



St. Luke's Sentinel

The Parish Paper of St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Blue Ridge

Volume XVI, Issue VI

Blue Ridge, Georgia

June / July 2010

Volunteers needed for Vacation Bible School

St. Luke's annual Vacation Bible School camp is set for Thursday, July 21, and Friday, July 22, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., with breakfast and lunch served both days.

According to VBS superintendent Heather Finley, this year's school will have a western theme and will be built around several experiences of King David, including his encounter with the giant Goliath and his later fugitive status while being pursued by jealous King Saul. The key memory verse will be Psalm 34:19: "Great are the troubles of the righteous; but the LORD delivereth him out of all."

"Life is not easy, and we often find ourselves in troublesome situations where we have to make difficult decisions. These stories focus on a series of difficult times in David's life and how God helped

him and used these experiences to form his character. From the story of David, children will be encouraged to think about similar situations in their own life and to learn to trust God and do the right thing."

As in past years, each day will open with procession from the ground floor entrance to Thomason Hall, down Jones Street, for an opening assembly in the church proper. Ray Pigott will be the story teller.

Workers are needed to assist with crafts, games, food service and wood working. Small Bibles are needed as awards for the children.

To volunteer, contact Heather Finley, telephone (706) 455-7921 or you may e-mail her at: flounderette@gmail.com.

Rector to attend Oxford summer school

The Rector will be out of the parish June 21 through July 7. Part of that time will be spent attending a summer school at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford. In his absence, services at St. Luke's will continue with the Rev. Ronald Wikander officiating. This is the Rev. Mr. Morgan's eleventh year attending summer schools at either Oxford or Cambridge.

The focus of this school will be "Great Awakenings", times when church and nation were aroused from sleep through the preaching of God's Word. Specific attention will be given to the Evangelical revival which occurred in the 18th century on both sides of the Atlantic under God's providence and the preaching of two Oxford

scholars, George Whitefield and John Wesley. The goal organizers have given the event is "to learn from these and other examples, so that we can be opened in a new way to what God is doing in our own day."

Presenters at this year's school will include: Michael Ward, C. S. Lewis scholar and author of *Planet Narnia*; Richard Turnbull, principal of Wycliffe Hall; Bishop Michael Nazir-Alli, Bishop of Rochester; and Michael Green, 'Mr. Evangelism' in the Anglican Communion.

Prior to going to Oxford, Mr. Morgan will spend several days in Pontesbury, Shropshire at the home of Bruce and Barbara Norsworthy.

Knowing God's will for your life

By the Rector

I don't know if you saw it, but as I was preparing to write this column, a news story broke concerning a man parading through the streets of Thibodaux, La., at 2 a.m. wearing no clothes. When police were summoned and arrested him, he told them that God had told him to get naked and walk the streets in order to save his soul.

The man, identified as Shafiq Mohamed, is very likely mentally deranged and stands in need of our sympathy and a good psychiatrist. Be that as it may, he is not the only one who claims to have heard God speak. Perhaps you have had an experience in which you believe God spoke to you, maybe not audibly but in some other definite and discernable way. Or, perhaps you have known someone who has had such an experience.

The question is: How does one sort out such experiences? How can one know if God has spoken or if one is suffering from an overly active imagination or perhaps is hearing unholy voices? After all, in the Scriptures we are instructed to "try the spirits".

Another story, one with which almost certainly you will be familiar comes to mind. Some years ago a well-known radio-television evangelist announced that God had told him that He was going "call him home" if he did not raise a million dollars.

Did God speak to him, or, was he deluded, or, less charitably, was his statement an out-and-out fabrication designed to get people's money? The complete answer to this one is known only to God, but surely, if our God is a God of clarity, rather than a God of confusion, there must be some way we can evaluate such claims and more importantly evaluate impulses and voices that arise within ourselves. How can we know when God is speaking to us?

In response to this question, I would want to begin by saying, God does speak. He is not a Deist God, that is, a God who is far away off. Indeed, the exact opposite is suggested in both the Old and New Testament. God is near to each one of us, is active in human affairs and on occasion speaks directly to human beings.

I am thinking of such Old Testament stories as God calling Abraham out of the Ur of the Chaldees, God speaking to Moses out of the burning bush and God calling to and revealing his will to the boy Samuel during the days of Eli. Nor does God seem to be silent in the New Testament. A case in point is found at Jesus' Baptism when He hears the Father say, "Thou art my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Moreover, there have been many in Christian history who claim to have heard God's voice, and the phenomenon is not unknown today. Many of the stories surrounding such claims are beautiful, inspiring, and, from everything we can tell, genuine.

That being the case, how do we 'test' these voices and impulses? The chief way, I want to suggest, is by putting them along side Holy Scripture – the whole of Scripture – and see how they measure up. Let me give you a rather absurd illustration.

Let's say you are tempted to take something that does not belong to you. Under the circumstances no one needs to know. Seeking to justify your desire, you remember St. Paul's words in I Corinthians 3:21. "All things are yours." You then convince yourself that it is God who is telling you to take this item. What should you do?

Well, the answer is obvious: you need to test the voice you are hearing and impulse you are feeling by the *whole* of Scripture. When this is done, it quickly becomes apparent that God's word to you is "Thou shalt not steal." Would that all life's dilemmas were so straight forward! Be that as it may, this is the place we must begin if we are separate the genuine from the bogus.

