just as our Sunday morning liturgies differ somewhat, so also will our offerings on Ash Wednesday.

For those unfamiliar with Ash Wednesday, and as a reminder for the rest, Ash Wednesday provides a solemn occasion to get in touch with our mortality and the implications that reality has for our daily lives. The ashes, marked on the forehead in the form of a cross, are delivered with the words,

“Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” Although we prefer not to contemplate our deaths, the sheer inevitability of our demise requires us to consider it well. And as Christians, we need not fear death, but are able to see through it to a life beyond.

Ash Wednesday and the Imposition of Ashes are a great way to initiate our Lenten reflections. I encourage you to participate. Give some thought now about how you want to observe this season of penitence, either through an act of self-denial or by selecting a new uplifting habit, or both. Schedule a time to meet with Ann or me, and experience the release offered through the reconciliation of a penitent (a.k.a. confession). Spend some time with your Book of Common Prayer and

your Bible, and if you don't have a copy of both in your home already, get a copy of these core devotional texts. But whatever you do, don't let these forty days pass you by. The spiritual blessings available for those who engage Lent are too precious to be ignored.



Youth Corner

Soup's On!

It's that time of year again – time for delicious homemade soup! This year marks the 3rd Annual Lenten Supper program sponsored by Hickory Neck youth to raise money for Mother Lauren Stanley's work in Sudan. As you will see from the letter printed elsewhere in this newsletter, there is a critical need for prayer and for support of the people in Sudan. The money raised will help go to the church and school where Mother Lauren serves. We hope you will join us for a great cause and GREAT SOUP!! Dates of the suppers this year are February 28th and March 7th, 14th and 21st.

Relay For Life

It's almost time to RELAY! Keep an eye out for more information coming soon about this year's *Relay for Life*, including our annual Car Wash and Spaghetti-to-Go Dinner. If you're interested in Relaying, contact Karen or John Dutro at 566-8561. ALL ARE WELCOME!



February Celebrations



Birthdays

- 1 - Judy Hodges
- 1 - Ted Ramsaur
- 1 - Kim Claytor
- 2 - Geraldine Kent
- 2 - Jim McGee
- 2 - Lucy Purse
- 3 - Ron Kindley, Jr.
- 5 - Ron Molrine
- 5 - Emma Delk
- 7 - Christine Hanlon
- 8 - Abigail Hanlon
- 11 - Laura Kindley
- 14 - Jean Jundt
- 16 - Coleman Ragsdale
- 19 - Bob Gay
- 19 - Bruce Manning
- 21 - Connie Boswell
- 22 - Tara Best
- 25 - Vic Shumaker
- 26 - Fred Boelt
- 27 - Ann Lipp
- 28 - Adam Lemos
- 29 - Kathy Arcement
- 29 - Alan Zoellner

Anniversaries

- 2 - Amy & Chris Miller
- 6 - Joan & Dave Forrest
- 13 - Patti Kipps & John Greenman
- 14 - Sharon & David Ware
- 20 - Nancye & Bill Morris
- 22 - Maureen & Ben Field
- 25 - Beverly & Ridge Kemp
- 27 - Bettie & Tom Guntherberg

Williamsburg Area Faith in Action Thanks Hickory Neck

Williamsburg Area Faith in Action thanks Hickory Neck for the ongoing work of their volunteers, Esther Gay, Lynn Geddy, Anne Johansen, Arthur Johansen, Thomas Mahone, James McGee, Linda McGee, and Carol Smith. WFIA, an interfaith coalition of volunteers, provides without fees or eligibility requirements, non-medical support services to elderly, chronically ill and disabled adults striving to maintain independence in their own homes. Simply put, WFIA "helps people over the hard spots of life." If you'd like to learn more about or become part of this outreach ministry to our community neighbors please contact Esther Gay at 253-0391 or the WFIA office at 258-5890



**FAITH
IN ACTION**

Meet the Tanners
(continued from page 5)

church in the community of Toano and all of Williamsburg.

Well said, Randy. We love what you and Joy have meant to our church and know that our future holds grand things ahead with the faith you sustain.

