

# St. Luke's, New Orleans, begins community outreach phase

Ben Jenkins, communications team

In the shadow of one of the city's largest schools, John McDonogh Senior High School, lies St. Luke's Episcopal Church at 1222 N. Dorgenois. Positioned in the heart of the city, St. Luke's Church is in a pivotal position to provide aid to Mid-City, Gentilly and Tremé. Since Hurricane Katrina, St. Luke's has been gearing up to begin its community outreach work and has transformed itself into a compassion center known as the St. Luke's Homecoming Center.

Under the direction of Ellene Stampley, Site Coordinator, the center plans to help the people in its surrounding areas through a series of programs. The center officially opened on Sept. 12, when the Homecoming Center hosted an Open House for the public. At the open house, the homecoming center staff unveiled the series of programs they will embark upon to help the community in the rebuilding effort.

Community meals are being held every two weeks not only for members of the church but also for people of the surrounding community. It offers a time for people to reconnect with others in the neighborhood and gives them an opportunity to see and hear cultural entertainment such as live poetry, art or music.

Full-time case managers will be trained and stationed at the Homecoming Center to help people allocate the resources needed to move

back home. Anthony Johnson has been hired as the case management supervisor and Yvonne Wilson as the case management team leader. The Office of Disaster Response plans to have 12 case managers trained and in place by the end of the year.

In partnership with John McDonogh High School, the Homecoming Center will be offering counseling for students, and workshops in conflict resolution and post-Katrina recovery. The counseling comes at a crucial time for the students, according to principal Donald Jackson, as an estimated 200 to 250 students of 750 are living in New Orleans without their parents.

One of the goals for St. Luke's is to bring the people in the area back together as a community. To help with this goal St. Luke's plans to offer a comfortable physical environment for neighborhood groups to meet.

The Neighborhood Story Projects was a program based out of John McDonogh that taught students creative writing and published stories about their neighborhoods. Since many art programs in public schools are now underfunded or have been eliminated, St. Luke's is offering available space for programs such as this so that students will be given the opportunity to express themselves in the creative arts.

On Oct. 7, the Youth Art Outreach Program began in coalition with the Ashe Cultural Arts Center which focuses on young people and

the theater.

This fall, the St. Luke's Homecoming Center is hosting Community Unity Days which allows people of the surrounding areas to come and see what services are being offered

at the center. There is food, games for kids, musicians and theater performances during the Unity Days' events.

The Homecoming Center functions as part of the diocese's Office of Disaster Response.



St. Luke's Homecoming Center in New Orleans hosts a September open house: [L-R] Center Coordinator Ellene Stampley, Office of Disaster Response Executive Assistant Betty Evans, St. Luke's Senior Warden Elvia James, New Orleans City Councilman James Carter, and Office of Disaster Response Strategy and Mission Director Dr. Courtney Cowart. (BEN JENKINS PHOTO)

## Business, civic and church groups partner for beautification project

Ann M. Ball, editor

Inspiration comes from all corners of New Orleans today and cooperative ventures between civic, business and church entities are more the norm than they used to be as the city endeavors to rebuild and regain its former gentility.

A cadre of volunteers from Shell Oil Company gathered at the corner of Harrison Avenue and Canal Boulevard on Oct. 25 to fulfill an ambitious beautification project they planned in conjunction with the Lakeview Civic Improvement Association (LCIA) and St. Paul's Beacon of Hope.

Donna Richard of Shell Oil organized the volunteers under Shell's Ambassador Program, designed to assist with innovative rehabilitation efforts in the city. She then went to the LCIA for ideas.

Here she met Lori Bird of the Resource and Finance Committee for District Five in Lakeview, a member of the LCIA, and a volunteer at St. Paul's Beacon of Hope Homecoming Center. Bird was inspired by the work of Denise and Doug Thornton. Doug for his phenomenal work at the Superdome and Denise for

her equally amazing work at rejuvenating their neighborhood in Lakewood North.

