



# Saints Alive!

## The Newsletter of All Saints' Episcopal Church

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May, 2007

### Father Immel Returns as Vicar and with a Special Request!

I always select the hymns based upon the Bible readings for the day. Carole was a great help with this. She would read the lessons for months in advance and suggest appropriate hymns. Now I turn to you for help. Please go through the Hymnal and pick out your favorites. Just give me a list of the numbers. We use five hymns every Sunday, so we use a total of 260 hymns in a year out of 720 in the Hymnal. Those that receive a vote from more than 20% of the respondents will be considered great favorites and we'll probably use them more than once. Hymns that the Organist, the Deacon, and I consider musically, historically, or theologically important will also be included.

Add any hymns you just plain like, whether they're in our hymnal or some other one. We have a license to make copies for use in the church only. I, for example, love "Sweet Hour of Prayer," and get goose pimples when we sing, *This robe of flesh I'll drop, and rise To seize the everlasting prize. And shout, while passing through the air, 'Farewell, farewell, sweet hour of prayer!'* That one is in our hymnal supplement, "Lift Every Voice and Sing." You might want to check that out, too. Copies are in the Choir area.

This will be a worthwhile project for the Easter season. I'll collate the lists right after Pentecost. The sooner you do it, the less likely you are to forget this important contribution you can make to our worship. Thank you, and have fun with it.

*Submitted by our Vicar, Fr. Otto Immel*

### UTO Sunday is May 20

Sunday, May 20th has been designated as our All Saints' United Thank Offering Sunday. Gather up your Blue Boxes, and/or your "thankful coins" and bring them to church on Sunday, May 20th. We have reserved the beautiful sterling silver Alms Basin from the Diocese Headquarters to use to gather our special thank offering.

The UTO is a ministry of the Episcopal Church that provides a way for men women, and children to give daily thanks to God with a sense of gratitude. The discipline begins at home by placing coins in the "Blue Box". Every coin is used to support grants for mission and ministry. Over \$100,000.00 of grant money has been awarded over the past six years for ministries in Georgia. Every coin counts!

We celebrate our UTO Sunday by having an Ingathering following the service. This is in the form of a covered dish luncheon. Our church will provide the meat. We ask you wonderful All Saints'chefs to bring a vegetable, salad, or dessert to compliment the entrée. See you on Sunday May 20th, UTO Sunday!

*Submitted by Marcie Cherau*

### Mark Your Calendar

**Saturday, May 12:** Women's Prayer Breakfast at All Saints'.

**Friday, May 18:** 7:00 pm: "Spirituals on the Jazzy Side" concert at our sister parish, St. Matthews Episcopal Church, 1401 MLK Blvd. Look for familiar faces in the chorus!

**Sunday, May 20:** UTO Ingathering and covered dish luncheon

**Sunday, May 27:** Pentecost!

**June 10-17** and then **August 19-26:** Interfaith Hospitality Network

## Notes on the Liturgical Calendar

After the cleansing and renewal of the Lenten season and the journey through Holy Week come the brilliance and splendor of the Easter season. Stretching for seven weeks from Easter to Pentecost, the Great Fifty Days offer an extended opportunity for celebrating Jesus' resurrection.

The ancient Christian church considered that one Sunday was not enough time to celebrate the central event of our faith. So the longest season of the Christian year was born: a 50-day counter-balance to the 40 days of Lenten penitence. Though it is right and necessary for Christians to engage in sober reflection and repentance, we also need to cultivate a theology of joy. Our faith will deepen and grow stronger as we revel in the wonder of God's gift of resurrection life through Jesus Christ and the promise of new life for all.

It helps to understand the flow of scripture readings throughout the seven weeks. On Easter Sunday, the lectionary choices of the 3-year cycle include accounts of the resurrection from Matthew, Mark and Luke, with John's gospel always being a choice. Old Testament texts include jubilant prophecies of the fulfillment of God's reign from Isaiah or Jeremiah, while epistle readings focus on the theological significance of the resurrection. This should be a day when we pull out all the stops: the most glorious music and the most festive visual atmosphere should welcome us into the freedom and joy of the day.

During the weeks following Easter Sunday, readings from the gospels focus first on Jesus' post-resurrection appearances and later from his teachings. Readings from the Book of Acts replace Old Testament readings for the season and reveal the early church in action. In the lectionary cycle, various readings from the Book of Revelation highlight the final victory of Christ.

After the euphoria of the Day of Resurrection, the first disciples did not continue in a never-ending celebration, and neither do we. Like them, we struggle to believe, and sometimes God's lively presence seems far away. The scripture texts for the season invite us to follow and participate in

the journey of belief, doubt, and reassurance that is common to all believers.

Though Easter Sunday is the dramatic high point of both the season and the entire Christian year, the two Sundays right after Easter are a descent into struggle. The next three Sundays move upward as we encounter Jesus' comforting and promise-filled teachings. Then another descent occurs on Easter 7 when Jesus leaves the disciples to return to God, and they feel bereft of the companionship of their Teacher and Lord. A surge of energy returns on Pentecost when the disciples experience the coming of the Holy Spirit and realize that they are empowered to continue the ministry of Jesus.

Last week, we observed Easter 4: Good Shepherd Sunday. Drawing from Psalm 23 as well as Jesus' own words in John 10, Good Shepherd Sunday creates and interprets a picture of a loving Shepherd who cares for his sheep and lays down his life for them. One of the earliest and favorite images painted by the first Christians, the Good Shepherd remains a central image in our faith.

Easter 5 (May 6 this year) continues with Jesus' final discourses recorded in John's gospel. Easter 6 is all about love—Jesus' love for us and our love for one another.

The texts on Easter 7 from John's gospel all contain poignant parting words from Jesus before his ascension and the promised coming of the Spirit. This Sunday may also be observed as Ascension Sunday.

Pentecost is May 27 this year. With multiple symbols of wind, breath, flame, and descending dove, this festive day closes the Easter cycle and opens the way again to Ordinary Time. The church is born in the power of the Spirit, and the Christian community becomes a visible, dynamic sign of the living Christ in the world. Pentecost is considered the birthday of the Church. We will be celebrating here at All Saints' with cake and ice cream, flames and doves. Remember to wear red!

*Extracted from an article by Marlene Kropf*

**All Saints' Episcopal Church**  
**P.O. Box 727, 804 Jones Ave.**  
**Tybee Island, GA 31328**  
[www.allsaintstybee.org](http://www.allsaintstybee.org)