Episcopal Church of Sudan (ECS) Protest Letter Over Attack On All Saints Cathedral

Dear Friends of Sudan:

Below is the text of the letter that the Bishop of Khartoum sent to the Government of Sudan, protesting the events of New Year's Eve at All Saints Cathedral in Khartoum. For those of you who have NOT heard, police attacked the Cathedral at 12:25 a.m. during a service praying in the New Year, launching tear gas grenades and beating people. The government claims that the police were chasing a man who had attacked another person, but Bishop Ezekial's letter shows that the police had been gathering outside the Cathedral all day. It took deep faith to overcome the fear that must have been present among the people simply to attend this service. Please pass this information on to all who pray for Sudan. Prayers for peace and reconciliation are more important than ever.

Blessings,

Lauren Stanley

.....
 H.E. Dr. Abdelhalim Ismail
 Almota'fi
 Governor (Wali)
 Khartoum State

Your Excellency,

Subject: A Protest Letter
 against Police Action

"Blessed are the Peace makers

for they will be called Children of God." (Matt. 5:9). We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on the occasions of Christmas, "Eid Aladha", New Year, Independence Day of our beloved country Sudan, and on the Second Anniversary of the CPA. We would like also to thank Your Excellency for your visit and sharing prayers with us on Christmas Day at All Saints Cathedral and wishing you all the best. As we are congratulating you on the second year of CPA, we would like to thank God who made it possible for us to have peace in Sudan with such an agreement that consists of many provisions that confirm freedom of religion, freedom of worship and respect of human rights. "Protocols agreed text on state and religion" Section 6.5 provided freedom of celebration of holidays. On these great occasions of Christmas and New Year we would like also to extend our greetings and gratitude to Sudan Inter-religious Council for positive steps it has taken towards promoting religious co-existence.

The ECS/Diocese of Khartoum has passed through very difficult times as you remember in 2001 during Easter Celebration, when the police forces attacked All Saints Cathedral with hundred troops and as a result of that 156 people were sentenced to prison, nine girls were lashed, one person lost his right eye and one person lost his right hand by "hand grenade", let alone the emotional effects. Many were traumatized because of these events besides the eviction from ECS Guest House by force on 20/5/04.

Our letter of today is to protest the brutal behaviour of the police forces that attacked the peaceful worshippers inside the All Saints Cathedral Church, Street "1" Amarat Khartoum. Here is the actual information of the incident. On 31st December 2006, while we were celebrating Christmas and praying on the last day of the year, in the presence of all worshippers and responsible people in the Government, Diplomats, Ambassadors, Members of International Community and NGO's representatives, we were all shocked by unwarranted police action against the Church.

On that day, we observed the presence of police cars since morning and their numbers increased eventually in the evening. We also noticed that the presence of the police was very threatening as they all faced the Cathedral, causing suspicion and fear in those who were coming to the Cathedral, and also that most of the officers were of high rank. Prayers started at 12:00 midnight and by 12:24 a.m. we heard shooting outside the Church compound. After some few minutes, over ten tear gas canisters were thrown and fired inside and around the Cathedral compound. There was series of tear gas canisters shot one after another for half an hour at intervals. This clearly showed that the police deliberately meant to disturb the prayers and celebrations and to hurt people. After the shooting stopped, there was seen to have been great destruction of furniture, properties and chairs at All Saints Cathedral. Many worshippers also lost their own properties during the incident.

Many people were affected by this incident. Six people were injured and taken immediately to the hospital. Three people were seriously injured including the wife of H.H. George Maker the Secretary for the Office of the First Vice President of Sudan. In terms of psychological effects, children and other people were traumatized by this incident and will be affected for a very long time.

