



Bob and Jeannette

### St. Thomas Looks Strong to Interim Priest Bob Reese

"I'm amazed at how well this congregation is organized to move forward," said Bob Reese, assessing the role he will play as interim priest at St. Thomas.

"Many times (when a parish is searching for a new priest) we have to jump-start the congregation—start from scratch . . . heal wounds . . . do grief counseling. Not here. This congregation is not bogged down. It has a stewardship program in the works, a vestry retreat planned, committees going to provide adult education and Sunday school.

"It's going to make my job a lot easier."

The Rev. Reese, an Asheville native, is a lifetime Episcopalian with three decades of service as priest and military chaplain behind him.

Fresh out of Virginia Theological Seminary in 1974, he became rector at St. John's Episcopal Church in Sylva, NC, where he served for seven years. When he retired 30 years later, he became a supply priest and—ironically—answered a call to return to St. John's to serve the parish for nine months, until the congregation chose as its rector St. Thomas's own Pattie Curtis.

Bob said his calling to the priesthood came early in life.

BOB REESE. *continued on p. 4*

Dear Friends,

Please email articles, prayer requests, or calendar items for the next issue to either Carol Thomas or me. The press deadline will be in Announcements. If you need copies of previous issues of Thomas Tidings, check the website or contact me.

For how to contact coordinators and Vestry, see Announcements.

—Diana Donovan ([diatoday@gmail.com](mailto:diatoday@gmail.com))

### Vestry News

John Davis is proving a welcome addition to the Vestry, replacing Marianne Dagenhart. John and his family do so much for St. Thomas, including putting the UTO (United Thank Offering) grant and other funds to use in the new Children's Chapel and in additional meeting space. Kerstin Davis is currently serving on the Search Committee and is helping to develop the Godly Play program for our youth, a Montessori-based method that we will be implementing soon.

We are pleased to report that Stacey Lane has agreed to her nomination for the Vestry. The Bishop baptized Stacey's two beautiful girls in June. She serves on the board of the Montessori School. Stacey has also served as president of TRAC (Toe River Arts Council). She is in an excellent position to foster and encourage participation from young members of the Burnsville community.

Our good fortune continues as Karen Miller has also accepted nomination to the Vestry. She is the published author of several children's books and is a VESTRY. *continued on p. 4*

### Jeannette Reese Pursues A Healing Ministry

She could have been a marine biologist.

She did become a successful business manager.

Those would have been good goals for many people. But Jeannette kept getting this call to serve others.

Finally, she stopped hanging up.

Jeannette Reese has a degree in marine biology from Queens College in Charlotte, but she never uses it.

"I decided I wanted to work with people more than I did with animals," she said.

She married and had two sons—a full-time job.

Jeannette joined the staff of St. Mark's Towers, in Brunswick, GA, in 1987, becoming administrator of the 150-unit apartment complex for low-income elderly persons. She worked at St. Mark's for 12 years, during which time she made another commitment.

"I'd had a longtime call to serve the church," she said. "But I kept putting it off. Finally, I listened."

Through the Diocese of Georgia, she took courses to prepare her for the diaconate, and in 1993, after three years of study, she was ordained.

JEANNETTE REESE. *continued on p. 6*

# St. Thomas

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SEPTEMBER 2007



David Johnson in Barahona, Dominican Republic

### David Johnson's Ministry

On Sunday, September 2, David Johnson gave us a great presentation on his work so far in Barahona, in southeastern Dominican Republic. He spoke of his current work in basic health practices, which will become easier when the home water filters he has ordered come to Barahona.

Our late-August ingathering for David yielded \$750. St. Thomas also functions as a funds manager for David's fundraising through other sources. In addition, David receives support from Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD), which is centered in New York City. ERD's website says of itself:

Episcopal Relief and Development saves lives and builds hope in communities around the world. We provide emergency assistance in times of disaster. When the immediate crisis is over, we rebuild devastated communities and offer long-term solutions in the areas of food security, health care and HIV/AIDS.

In his presentation, David suggested that we educate ourselves on world relief work and what may become the next wave of problems. He highly recommends the article by Laurie Garrett, "The Challenge of Global Health," *Foreign Affairs* 86, no. 1 (January/February 2007): 14. A summary of it is:

Thanks to a recent extraordinary rise in public and private giving, more money is being directed today toward the world's poor and sick than ever before. But unless these efforts start tackling public health *in general* instead of narrow, disease-specific problems—and unless the brain drain from the developing world can be stopped—poor countries could be pushed even further into trouble, in yet another tale of well-intended foreign meddling gone awry.