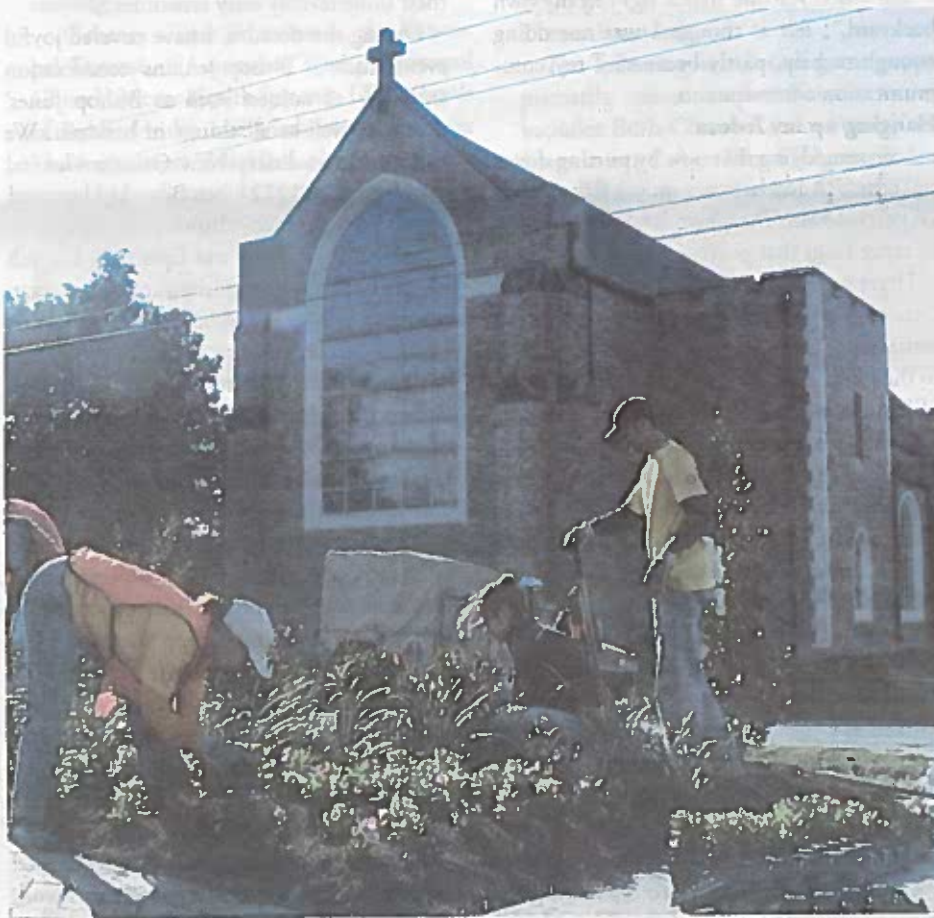
"When LCIA saw what Denise did, we asked how she did it and how we could do it project," Bird said. "We eventually decided that it would be best psychologically for all the people of our neighborhood if we beautified this neutral ground."

Al Pitre of LCIA has served as an ad hoc coordinator for the beautification project. Brad Casey of Vista Landscaping secured the plant and laid out the garden beds, pathways and attractive wrought iron benches which do the spacious area.

Volunteer worker Selma Hawk planted flowers. "My property is here in Lakeview but I'm not back in it yet."

St. Paul's Beacon of Hope Homecoming Center, which is next door to the church will begin its case management program next month to assist people like Selma Hawk to return to her home more quickly. Connie Uddo serves as the center's coordinator.

The Homecoming Center was open for the Shell Oil volunteer workers as a comfortable place for a work break. Snacks and beverages were provided as amenities.



Early morning sunlight catches Shell Oil employees Selma Hawk, Lexie Reed and Duane Johnson as they plant flowers and shrubs on the neutral ground in front of St. Paul's Church in the Lakeview neighborhood of New Orleans. (EDITOR PHOTO)

## St. Paul's Homecoming Center serves lakefront neighborhood returnees

St. Paul's Homecoming Center in Lakeview, New Orleans, opened Oct. 1 at the corner of Vicksburg St. and Harrison Avenue next to St. Paul's Church. The attractive building will house case managers on the first floor by day and on the second floor, out-of-town volunteers by night who come to the city to clean or rebuild houses. The center is also a meeting place for local neighborhood associations and a clearinghouse for information and data. The center is funded through the Office of Disaster Response.