In the light of this event and all that has been mentioned, the administration of the Episcopal Church of the Sudan, Diocese of Khartoum, with its leadership and worshippers condemn this terrible, barbaric and brutal behaviour of the police forces for the second time in this Cathedral. Their behaviour this time has exceeded all ethical ways and contravened the respect of the religious rights and freedom of others in worshipping and prayers. Such barbaric and irresponsible behaviour will eventually lead to some difficulties in the Church and State relationships and will give a wrong concept in the minds of Christians about the policy and authority of the State government of Khartoum, in the National capital. Such events if left without accountability will contribute to deepening the religious grievances among the Christians and may destroy all the efforts that have been exerted for unity and co-existence.

Your Excellency, we believe that your authority and leadership should not accept to be defamed by such incidents as these police forces belong to the State government of Khartoum. Despite what has happened, we trust in your Leadership of this State and your real efforts towards preserving the rights of Christians in Khartoum. Therefore,

we hereby appeal to your good office to take all possible actions, to investigate and bring to justice all responsible bodies who participated in this horrible incident directed against the Church. We also request you to guarantee that such events should not occur again and to preserve the rights of the Church to carry out all its spiritual activities peacefully and safely.

Yours faithfully,

Right Reverend Ezekiel Kondo
Diocesan Bishop, Diocese of Khartoum

Editor's note. The abbreviation CPA refers to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed by the Sudan government and the erstwhile southern rebels, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), in January 2005.



Vestry Highlights

Eve Butler-Gee Register

The Vestry of Hickory Neck Church was assembled in regular session on Tuesday, January 9, 2007, in the Parish House. The minutes of the December 2006 Vestry meeting were approved, after which Eve Butler-Gee was commissioned as incoming Parish Register. The Treasurer's report was approved. The Junior Warden reported a need to streamline data generated by the Time and Talent survey so as to help ministry leaders make the best use of this as a resource for contacting those parishioners who have expressed in-

terest in serving. The Senior Warden assigned responsibility to Vestry members to conduct an insurance inventory of major items in various categories, as part of the recent insurance inspection. There will be a photographic record made of items, such as sacred vessels, for further documentation. The Associate Rector reported on ongoing and future Christian Formation offerings (including the upcoming Lenten supper series); the addition of Brian Hanlon as a new youth volunteer this year; and on a new singles foyers group as part of the beginning of a singles ministry component of pastoral care. The Rector reported that the Men's Breakfast on December 24th was a great success, as was the Childrens' Christmas Pageant which worked comfortably in the new worship space. Attendance at Christmas Eve/Christmas Day services was high, especially at the 11:00 p.m. Christmas Eve high mass at which attendance was double that in any previous years. Plans are being made with Tony Cassanave to build a kiosk for the Narthex for the posting of information/signups, as well as the building and hanging of the cross for the worship space. The Vestry authorized the establishment of Historic Hickory Neck, Incorporated, as a non-profit affiliate parish organization, which will enable the seeking of grants and donations from secular sources for the purpose of restoration/operation of the historic chapel, which could not otherwise be sought by a sectarian body. Hickory Neck will host a Convocation V Pre-

Council Meeting on January 24th, the first time Hickory Neck has been able to do so. The next Vestry meeting will be held on February 6th at 7:00 p.m., rather than on February 13th, since the Rector will be out of town on the regular second Tuesday.

Please note that the official minutes of the January Vestry Meeting will be approved at the February meeting and published on the church web page following that meeting.

Lenten Soup and Supper Series

The Reverend Ann Dieterle

Lent is a season of fasting and discipline - a very solemn and serious task. We fast so that we can hear the voice of God more clearly, so that we can receive the simple and true joy of knowing Jesus, and so that we can prepare for the great feast of the Easter season. Solemn and serious doesn't mean sullen! Join us on Wednesday evenings during Lent, and be enriched by worship, fellowship and study.