David has copies of the article to loan. On the web, it is at: <http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20070101faessay86103/laurie-garrett/the-challenge-of-global-health.html>.

—Diana Donovan

### Profile: David Johnson

David Johnson is married to Alice, who, he says, is truly the better half. They have lived in Burnsville for the past 11 years. Prior to that, David was Director of Cardiology and Executive Medical Director of the Children's Hospital of the King's Daughters in Norfolk, Virginia. Alice and David met while he was a medical student at Tulane University. Their first child was born at Vanderbilt while David was there in his residency. During the Vietnam conflict, he was drafted and served in the United States Air Force, during which time their daughter was born. They subsequently moved to Boston, where David completed his residency in pediatrics and trained in pediatric cardiology at Children's Hospital. Their third child was born in "Beantown."

Following retirement from Norfolk's Children's Hospital and from Eastern Virginia Medical School, David and Alice moved to Burnsville, where David entered pediatric practice with Dr. Carolyn Cort. Carolyn and David, along with John and Suzette Renfro, worked together to create the Graham Children's Services of the Toe River, which is responsible for, among other things, the Children's Dental Clinic in Bakersville and the Children's Playground in Burnsville. They received a CATCH grant from the American Academy of Pediatrics to develop services for the Hispanic population. Out of this effort has grown Centro de Enlace.

David is an appointed missionary of the Episcopal Church and served in the Northwest Frontier Province of Pakistan in 2005 and 2006. There he helped develop long-term health relief activities sponsored by the Church of Pakistan for displaced victims of the 2005 earthquake. He and his Pakistani physician colleagues have received a three-year Rotary International grant to create a model pediatric tuberculosis detection clinic at Khyber Medical School and Teaching Hospital in Peshawar.

Currently, David is serving in Barahona, Dominican Republic. He partners with Jesus Peregrino Episcopal Church in developing sustainable health promotion activities around safe water and personal hygiene, children's immunizations and nutrition, and family recognition of serious pediatric illnesses. Currently they have 97 families enrolled in their project. David plans to work with the team for the next several years, focusing next on working with teenagers at high risk for pregnancy and HIV infection.

—David Johnson

**PRAYER REQUEST**

*I would like to thank you for your continued prayers for my brother, Gene Pitra, who has non-Hodgkins lymphoma. Here is an update, to help you focus your prayers, and a photo of him reading at my wedding to Robbie in 1996.*



*He is tolerating the chemo well. He still drives to his "farm" about 45 minutes from home, and feeds his cats. But so far the chemo has not been working. His tumors have grown, not shrunk.*

*The last bone marrow biopsy showed 98 percent cancer. The doctors told him that if this last round of chemo starting the week of Sept. 10 doesn't work, they have nothing more to offer him.*

*Please pray that this chemo will work and then that the stem cell transplant effort will go quickly after that. My sister, Mary Patton, age 71, is a match for him and lives close by.*

—God bless, Pat Sharkey

**VISITATION REMINDER**

*Jim Peek has moved from rehab in Asheville to Brookside in Burnsville for more rehabilitation since his fall that injured his head. As you know, falls are not unusual in those who have Parkinson's. Jim is still unsteady on his feet and needs to be supported when walking, even when he uses a walker. His fall and concussion also affected his hearing somehow, so when you talk to him, be sure to help him plug in one of his hearing devices—there are two on his bedside table. It took a little while for him to register who I was when I visited him last week, but he did seem to enjoy a visit. He is in room 312, just down the hall from Bob McMillan in room 300, so now you have two reasons to visit Brookside. In addition to your prayers, I'm sure any visits would be appreciated. Thanks,*

—Jim Haaga

*Let us remember Vestry as they plan for the coming year during their retreat on Saturday, September 15, and afterward.*

**PRAYER REQUEST**

*Who is this Ursi who has been on our weekly prayer list for some time? She is a mother of young children who is battling an aggressive, non-hormone-based breast cancer. She is almost through her chemo, which has left her weak and ill, and will soon begin radiation. She is also a Swiss Olympic medalist in snowboarding, and an evangelical chaplain of high-level athletes, including one of the Swiss Olympic teams in the last winter Olympics. She and her husband, Gürgen, live in Saanen, near Gstaad, not far from Thun, where my 25-year-old son Micah lives.*

