

# ***Welcome to St. George's!***



## ***Realizing the Vision: Spirit ... Service ... Stewardship 2008***

**St. George's Episcopal Church**  
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**St. George's  
Episcopal Church  
Germantown, TN**

## On Stewardship

Here are our stories—emotional moments, humorous moments, learning moments—but all focusing on the development of our faith and our knowledge that our Lord is leading us down the right path. What do these stories have to do with stewardship? They remind us of the grace and joy that can be found in giving and of its many faces. We hope you will enjoy and learn from these stories, as we did, and that you will prayerfully consider your own role in giving, receiving, and grace.



On Sunday, September 30th, we start a new method of bringing the message of stewardship to the congregation, the Pony Express. Our hope is that through the transferring of the saddle bags among our families, you take the time to speak to one another, learn more about each other, and share your own stories of St. George's and your faith.

Please reflect on our dreams and opportunities as reflected in our preliminary budget needs (p. 13) and pray for our families and staff as we make our move to our new home with its new challenges and opportunities. Please do all you can to help St. George's grow in the Spirit in the coming year.

-Kenny Kyle, Stewardship Chair  
 -Don Rossman, General Manager, Pony Express Carvass  
 -Grant Sperry and Henry Stokes, SGEC Stewardship Team

### Clergy and Staff

The Rev'd Gary K. Sturni, D.Min., Rector  
 The Rev'd Jerry Crook, Assisting Priest  
 Angela Gill Saunders, DMA, Director of Music/Organist  
 Eileen Fields, Parish Administrator/Financial Assistant  
 Heather Crawford, St. George's Preschool Director  
 Elizabeth Whitlock, Youth Ministries Director  
 Jenny Matthews, Coordinator of Lay Ministries and Volunteer Sunday School Coordinator  
 Julia Jones, Communications Specialist  
 Kit Decker, Communications  
 Charles White, Sexton  
 Kay Wadlington, Volunteer Nursery Coordinator  
 Martha Gardner, Volunteer Office Assistant

### Vestry

Drew Murphy, Sr Warden  
 Anne Leonard, Jr Warden  
 Nelda Griffith and Tom Griffith, Treasurer  
 Marion Rossman, Clerk  
 Tom Baker  
 Verlinda Henning  
 David Olinger  
 Henry Stokes  
 Stuart Wilkinson  
 Bill Thorsberg  
 Cindy Eggleston  
 Jane Birdie Barker  
 Pat Gallagher  
 David George  
 Amy Morse  
 Don Rossman  
 Sandra Thompson-Jaeger

As members of St. George's, we are offered numerous opportunities to do God's work in our community. From worship roles like serving at the altar to participation in any of the numerous outreach opportunities outside of St. George's parish such as support for the downtown Emmanuel Center, Operation Warmth, Habitat for Humanity, to name a few — you and your family can follow in Christ's path of servanthood. From a stewardship perspective, we at St. George's feel this is as important as our monetary commitment to His work. We have been given so many gifts—it is only appropriate that we give back some of our talent as well to the St. George's extended community. Listed here are some examples of opportunities you can explore for yourself. Remember our cry: *NO SPECTATORS!*



## Service Ministries

**Outreach**  
 Outreach Committee  
 Antiques Arcade  
 Church Health Center  
 Emmanuel Episcopal Center  
 Habitat for Humanity  
 Heifer Project  
 Health Ministry

## Resources

Endowment Committee  
 Finance Committee  
 Stewardship Committee  
 Pony Express Trail Boss  
 Memorials  
 Helping Hands  
 Office Volunteers  
 Communications Committee  
 Publicity and story writers  
 Graphic Design  
 Newsletter/Lance support  
 Photographers

# Time and Talent Opportunities

## Fellowship Ministries

### Worship

- Acolyte
- Acolyte Coordinator
- Altar Guild
- Flower Guild
- Lay Eucharistic Minister (LEM)
- Lay Reader/Lector
- Ushers
- Greeters

### Music

- Coventry (Adult) Choir
- Canterbury (Children's) Choir
- Musician (inst: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Exultemus!
- Friends of Music

