



The Voice of St John the Baptist, Pinetown

Jesus said: "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit - fruit that will last."
John 15 : 16

From the Rector

LIVING THE HOSPITALITY OF GOD

Dear People of St John's

In his synod charge on this theme of Living the Hospitality of God (October 2009), Bishop Rubin said: "All through the Bible we encounter God as the hospitable One - the one who says, Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest (Matt 11:28). In my Father's house are many rooms, if it were not so, would I have told you that I go and prepare a place for you? (John 14:2). Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me. (Rev 3:21).... This hospitality of a gracious and generous God, shown supremely on the Cross, is what we ought to be experiencing in greater measure in our own lives. And equally important, this is what we ought to be holding up

to the world in our preaching and teaching and through our common life as a church. Which is why we need to become less occupied by fighting and quarrels in the church, and become more focused on the task of experiencing, proclaiming and demonstrating the hospitality of God."

Here at St John's we explore these themes further in our Lent course and I encourage you to make the most of this opportunity.

Also the Spirit of Growth focus this year is a focus on offering God's hospitality to those in our community. We believe in an hospitable God, who welcomes us, loves us, helps us to love ourselves and others in turn. Let us work together on this practical outreach.

With love

Revd Dr Andrew Warmback

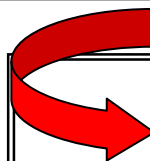
AN EVENING OF STORYTELLING WITH GCINA MHLOPE – FIRST FUNDRAISING EVENT OF 2010

at St John's on Friday 12 February 2010 at 7pm

Don't miss this special evening with the world-renowned poet and storyteller Gcina Mhlope. Those who attended the Jazz evening last August will have seen and heard Gcina, who was there to see her long-time friend Bheki Khoza, when she sang to entertain us when the lights went out. It is a great privilege to welcome Gcina to our church again, when she will entertain us with storytelling around our theme for 2010, *The Spirit of Growth*.



Tickets are on sale for R100, or at a discounted price of R85 if purchased at church after a service, and R50 for pensioners. There is no charge for children under the age of 10, and scholars pay R20. Bring your own picnic supper to enjoy "Barnyard style" – wine and soft drinks will be on sale.



VESTRY MEETING

SUNDAY 14 MARCH

ONE SERVICE AT 08:00

Our annual Vestry will take place on Sunday 14 March at the end of the one 8.00 morning service. All are encouraged to participate in this important meeting when we review the activities and use of finances of 2009 and again commit ourselves to sharing in God's work in Pinetown and beyond in 2010.

Nomination forms for churchwardens and parish councilors will be displayed on the church notice boards. Please give serious thought to the people you think would be best able to serve in the different portfolios, and, if they are willing, write the names on the forms.

During February reports on groups and ministries within the church will be distributed to parishioners through *The Lantern*.

SPIRIT OF GROWTH:

Friday 29 January at 18:30, Bring and Share - bring food and ideas to share. In the Spirit of Growth, we as a church wish to become involved with a practical project that will benefit us and the community. This evening is when we will decide what that project will be, and everyone is invited to be a part of this process.

LENT COURSE

The course to be studied by house groups this year is called "The Hospitality of God", compiled by Ron Nicolson. It is a continuation of the theme Bishop Rubin focused on in his charge at the last diocesan synod. If you are not part of a house group you are invited to join one. There will be two new groups starting, one in New Germany and one in Mariannahill Park – please speak to the Revd Sue Britton for further details. If you would like to study the material as a family you are welcome to collect booklets from the parish office.

KIDZOWN

This has restarted, and we welcome all the children. There is a registration process. If your child is attending Sunday School for the first time this year please accompany him/her to the large hall at the start of their session on a Sunday morning and fill in a form with your and your child's details. Thank you.

FUNDRAISING

All those who regularly read *The Bell* and the pew bulletin, will be aware that the church has a serious financial problem as we are entering 2010 with an accumulated deficit. This will be explained in more detail in the Wardens' and Treasurer's reports to be presented at Vestry.

Expenses have been pared to the bone, and we continue to be careful with spending money, but the only way to alleviate this problem is to increase our income. One way to do this is by fundraising, and we have an enthusiastic fundraising team with some good ideas, but **lots** more people are needed to join them – people with ideas who are not afraid of hard work. Working together is always fun, and St John's folk have always known how to put the **FUN** into fundraising.

So anyone who has an idea, or is willing to help in any way whatsoever, please talk to one of the team: Eve Raynor, Makhosi Cain, Roy and Lyn Brough, or to the Revd Andrew Warmback. We will hear more about their ideas for fundraising events as the year progresses. The first is the Gcina Mhlope Storytelling Evening on 12 February.



CHRISTMAS CARDS

The sale of 'recycled' Christmas cards last year netted **R1395!!** A very big THANK YOU to Val Williams, who is responsible for these lovely cards.

MEN'S GROUP

The next meeting will be on Thursday 25 February at 18:30 in the large hall – Bring and Share supper. All welcome.

REPORTS FOR VESTRY

These need to be submitted to the parish office by Monday 1 February at the latest. We would like reports from those involved in ALL groups and activities within the parish, including those areas not directly represented on parish council.

HERITAGE GROUP

At the start of a new year, we invite all parishioners who are interested in the history and heritage of St. John the Baptist Church, as well as in the wider community, to join the group. Our first meeting of the year will be held on Saturday, 13th February, at 9.15 for 9.30am, in the small hall, when planning will take place for the year ahead. Come and share your ideas with us!

YOUTH

A reminder that the Youth Group for has restarted on a Friday evening for High School going young people. All are invited to share in the fun and learning, and are welcome to bring a friend. The group meets in the small hall at the church from 18.30 to 20.30 during term times.

DATES FOR 2010 (February - March)

31 January, 7 and 14 February:	Theological Education, 17:00 in the church hall. All welcome.
12 February	19:00 - Gcina Mhlope Storytelling
16 February	Shrove Tuesday: 17:30 - Pancakes & Liturgy for burning palm crosses and preparing for Lent,
17 February	Ash Wednesday: Services at 07:00, 10:00 and 17:30
5 March	Women's World Day of Prayer
14 March	Vestry meeting (one service at 08:00)
27 March	Palm cross making, 14:00
28 March	Palm Sunday

LENTEN APPEAL

This year the money collected will go towards building a church in one of our link dioceses, Niassa, in the northern part of Mozambique. See the letter from Bishop Rubin. Envelopes to use to make your contribution will be distributed soon.

CHRISTMAS CRIB

Did everyone notice the exquisitely carved wooden Nativity figures in our Crib last year? These were hand-carved in Zimbabwe, and were loaned to us by the Revd Eliza Getman.