*She is one of Micah's close friends and mentors who have been there for him as he explores his Swiss roots and as he tries his hand at high-level crew. In 2005, when Micah tore ligaments on the ski slopes and needed surgery and rehab, Ursi and her husband let my husband, Gred, stay in their house and use their car to help Micah over the post-surgery hump. Now Micah helps care for Ursi's children when she is ill from chemo, gives her a place to stay on nights before chemo (because the treatments have been in Thun), and will help with the drives to Bern, where her radiation sessions will be.*

*As Ursi and her evangelical church have taken in my son and included him in family activities, I ask my Episcopal church family here to include Ursi and her family in their prayers. Please pray that the Lord holds them close in this time of suffering, and ask that her children have the chance to grow up with a living, healthy mom.*

*I have a more "normal" photo of Ursi, but I thought this one might convey her zest for all parts of life. It was taken just before she found out she was ill. As always, thank you.*

—Diana Donovan



# St. Thomas

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BOB REESE. *continued from p. 1*

"There were no clergy in my family," Bob said. "But we had a lot of clergy friends and I always knew I wanted a life with the church."

After seven years at St. John's, Bob felt the call to do something different.

"I was taking flying lessons and met a marine fighter pilot. He suggested I become a marine chaplain." Bob liked the idea, but chose the Army instead.

At age 32, he ran the obstacle courses, marched the marches, and became a captain in the 5th Infantry Division at Ft. Polk, LA.

"Chaplains are trained to function in whatever situations their men are in," he said. "We even had desert training at Ft. Irvin."

A military chaplain serves the pastoral needs not only of men (and now women) in service, he said, but also their parents.

He laughs, remembering.

"We also had to deal with the calls from Mom and Dad, asking, 'How's Billy doing?' We had to tell them, 'Billy is fine, but you can't talk with him right now because he's awfully busy.'"

Bob says his military service was rewarding.

"You're the only officer not in the chain of command," he said.

"The soldiers knew they could talk to me about anything and it wouldn't affect their military careers."

Bob also got more than a year of clinical pastoral education—specialized training in ministering to enlisted personnel and veterans in a hospital setting. He served at Martin Army Community Hospital in Ft. Benning, GA, in that specialized capacity.

Rewarding, yes, but after eight years of service that included five-mile marches to keep in shape, his body told him to retire.

Besides, "I missed the rootedness and tradition of a church. I needed to get back to a parish." Leaving the Army as a major, he became rector at St. Mark's in downtown Brunswick, GA, serving for 10 years. During that time, he earned his Doctor of Ministry from Virginia Theological Seminary. For his last two years as a full-service rector, Bob moved to Darien, GA, and served not only St. Andrew's church but also provided leadership to the nearby African American congregation at St. Cyprian.

In "retirement," Bob Reese and his wife Jeannette are as busy as ever. "I see my job here at St. Thomas as one more of pastoring and preaching than anything else," he said.

"This is a very healthy congregation. A lot of that is because of Augusta's pre-planning," he said, speaking of former St. Thomas priest Augusta Anderson.

"This parish is taking the initiative, rather than waiting for the bishop, or some other diocesan official, to tell it what to do.

"St. Thomas really got on everyone's radar with the construction of the new church building, and Burnsville is a fine, growing community. I think the search committee is going to be surprised at the caliber of people who will be interested in becoming priest here, if it's at least a half-time job."

Bob said it is not being too hopeful to think that St. Thomas could have a new priest by Easter.

—Carol Thomas

### BOOKS RECOMMENDED BY TOM NIEHAUS

- William Countryman. *The Poetic Imagination: an Anglican Spiritual Tradition*. Orbis Books, \$15.
- Teresa of Avila. *The Book of My Life*. \$27. Also available in audio CD.

### LATE-BREAKING GOOD NEWS!

*Augusta Anderson gave birth to a six-pound daughter on September 7. The newest addition to the Anderson family is named Mary Love. Mother and daughter are doing well.*

VESTRY. *continued from p. 1*

committed and active member of our St. Thomas family. We give thanks to these folks and all who continue to give so much of their time and hearts to our small but vital church community.