### Parish Life

- Newcomer Committee
- Fellowship Committee
- Daughters of the King
- Sunday Morning Breakfast Crew
- Coffee Hour
- Bountiful Bridge
- Lancers
- Single Women-Flying Solo
- Family Ministry Committee
- Pastoral Care
- St. George's Book Club
- St. George's Theatre Group

## Christian Formation Ministries

### Youth & Children

- Sunday School Leader
- Children's Chapel
- Nursery Ministry
- Vacation Bible School
- Episcopal Youth Community
- Adult EYC Sponsors
- St. George's Episcopal Preschool

### Adult

- Sunday School Leader-Adult
- Sunday School
- Diocesan Laymen's Conference
- Education for Ministry (EFM)
- Adult Education Council
- Brotherhood of St. Andrew
- St. George's Bookshoppe



## A Message from the Rector

Dear Friends,

You and I are friends, and Jesus also calls you "Friend:" *I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends ...* (John 15:15)

Among the many aspects of friendship, it's obvious that as friends we share joys and sorrows. We support and are available to our friends. We take up tasks together; we help each other overcome; we eat, drink and laugh together.

Friends of Jesus share the mission given to Jesus by the Father -- to be joyful, winsome and creative as we seek to continue his ministry. Our calling is, with him, to teach, reconcile, lift up, heal and forgive. We share in the Passion of Jesus. And with him, we are partners in being about our Father's business. *For everything that I have learned from my [our] Father, I have made known to you.* (John 15:16)

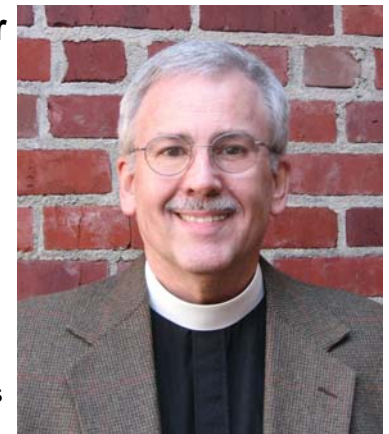
He has made known to us everything that he learned from his Father.

*You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last.* God has truly blessed St. George's and each of us. He has created in us fruit that will last.

At this time of year we take counsel to be fruitful, to multiply and share God's blessings. We practice our friendship with Jesus by "being there" for him, by being present at His table, by being stewards of His gifts, by following in paths of service in His name. To do this, we honor Him and further this common mission with our gifts of time, talent and treasure. We give, not to meet a budget or the needs of an organization, but to deepen and further commit to our discipleship.

Please consider taking a next step in offering an increase over last year in the percentage of your income your gift represents, as you are able, striving to approach the Biblical tithe. We do this in gratitude for our share in Christ's mission, for this privilege of being called "servants no longer," but friends.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Adam", is written on a white background. The signature is stylized and cursive.



## Living in God's Image

We are taught that we were created in the image of God.

It is so easy to think of that in terms literally skin-deep, ignoring the reality of where God put his likeness within us.

I search for that holy image in the hymns, the readings, and the homilies of Sunday mornings at St. George's.

But it is more likely I glimpse it in the lively discussion of an adult education class, in the sharing of personal events of the week over coffee in the parish hall, and in the concern expressed from one to another after difficult life events.

That image is known by the way it manifests in our actions -- in love and caring; in service to one another; and in giving of our wealth of time, talent and resources to sustain the work of God's Church.

— Henry Stokes



## Where We Are Headed

2008 will be a challenging year filled with much promise. Our new church home will be a beacon attracting newcomers while at the same time strengthening our current members. Financially, we must be in a position to support the physical needs of our new church home, while reinforcing and meeting our spiritual needs.

Areas which must be considered include:

- Reallocation of resources among the various ministries to meet changing needs with a goal of increasing percentage of budget for programs by at least 2 percent
- Expansion of Adult Christian Education
- Completion of annual funding for the Youth Director
- Possible addition of a clergy member during 2008
- Pay increases for staff – well deserved
- Changes in operating costs for grounds and building maintenance, custodial services and utilities
- Acquisition of office equipment to replace items with expiring leases
- Funding of interest and principal reduction associated with our cash flow needs and planned long term building debt (no debt service costs have had to be included in the budget for the past several years)
- Contingency for unforeseen costs associated with relocation

Implementation of all these items will require an increase in funding of approximately 14% over the original 2007 budget level..