Connie Uddo is the center's director. The center is open from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. but hours will expand as soon as the case managers arrive

in December.

"We hosted our first overnight group at the end of October," Uddo said. A shower trailer will complete the needs of the facility.

"We have a fax machine, a copier and wireless connection for people to use," Uddo added. "Every Wednesday we have a free notary from 9 a.m. to noon. People can get vendor lists for plumbers, electricians, tree cutters, lawn care and other services."

"This is meant to be a place where people can come and relax," Uddo continued. "Soon we'll be offering a washateria and UNO will be offering counseling. I am passionate about helping get people back home."



St. Paul's Homecoming Center on Vicksburg Street in Lakeview, New Orleans (EDITOR PHOTO)

## Slidell church hosts one-man play

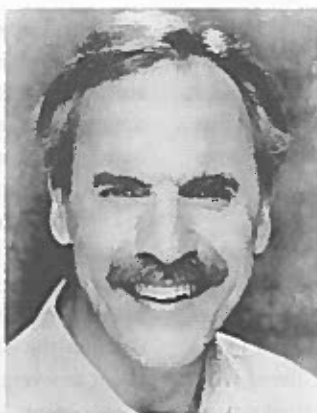
"Me and my Shadow", the story of Judas, will be performed at Christ Episcopal Church, 1534 Seventh St. in Slidell on Saturday Dec. 9 at 7 p.m.

The author, John Maxwell, as Judas Iscariot, will tell the story of what happened the night Jesus died and why Judas decided to betray the one he loved.

Tickets are \$25 for couples, \$15 for an adult, and \$5 for children under the age of 17.

Tickets can be purchased at Christ Church office, Tuesday thru Friday 9 a.m.- 2 p.m. Seating is limited to 300. A sold-out performance is expected. For more information call Sheila MacArthur at 985-641-2989.

Maxwell has been presenting religious



Playwright/Actor John Maxwell

monologues on characters from the New Testament for over 10 years.

"Is there any better drama in the world than the Scriptures?" Maxwell asks. "I love putting them into the 'now.' I love jacking them up and reintroducing them to an audience of not just the 'churched' but the 'un-churched' as well. You don't have to be a Christian to share a commonality with these people. The Bible is wonderful in exploring the universal human dilemmas that we all face. One of the most surprising responses I've received from 'Me and My Shadow' are those people who tell me 'It hit too close to home'. And isn't that what good drama is all about?"

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## Parker to lead Choir Workshop

Composer, conductor and teacher Alice Parker will lead a three-day workshop entitled, "The Fruit of Our Lips!"—A Celebration of A Cappella Hymnody and Anthem Arranging at St. George's Church in New Orleans, Feb. 9-11, 2007.

This celebrated musical talent will lead the workshop with three objectives:

- to provide choral directors and their choirs an opportunity to enhance their ability to sing a cappella with success;
- to teach choral directors



Music Composer Alice Parker

of every level of experience effective methods for turning choral music into meaningful anthems and performance pieces; and

- to promote the deeply rewarding experience of singing in a choir.

Sessions will be held on Friday evening and all day Saturday with a final concert performance on Sunday afternoon at St. George's.

For more information about the workshop, contact David Kemp at 504.899.2812 or email music@sgec.org.

## La seminarian to teach in Sudan

All Saints, River Ridge, parishioner Phoebe Roaf, a seminarian at Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, Virginia, will be teaching Biblical Hebrew at Renk College in

Renk, Sudan, in January. This will give Roaf an opportunity to support and learn from the Sudanese Christians. Prior to entering seminary, Roaf was a practicing attorney.

## Send your foreign stamps to Sr. Clare

Wonder what to do with foreign stamps? Send them to Sister Clare, OSH, of the Convent of St. Helena, P. O. Box 4645, Augusta, GA 30906.

Sr. Clare is a New Orleanian who was a communicant of Christ Church Cathedral before entering Holy Orders at the time when the Rev. Albert Stuart was dean.

Sr. Clare is the oldest member of the order celebrating her 99th year this November.