One may ask "Why so much emphasis on youth?" At the recent Ministry and Mission Conference, it was noted that very few congregations with a significant number of members over 50 years old were growing. A significantly greater number of congregations with younger memberships are growing. If we here at St. Thomas want to grow our membership we will need to attract more young people. The Vestry feels our nominees will help us accomplish that goal. Older folks don't need to worry. Half of the Vestry will still be made up of people drawing Social Security!

At our October 28th annual church meeting, the floor will be open to additional nominations to the Vestry. If there is anyone whom you would like to see on the nominations list, please ask them if they will serve if elected. Their names should be submitted to me as Senior Warden as soon as possible.

The Vestry is scheduled to consider our 2008 Goals and Visions at its retreat September 15th. Obviously, hiring a rector is a top goal. The Vestry members would appreciate any input that the general membership might have in addition to the surveys that have been turned in. Many thanks to all of those folks who took the time to complete the forms. They will be of tremendous value to the Search Committee.

The Vestry also will be considering the 2008 budget that will be presented at the general meeting in October. I hope that all of us will give serious thought to how we can provide the time, talent, and resources to further God's Kingdom. St. Thomas is blessed with a membership devoted to the parish and working diligently to do God's will.

Peace and blessings to you all!!

—Neal Culver, Senior Warden

## U-TURN

The Ministry and Mission committee is catching up with reports to the congregation from organizations to whom St. Thomas gives its monthly local donation of \$200. These reports have been set aside in the recent past because of time and attention needed to build our new church.

On September 16, Dawn Teal will tell us about U-Turn Ministry, which operates the Shack, a teen center on N. Main in Burnsville. The hope is that the Shack will play a role in teens being nurtured and becoming able to plan a life with purpose.

Please plan to stay for about fifteen minutes after church on 9/16, so that you can hear about this group that St. Thomas helps to support.



*The Shack, a safe, trouble-free environment*

—Jim Haaga

## 2007 LOCAL OUTREACH DONATIONS

Besides its donation of the 2007 Valentine's dinner/dance proceeds to Reconciliation House's fuel fund, St. Thomas has, or will, make the following monthly \$200 donations to local groups in 2007:

January	U-Turn Ministries for Youth
February	Camp Henry Scholarship Fund
March	Literacy Council
April	Crossnore School
May	Family Violence Coalition
June	Centro de Enlace
July	Mountain Opportunity Center
August	Habitat for Humanity
September	Imagination Library/Partnership for Children
October	Hospice of Yancey County
November	Senior Center OR Senior Day Care (decision pending on support need of Senior Day Care)
December	to be decided

Please suggest recipients for 2008, or for December 2007. Contact Diana Donovan, Jim or Margie Haaga, Eloise Kaeck, Tom Niehaus, or Diantha Stevenson.

## VISITING THE HOMEBOUND

Ministry and Missions has organized a project where anyone who is interested can be mentored into visiting the homebound or those in the local nursing home. We will visit members of the St. Thomas family and others from the wider community. We are calling this the Visitation Ministry. Maryallen Estes is the coordinator. She says of it:

*If you would like to visit the homebound or the local nursing home, please call me for details. We would like for you to commit to visit at least one or two people, at least once a month, for a year. If that isn't possible, commit for six months.*

*You will visit the same person regularly. We ask you not to stay more than 30 minutes, and to stay less time if you sense that the person needs to rest.*

*I have a list of do's and don'ts, and I will go with you for your first visit. If you choose to visit the nursing home, you have to sign papers saying you will abide by the nursing home rules. The rules are simple.*

*Please contact me at church, or at 682-7264, if you're interested in being part of this very rewarding ministry. Thank you in advance for your prayerful consideration of this project.*

—Maryallen Estes

## Cultural Exchange

M&M is helping to organize a simple, authentic supper to help Centro de Enlace's cultural committee—Comité Hispano—to raise funds. The supper will be Friday, November 2. Tickets are \$10. There will be a slide show of Cherán, the hometown of our Mexican neighbors, and a display table of typical items used to celebrate the Day of the Dead—*El Dia de los Muertos*. Translators will help bridge language barriers. If you want to help, please contact Diantha, at 682-3188.