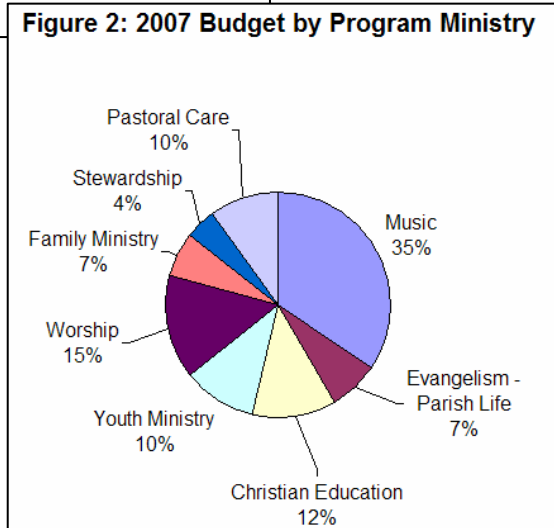
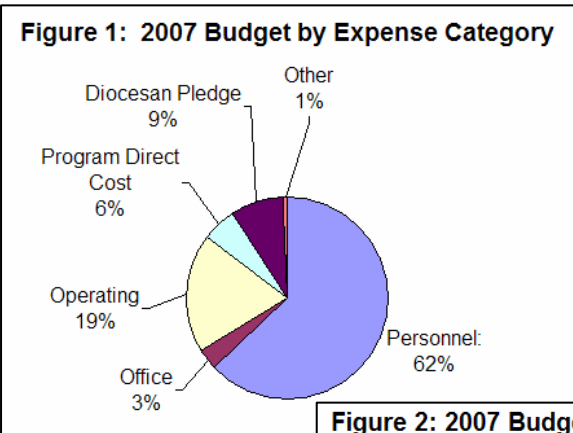


## How Are Our Gifts Used At St. Georges?

Figure 1 depicts by category how your contributions are being utilized at St. George's in 2007. We continue to operate in a manner consistent with diocesan guidelines and always work to maintain a sound fiscal posture.

Figure 2 depicts by ministry how funds are spent. Salary costs were allocated to each ministry and included with the direct program costs to determine the total. Ministries not shown below are self supporting.

These include the Antiques Arcade, St. George's Episcopal Preschool, Bookshoppe, certain Outreach activities, and special music events.



## Connectivity

Years ago, Allen Cooke, the rector at St. George's at the time, preached a sermon that included advice about how to keep your children from being bored in church. We had three young children at the time, which is probably why we remember his sermon so well.



The key, he said, was to involve them in the service. Sit up front where they can see what's going on, Help them hold the prayer book and follow along. Let them put something in the collection plate, even if it's only a penny.

He was right. It's hard to be interested and feel connected if you're not involved.

We all know that it's the right thing to do to make a pledge to the church and to volunteer one's time and talent. As Christians we are instructed to help others with our time, talent and treasure., and St. George's offers many ways to be a good steward. But there's another very good reason to do these things. When you involve yourself, in whatever large or small way you choose, you'll feel the connection with the body of Christ that is St. George's. It feels good. And I can guarantee you won't be bored!

— Jim and Barbara Bongard



## No Doubt It IS About More Than Money....

This is what we learned about stewardship as children – you are supposed to give one tenth of your money to the church. It's always been easy to rationalize THAT particular biblical teaching away! After all, stewardship is most certainly about more than money - St. George's showed us that it isn't **only** money that we offer to our Lord, but in the words of the Eucharist, it is "ourselves, our souls and bodies." That means our worship, our prayers, our outreach, our special talents – whether those talents are organizing a charity event or working in the office or whatever ...but wait a minute ... we're talking about money here.



Our St. George's community is a family – we all benefit from the wisdom and experience of our elders, and delight as we watch our children grow. As new members come, we are enriched by the gifts they bring to our family. Together we mark the passages of life and support and nurture each other. And as in any family, financial resources are just one of those necessities for survival. It's up to us to provide financial support to ensure that the church has not just adequate, but excellent resources as we begin our big adventure on Germantown Road. It will take all of us giving sacrificially to do that.