What a great birthday gift for Sr. Clare to receive a batch of foreign stamps. The stamps are appreciated, needed and easy to send, but most important, they are a way for a congregation to take part in an outreach program.

The stamps have, over the years, helped furnish and supplied many of the convent's needs and services. Just collect a batch of stamps every few months and mail them to Sr. Clare.

## An even better day than usual in the lower Ninth Ward

Deacon Quin Bates  
Mobile Respite Care Unit

Tuesday, Oct. 17 was already a great day at the diocese's Mobile Respite Care Unit parked in the lower Ninth Ward as it helped serve the needs of the community with supplies. The MRCU had a very diverse group of great volunteers including the bishop of Massachusetts, Bud Cederholm and his wife Ruth Anne assisting with the distribution.

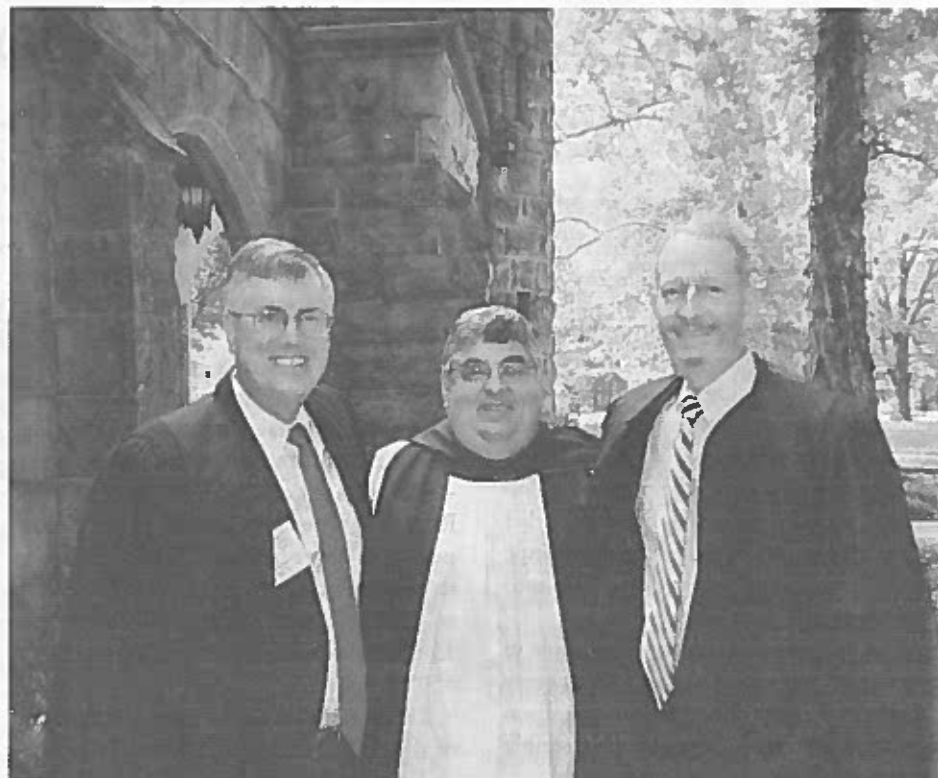
Then Steve Way, a gentleman passing through from Tacoma, Washington, stopped by to see what we were doing and to get directions to view the devastation. He became interested in our ministry of distributing supplies and listening to those who come to see us. Steve was wearing sandals and was not particularly impressively dressed, but he mentioned that as he was passing through town he felt called to give a contribution to the New Orleans schools.

I directed him to a school in the lower Ninth

Ward, the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Charter School for Science and Technology, that is temporarily meeting in uptown New Orleans. He wanted me to go with him but I was too busy working. I later wondered if it was wise to send a stranger to an elementary school or if he would even be able to find his way.

On Friday, I stopped by the school to bring some T-shirts for the children that had been donated to us. Mrs. Hicks, the principal, told me about Steve Way's visit on Tuesday. Steve had asked her if they could use a \$500 donation and of course she said yes as they are short of everything. He went to the bank and returned with a \$5,000 contribution!