Our Lenten Soup and Supper series will feature an evensong with a homily beginning at 6 p.m. A simple soup supper follows at 6:45 p.m. The suppers are put on by our youth, and go to support Mother Lauren Stanley's mission in Sudan. Following supper, we will gather in small group discussions from 7:30 - 8:15 p.m. Discussions will be based on the book *Mark My Word: 40*

Days with Jesus through the Eyes of St. Mark by Richard Giles. It is not required that you read the book, however the time will be enriched for having done so. If you choose, the readings are "due" on the date that they are listed. A schedule of dates and readings are listed below:

Feb. 28 th	Day 1 to Day 8
March 7 th	Day 9 to Day 16
March 14 th	Day 17 to Day 24
March 21 st	Day 25 to Day 32
March 28 th	Day 33 to Day 40

The cost for the supper is \$3 per person with a maximum of \$10 per family. Child care is provided by reservation only. Please contact Pastor Ann Dieterle at 566-0276 for reservations. We hope that you can join us for all (or any) part of these Wednesday evenings.

A Happy Treasurer

Fred Boelt

December 2006 was a record-setting income month in the life of Hickory Neck! Consequently, our operating finances finished \$930.00 in the Black! You, the Congregation, all deserve a huge thank you. You heard and read our financial reports that showed us deeply in the red and you took action and brought the year to a fantastic close.

And now, some of you will be saying, "He is never satisfied." But I would like to remind all of us that in addition to our operating expenses, we have a debt service of approximately \$212,000.00 to be met in 2007. We owe \$162,000.00 plus interest on our demand note that needs to be paid off by year's end plus \$4,200.00 per month on our long term mortgage. With your

help, we can do this. Please make every effort to keep your capital campaign commitments up to date, increase them whenever possible or consider keeping them going for a fourth year.

I really am very satisfied with all that you do for Hickory Neck. As your treasurer, it is part of my job to give you updates on where we stand financially. With God's direction and your help, I am confident that 2007 will be another great year in the life of Hickory Neck Church!

The Secret Message of Second Hand Books

The Reverend Michael L. Delk

I enjoy reading books. Reading relaxes and excites me more than hardly any other pursuit. Whether it's a revealing biography, a well-written novel, or the often dense yet worthwhile texts I devour on theology, philosophy, or political science, books open a door into another world. In fact, books can lead the reader to multiple worlds of meaning. There's the text, of course, but whenever I read a book, I also feel as if I have a companion in the author. Why did he or she structure this chapter or paragraph or sentence in just this way? Why this word and not another? Which claims made by the author were self-evident to them, which came as a flash of brilliance in the night, which emerged only after ponderous effort?

But beyond the book itself and the author and myself as reader, there is often a fourth party to my reading, and that's the previous owners of

many of the books that now sit on my shelves. You see, I am an inveterate habitué of second hand bookshops. Occasionally, you can find a rare treasure, and if the shopkeeper isn't familiar with the subject matter, you can frequently get that special find at a real bargain.

Some people, when they go to used books stores, are looking for books in the best condition possible, and there's certainly something to be said for that. I prefer unbroken spines (I prefer to do that work myself), dust jackets on hard covers whenever possible, but the one thing I do most enjoy that may set me apart from other second hand book aficionados is that I like marked books.

I do it myself. Over the past two decades of reading, I've marked the vast majority of books I've read, in an effort to make recollecting the information easier. I use a hieroglyphic system of notation that at glance signifies to me: here is an area where I disagree with the author's argument; here is a point of agreement; this segment is key to following the author's line of thought; here is a useful concentration of factual information, etc. I also sign the books I mark and place the date I completely finish them, on the front fly leaf.

One of the things I enjoy most about marked books is that they connect me with the previous owner. I even know some of their names, scribbled on the fly leaf, just as I do myself. Upon completion of a second hand, marked book, it's a special thrill to sign my own name underneath the previous owner's.

As I do, it makes me wonder what that person was like, and whether they enjoyed the book as much as I

did. And the markings and marginal notations can be fascinating. Why did she underline a passage that seems relatively unimportant to me? What did those hieroglyphic scribbles in margins signify for the person who last read this book?

Inevitably, this distant encounter with the preceding reader causes me to think about what will happen to my own books someday. I'm loathe to part with any but the most frivolous of the volumes I purchase and read, and yet there's no guarantee that either Emma or Benjamin will ever have such a passionate interest in reading, despite my fervent hopes and concentrated efforts to insure that they will.