If Mr. Mohamed had followed this approach, he might have stayed out of jail.

O God, by whom the meek are guided in judgment, and light riseth up in darkness for the godly; Grant us, in all our doubts and uncertainties, the grace to ask what thou wouldst have us to do, that the Spirit of Wisdom may save us from all false choices, and that in thy light we may see light, and in thy straight path may not stumble; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Recipe of the Month

By Diane Wikander

This month's recipe comes from Jane Koster. Jane collects recipes for me out of the newspaper every week. I have found many interesting ones, and this one I like very much.

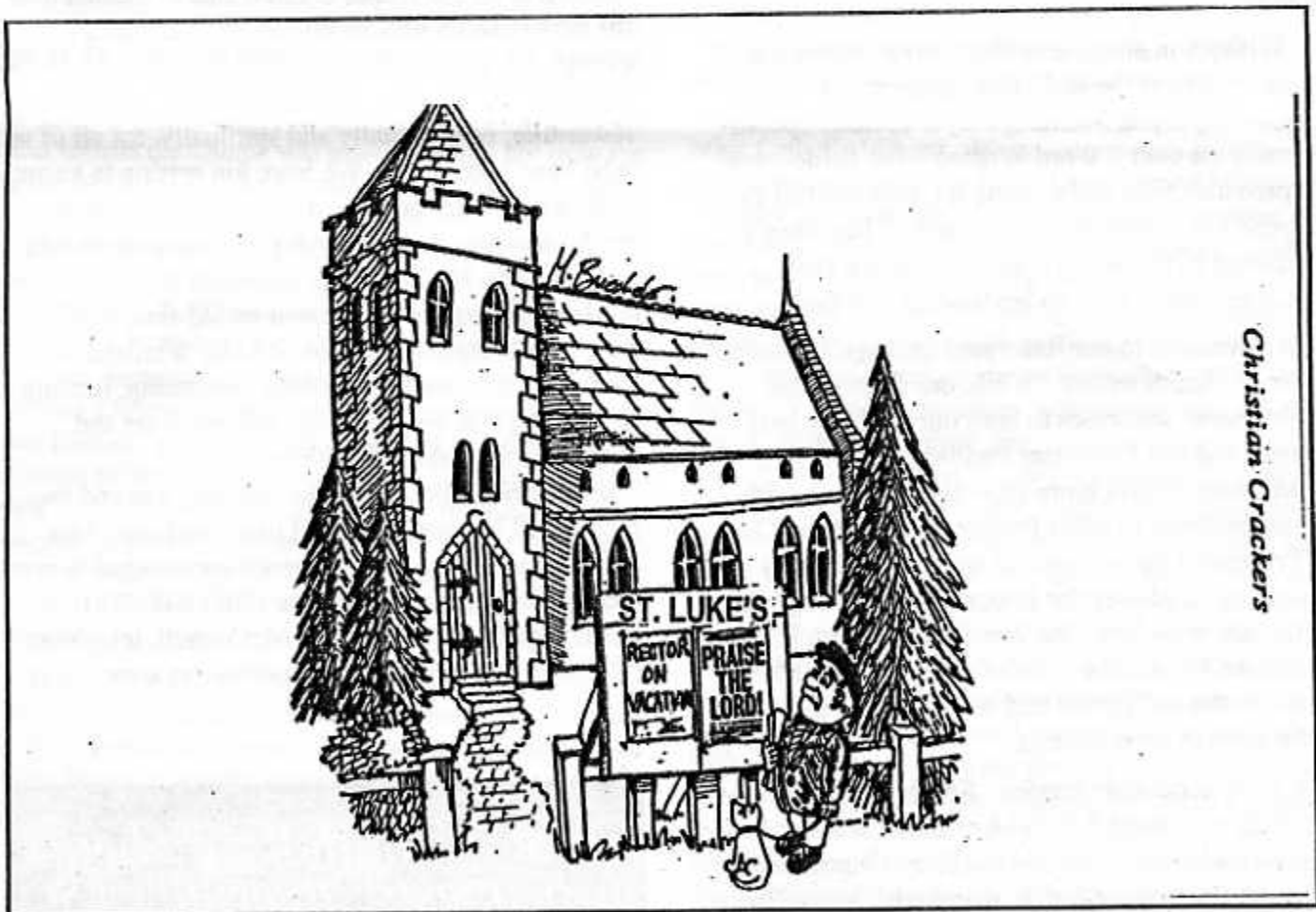
Maple-Orange Chicken

2 tablespoons olive oil
Salt and pepper
1 tablespoon orange marmalade

4 chicken cutlets, patted dry
1/4 maple syrup
Juice of one lemon

Heat the oil in a non stick pan over medium-high heat. When hot, add the chicken, seasoned with salt and pepper. Cook until the chicken is browned and opaque throughout. Transfer to a warm platter. Discard the oil in the pan, and place pan on medium heat. Add the maple syrup, which will bubble; stir in the marmalade. Boil until the sauce thickens, about 1 minute. Pour sauce over the chicken; add the lemon juice. If you'd like, dust with parsley and scallions.

This is a fast and easy dish to make. Enjoy! Thank you Jane for all the recipes you save for me. God bless you.



Sentinel - 'Around the Corner & Around the Communion'