And isn't it great that there are dedicated folks in the church who are amazing at managing these resources? If you've never looked at the treasurer's report from any Vestry meeting, or from the end of the year, you should. Every single penny is accounted for and the Vestry and the financial minds are vigilant in keeping down expenses and using our money wisely.

When we pledge we try to think of how we spend our money and how the value of our relationship with God through St. George's compares. Then in light of that, we try to give sacrificially. And in return we know our contribution -- along with that of the rest of the church family – makes our life together possible.

— **Bill and Mary Thorsberg**

## An Opportunity for Growth

"GOD LOVES A CHEERFUL GIVER" says Paul in his second letter to the Corinthians. And why shouldn't we give cheerfully? There is not a day that goes by that I am not in awe of the blessings God heaps upon me. There are times I sit in church and cannot help but feel so happy to be a part of this wonderful congregation, folks who have welcomed me with open arms from the first Sunday I arrived.



As our days increase, we do not always welcome change. But for some reason, I seem to thrive on change. I joined a new church after spending 16 years in my former parish, where I knew everyone, where I had worn many hats, from Altar Guild member to Junior Warden with responsibility for the building and grounds. It was home, but now this is home. As we anticipate our move to new surroundings, I feel a sense of excitement and look forward to being a part of that new experience.



When we join a new church, we can sit on the sidelines and enjoy the worship services which are varied and always joyous events or we can volunteer to further our worship experience and grow in God's love and become a part of the fabric of that Christian community. I feel blessed to be able to contribute some of my talents to expand God's kingdom within the Episcopal Church, and specifically at St. George's.

— **Caroline Brown**

## Tending the Soil

When I was a little boy, my concept of a flower was limited to the blossom – it was the part that was pretty and sweet-smelling. To me, the flower's stem served as a holder (sort of like a popsicle stick) and the roots were there simply to keep the flower in the ground. It was the blossom that defined the flower.



So when my Mom asked me to water the flowers, I took the watering can and drenched the petals. She saw my work (and probably laughed at me) and then explained to me that I should pour the water on the ground around the flowers so that it would reach the roots. The growth and health of the flower depended upon the soil and the roots more than anything else. To take care of the flower, you first took care of the soil.

Shortly after Kimberlee and I moved to Memphis eight years ago, we were invited to St. George's by someone I worked with. We were greeted quite warmly and encouraged to return. We have kept coming back ever since.

St. George's has been an environment of rich growth for us over these years – growth in friendships (so many, so wonderful), growth in knowledge, and growth in spirit. That growth was made possible because others had tended to the health of the soil for so many years before we moved here. It was the investments that others had made, through their financial support and generous giving of their time and talent to St. George's, that made this church such a conducive place for our growth. We are deeply appreciative of what they have done.

But as anyone who has tended a garden knows, the soil requires regular care. It's not enough that everything was well tended in some previous season. We must make sure that the soil is getting its proper attention now, so that flowers will bloom today and tomorrow.

For us at St. George's, that means we must provide for the church's financial well-being and we must invest ourselves in the health of the parish – through the giving of our time and our talents. Then our spiritual garden will grow and flourish so much that others will take notice of the attractive fragrance of Christ's love at work at St. George's.

— John Hannum

## Grace

I freely admit to being an iconoclast, likely the product of growing up in the turbulent Sixties, and living by the axiom that rules were meant to be broken. That I should pursue a career in church music came as a shock to many of my family and friends.



But it was through such a career that I discovered another iconoclast -- Jesus Christ. Growing up in the Jewish tradition, Jesus sought to turn orthodoxy on its head when it failed to serve the needs of the people. The law wasn't enough to bring people closer to God. It had to be reinvented. This story is a case in point:

*Sam, "Golden Rule" Jones, one-time mayor of Toledo, used to preside in police court once in a while. One day, in a winter of widespread destitution, they brought before him a man arrested for stealing a loaf of bread. The accused made no defense other than that he could get neither job nor food, and his family was hungry. "I've got to punish you," said the mayor. "The law makes no exceptions. You stole, not from the community which is responsible for these conditions, but from an individual. So I can do nothing but sentence you to a fine of \$10." But the mayor was reaching into his pocket as he added: "Ten dollars. And here is the money to pay your fine. And I remit the fine. Furthermore" - the mayor turned and from a chair took the big white sombrero that Toledo knew so well, and tossed a ten dollar bill into it- "Furthermore, I'm going to fine every person in this room 50 cents, or as much thereof as he happens to have with him, for living in a town where a man has to steal bread in order to eat! Here, Mr. Bailiff"- handing the hat to the court officer- "Go through the courtroom and collect these fines, and give them to this defendant."*

The essential message is grace – grace to turn the law aside when it no longer serves. There is a new law, that of Jesus Christ, to go out into the world, feed the hungry, heal the sick, and comfort the afflicted. We, who walk the way of Christ, can do no less.