I'm painfully aware that many of the treasures I discover in used book stores came to be there by way of estate sales, the massive library of the former professor or cleric or general booklover off-loaded for pennies on the dollar. It makes me wonder about some youngish person strolling through a bookstore fifty years from now, presuming there are bookstores in 2057, and picking up volumes once bought or gifted to me, now gathering dust on a shelf.

As they open the volume, they'll find my name, and a date, and throughout, a whole series of mysterious markings. The questions I

ask now might be asked then. Why did he mark this and not that? What does the five-pointed star mean relative to the eight-pointed star and the checkmark and the X and the "!" and the wavy vertical lines? And in the books that really light my fuse the wrong way, I suppose my subsequent reader will be wondering, "What sort of foul-penned person read this in 2006?"

I've been thinking about this a lot lately, not because I've become maudlin or melancholy, but because I've begun to wonder what our purpose here is, and what enduring legacy we might leave to the generations that will follow us. Of all the used books I own, and there are hundreds, there are dozens that have been signed. I haven't the slightest idea who any of them were. No name recognition at all. And that's humbling.

Obviously, they were fairly bright people, intellectually curious, introverted enough to spend substantial time with some pretty serious books, but I know nothing of them but a name and whatever clues were left by the scratches of their pen or pencil on the text. Were they a person of imagination or



Treasurer's Report

(as of 12/31/2006)

YTD Budget Income	\$317,209.00
YTD Actual Income	\$302,426.57
YTD Budget Expenses	\$317,209.00
YTD Actual Expenses	\$301,495.80
Loan Balances	\$658,876.00

(as of 1-4-07)



Hickory Neck Parish Episcopal Church
8300 Richmond Road
Toano, VA 23168

Tel (757) 566-0276 Fax (757) 566-0081

"Rooted in history and embracing the future, through Christ"

daring? Were they petulant and demanding? Quiet and frightened?

It makes me wonder, how can we fulfill a purpose that matters enough now to endure beyond the present? Some might see that as a quest for glory or earthly immortality, but I think these ruminations strike to the very heart of what is often most noble about us – how can we make a difference; how can we matter; how can we transcend the ordinary everyday, or at least find a way to transform that ordinary everyday into something remarkable and durable?

Did my predecessors read these tough books because they thought there might be something lurking in those pages that could lead them to a more honorable legacy for their descendents? Is that why I read so avidly? Or are we trying to avoid something by escaping into those alternate worlds of meaning I mentioned earlier? It's hard to know about myself, much less to speculate on those long gone.

But that self investigation is one of many ways in which a person can be altered by books, particularly of the second hand variety. We can be taught about what is possible, while simultaneously receiving a lesson in humility. We can probe the pages of a book, and feel it digging into us, uncovering a

whole host of concealed and potentially frightening things. I think that's why, on the whole, we're not a terribly literate culture. What we read is for escape, not challenge; for confirmation, not contradiction, and it leaves us far from sated and occasionally cold, because we realize deep down inside that we've cheated ourselves.

So choose your books wisely, and take time to read them closely. Enjoy reading, and consider a visit to second hand bookstore. Not one of those tidy antiquarian places, but go to a humongous, sprawling, labyrinthine, messy bookstore. Don't seek out the best copy, unless you're looking to resell, but find a volume that's scruffy and marked, and sit down for a chat with the text, the author, and the previous reader. Add you own thoughts. Someday, it'll all get passed on.



Breakfast Speaker



On Saturday morning, January 20th, Hickory Neck's own Lieutenant General George Loving, USAF (Retired) regaled the Men's Breakfast club with the story of his participation in a secret air operation in support of Soviet troops during World War II. Over sixty men enjoyed a great breakfast and the fascinating tale of Operation Frantic. George is shown wearing the medal he was awarded by the Russian government in honor of the fiftieth anniversary of his exploits.

NUGGETS STAFF

Editor: Nancy Snyder

Editorial Assistant: Barbara Paul

Reporter: Doug Smith

Historical Reporter: Martha McCartney

Spotlight Reporters: Carol Goff and Terri Christin

Production: Steve Snyder

March Deadline - February 15th