## ST. THOMAS MINISTRY & MISSION:

Don't forget: Two of our annual outreach projects will be upon us soon. The December dinner for prisoners and the February Valentine's dinner dance. These events take lots of planning. Margie Haaga will continue to coordinate the prison dinner, and will be in touch as organization continues. We do not yet have an overall coordinator for the Valentine's project. Would you like to volunteer? If so, please let me know. Also, since prayer is our sustenance and guide, please pray about these projects.

—Diana Donovan

## Vignettes from the August Diocesan M&M Conference

Below, listed in the order received, are excerpts from diocesan conference insights, along with who submitted them.

**Keynote address:** The Episcopal Church (EC) in Sudan. Ellen Davis. There has been so much war in southeastern Sudan over the past 10 years that survivors see the EC's project of rebuilding the seminary and training priests as a vote of confidence that southeastern Sudan's people will still be there five years from now. Dr. Davis said that Sudanese Episcopalians are drawn to scriptures that speak of a people's suffering, their survival, and of their God who saves. She said that she reads and teaches Hebrew Testament very differently, now that she understands the group perspective of this people who do not take life and peaceful existence for granted.

—Diana Donovan

**Strengthening the Small-Church Congregation.** Suzanne Watson. The national church has surveyed 4100 congregations and has a handbook and charts to help identify where we are in growth patterns—what types of questions are typical of where we are, and how to grow from here. Rev. Watson is available for help.

A small church is one with average Sunday attendance of 70 or less—definitely St. Thomas. Charlie Stover and Neal Culver have the growth handbook; it is also available at <http://www.episcopalchurch.org/congdev.htm> or by emailing Rev. Watson at [swatson@episcopalchurch.org](mailto:swatson@episcopalchurch.org). National church is a great resource for helping us to grow in healthy ways.

—Charlie Stover

**Practicing the Faith.** Bishop Taylor. The message was about how to make daily spiritual practice a habit, and how to live the virtues of prayer, hospitality, and forgiveness. Workshop attendees received a binder with a chapter on each virtue, written by Bishop Taylor, Rev. Robert Boone, and Rev. Charlotte Cleghorn. An example of content: "Forgiveness is *my action*, reconciliation is merely agreeing to get along together." As such, I can carry out forgiveness for persons who may have died or are far distant. It doesn't require that that person be present. I have one of these binders if you want to check it out.

—Charlie Stover

**Old Testament Preaching.** Ellen Davis. The Episcopal Church will switch to the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) in Dec. 2010. Sunday readings will include more required (rather than optional) selections from the Hebrew Bible. The (optional) reading for Sunday Sept. 16, for example, from Jeremiah, speaks of suffering of the earth, and relates to our environmental concerns. —Tom Niehaus

**It's Not About Us.** J. Derek Harbin. The unchurched segment represents up to 50 percent of US population and crosses all age groups. Needs to fill include relationship, basic Bible study, friendliness to outsiders, clear membership requirements, and visible outreach. Church of the Beloved in south Charlotte has focused on creative liturgy, outreach that stems from 10 percent of parish income, and church budget not based on pledges. This budget process, sometimes referred to as faith budgeting, relies on the motivation of members to give, based on their perceived value of the parish experience. Info on this new-style parish is at [www.churchbeloved.org](http://www.churchbeloved.org).

—Tom Niehaus

# St. Thomas TIDINGS

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**MDGs.** Michael Kinman. The Millennium Development Goals adopted by the United Nations in 2000 are formally supported by the Episcopal Church. (See Augusta's letter on the MDGs in the July *Thomas Tidings*. It lists the MDGs and asks that we set church goals with MDGs in mind.) Rev. Kinman stated that salvation is not only a personal issue but a global one. As US citizens, we need to remember how rich we are, and put aside our present scarcity thinking that leads us to give only out of what is left over. Besides our tithe to church, we should pray about implementing an additional minimum of 0.7 percent toward international programs that work on the MDGs. This small amount, given by all, could change the world. Besides groups we may know of on our own, St. Thomas links us to three efforts that we might consider: (1) supporting the work of David Johnson in the DR; (2) supporting our companion diocese in Durgapur; (3) giving to the ERD (Episcopal Relief and Development), which finances both disaster relief and implementation of the MDGs.