—Angela G. Saunders

## What is your S.H.A.P.E.?

*(With apologies to Rick Warren)*

Often I wonder what God's plan for me is. At times I think I have some inkling of what I should be doing, but often it resolves into simply more doubt. I think "what if I headed in this direction" or "what if I tried this" but these thoughts often are resolved into the statement – "there's no way I could support my family by doing \_\_\_\_\_" and I let it go. These thoughts keep "haunting me" (might that be God talking?) but I have yet to act on them.

Over the weekend, I heard a sermon by a preacher who had borrowed the idea of "finding your SHAPE" from Rick Warren, the pastor of Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, California, one of the largest churches in our country. In that sermon, he discussed what it meant to find your "shape." "SHAPE becomes an easy acrostic for

### Spiritual gifts Heart Abilities Personality Experience

As both Fathers Sturni and Crook have mentioned in recent sermons, finding our gifts is key to accomplishing God's purposes for us here on earth. Maybe we can consider using this SHAPE acrostic to find our shape in the kingdom.

**Spiritual gifts** – We know that God has given each of us special spiritual gifts to use. Some of us are great at building programs. Others of us have some talent in bringing people to God. Others of us are exceptionally giving or prayerful. Some of us love to serve, to teach, to write or to shepherd others. These spiritual gifts are probably limitless. What we need to do is identify them within ourselves. Often, experimentation – just trying different avenues – can be a big help in finding just what spiritual gifts God has given us.

**Heart** - *"For Where Your Treasure Is, There Your Heart Will Be Also"* – we often use this quote from Matthew to remind ourselves that we need to avoid treating our "treasures" as a god. But I think it more aptly applies as we try to discern our shape. Just what motivates us or excites us? What do we have a passion for in life? It is these areas we must discover and use in some way so that we are good stewards of these gifts. Each of us is unique and in this uniqueness, we can, with great passion, come together to accomplish God's will on earth. These gifts energize us to that mission.

**Abilities** – Some of us speak well, some of us are humorous, some of us are math whizzes and some of us could care less about math. We all seem to be born with some innate abilities. These gifts allow us to be, in the words of the saint, different members, but part of the same body - God's hands and feet here on earth. Many of us might say, "I just don't have any abilities to offer." Nothing could be further from the truth here, because studies have shown that the average person possesses from 500 – 700 skills. Imagine if all of us decided to use just five to ten of those next year in support of efforts here at St. George's or elsewhere in the community. No telling how many new souls might come to Christ. We just need to take some time to identify those skills.

**Personality** – How might our personalities play in defining our shape and how we look to do God's work in the world? Certainly some of us are more introverted; others are party animals and a friend of almost anyone they meet. It takes all kinds, from thoughtful and sympathetic and deliberate, to bold and adventurous and assertive, to minister in the world.

**Experiences** – Finally, experience. Just what is it we have spent our years doing? God has made us for a purpose and has provided many of these life experiences for us to learn from. From our education to our current vocation, from spiritual to painful moments, our experiences have been helping shape us in the form God needs us to take and to use.

We must celebrate the form in which God has made us. We are each special and unique. We need to (we must!) identify ways to use these talents and gifts to the glory of God.

Clearly, if we are only using the gifts God has given us to make our own way in the world and have not found a way to apply these gifts in growing His kingdom here on earth, we have completely missed the point. We must find and use our gifts for the spread of His Kingdom.

Wise stewardship of our lives begins by understanding our SHAPE. We will be the most effective and fulfilled in our "ministries" – whether at St. George's or in the community – when we use our spiritual gifts and abilities in work about which we are passionate and in ways that best use our personalities and experiences.

— Kenny Kyle