He said that he felt spiritually moved to make a larger contribution because his son had originally planned to be an elementary school teacher but later decided that he didn't want to live on a teacher's salary. Instead, the family went into business and experienced financial success. Now he wants to give back to others, especially the education system.



Ian Hipwell, the Rev. Ernie Saik and Jimmy Benton attend the board meeting at The University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee.

## Did you know our diocese owns a university & seminary in Tennessee?

Ian F. Hipwell, College, '70, SMA, '66  
St. Luke's, Baton Rouge

Do you know that we own a university? It is The University of the South, a beautiful college and Episcopal seminary, located on a mountain top in Sewanee, Tennessee. The university sits on 10,000 acres. It is owned by the Diocese of Louisiana and 27 other dioceses of the Episcopal Church, most, but not all of which are located in the deep South.

Each diocese elects two lay representatives and one priest to join its bishop on the Board of Trustees, which has become the largest governing body of a college in America. While much of the day to day business has been entrusted to a smaller, eighteen member Board of Regents, elected by the Board of Trustees, the trustees perform important oversight and final authority over any action of the Regents.

From Oct. 9-12, Jimmy Benton from Grace Church, St. Francisville and I, as your newly elected trustees, joined the other trustees and regents, for the annual meeting and Founder's Day at the University of the South. The Rev. Ernie Saik of St. Luke's Baton Rouge, who serves on the New Trustee Orientation Committee joined us for this important meeting. Jimmy's daughter, Ann Fraser, is a candidate for holy orders, and a senior in The School of Theology, a seminary which now has 88 students. He also has another daughter who is a freshmen in the college. The college enrolls about 1,400 students annually, and is committed to seeking out and enrolling multi-cultural and minority students.

I had not been back to Sewanee in 16 years and noted a number of changes. Beautiful All Saints Chapel, the centerpiece of the campus, is now fully air-conditioned.

A new dormitory has been added and several others have been completely renovated. Old Gailor Dining Hall, where I served tables for four years between 1966 and 1970, has been

completely remodeled to house the literature and language departments.

A new, self-service dining facility, McClurg Hall, was completed in 2001 and serves a wide variety of food for students and faculty.

The Tennessee Williams Performing Arts Center, a gift from the estate of the famous playwright, has a top-of-the-line sound and lighting system.

The Chapel of the Apostles is an 8,500 square-foot chapel used by The School of Theology for weekly services.

At the May meeting, the trustees elected the Rev. Thomas E. Macfie Jr. of Otey Memorial Church in Sewanee to a four-year term as Sewanee's chaplain. Fr. Macfie is a graduate of both the university and The School of Theology and is a former trustee.

In other business, the entire board heard a report from a consultant group, tasked with examining future growth and development, including possible development of a piece of property adjacent to the university. The property was transferred a number of years ago with the stipulation that it be used for the enhancement and benefit of the faculty of Sewanee. Careful attention is being directed to match whatever development might be envisioned to the ecological balance of this beautiful mountain.

The Sewanee Call is a campaign to raise the endowment of the university by \$180 million to serve a variety of needs, including funding scholarships, faculty chairs, salaries, fellowships, and capital needs. By way of example, we learned that our total endowment of \$269 million is roughly half that of one of Sewanee's closest competitors, Washington and Lee University in Virginia.

If you want to learn more about this worthwhile investment in your university, or to learn more about Sewanee, feel free to talk to Jimmy Benton, Fr. Saik, or me. We will be happy to tell you about your university.

## Altar Guild handles liturgical donations

The Diocesan Altar Guild has been given the privilege of coordinating liturgical donations for congregations in the Diocese of Louisiana that were affected by Hurricane Katrina, according to Carolyn Douglas, Diocesan Altar Guild directress.

The guild has begun to receive offers of donations of both new and used items from around the country.

The diocesan Gift and Loan also has previously donated items. The guild has established

a small fund to assist with repairs of damaged liturgical items.

If your congregation has a "needs list" or would like to make donations, contact the Diocesan Altar Guild. The guild will try to match needs as contributions are received.

Speak to your Altar Guild representative about this or contact, Carolyn Douglas, P. O. Box 991, St. Francisville, LA 70775, lacat3@bellsouth.net, or call, 225.939.1954.