—Joann Collins

JEANNETTE REESE. *continued from p. 1*

During this time she met Bob, rector of St. Mark's Church, which sponsors the apartment complex she was managing. Both previously divorced, they married three years later, in 1994.

Jeannette retired from St. Mark's Towers in 1999. A short time later, she started up Laurel Grove, a cottage industry that designed, created, and marketed decorative pillows, baby blankets, aprons, dried flowers, and unique grapevine wreaths and baskets. The small company soon had sales of a million dollars.

When Bob retired in 2004, Jeannette "retired" too.

At St. Thomas, Bob and Jeannette are a team. She provides deaconate service as he provides leadership as interim priest. "The most important thing Bob will bring to his service here is process," Jeannette said. "He is skilled at dealing with people, and he'll bring solid, gospel-based preaching to the congregation."

In their time off, Jeannette and Bob love to hike, and attend concerts and plays. And Jeannette has answered yet another call to serve. A state-certified massage therapist, specializing in geriatric massage, she plans to establish a healing ministry through therapeutic massage.

—Carol Thomas

# Yancey's Mexican Population Part of Broad Cultural Change

By Carol Clark

When I first arrived in Cherán, the rural hometown in Michoacán of many migrants in Yancey County, I was struck by all the new home construction.

My guide, a 50-year-old grandmother, fetched drinking water from one of the town standpipes and explained.

"These houses are paid for by migrants in the United States. When you get to my place you'll see the house my son is building."

Señora M lived in a one-room wooden shack behind three new walls of red brick, with wooden beams for the ceiling. Rebar stuck up from the top of the walls, preparatory for the second story—when there was enough money.

Besides the new homes, I saw many late-model cars and trucks with North Carolina license plates. As in other small Mexican towns, the residents of Cherán are primarily children, the elderly, and women who have stayed behind as the young males go north.

The cultural changes responsible for this picture are described well in two books available now at the Yancey Public Library.

*Crossing Over: A Mexican Family on the Migrant Trail* was written by Ruben Martinez, a second-generation Mexican from the United States who spent seven months in Cherán, then followed families he met there to US towns where they migrated. He does an excellent job of describing culture, place, and his interactions with the people. His story is applicable to Yancey County migrants even though he did not follow anyone to Yancey County.

*Antonio's Gun and Delfino's Dream: True Tales of Mexican Migration* is a series of vignettes by Sam Quinones. Some of the vignettes address migrant issues.

Here are some of the issues you'll find addressed in the two books.

- **Jobs and Wages.** *La crisis económica* of 1994 resulted in a loss of jobs in the cities, and NAFTA caused job loss in rural areas when farmers could no longer compete with low prices of grain imported from the bread basket of the United States. In addition to all the unemployment created by the economic events, population increase means there are a million new job seekers entering the market each year. Jobs at assembly plants (*maquiladoras*) are moving to Central America and China where even lower wages will be paid. In the rural areas, population increase means that the next generation does not have enough land to raise sufficient crops to feed a family. Older workers can't find work easily, since employers want young workers. Jobs that are available may pay lower wages than people can earn in the States. Our hourly minimum wage is about what many Mexicans earn in a day.
- **Family reunification.** A woman in Cherán asked me if I knew anything about her husband in Kentucky. She said it was hard to have her husband there while she remained behind so that her children could go to school. One problem faced by women left behind is that some male migrants meet women here and abandon their families. But, as with many people in Yancey County, Mexican families often come to the States to reunite. The ones who come first facilitate the move for those who come later.
- **Children's future.** In Mexico, parents must pay for school supplies and uniforms. They want better, cheaper education for their children, including higher education. They see this as the way for their children to get a better job than the parents have. Many parents also see the opportunity to continue their own education.

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- **Greater social activity.** Except for annual town festivals, there is little going on in small-town Mexico, especially compared to the "bright lights" of the States.
- **Feelings of dignity and respect.** Income from the States helps migrants escape the submissive feelings prevalent among working class and poor in Mexico.
- **Better living situation.** Most of the housing in the United States has running water, an indoor bathroom, an electric or gas stove. Homes in rural Mexico may not have these amenities.
- **Cultural Habit.** In some rural towns, a third to two thirds of the population leaves for the north. These migrants often return temporarily with nice clothes and a good-looking car or truck, or they are able to send money. Migrants in their twenties bring back the current popular culture (hip-hop and urban gangsta style clothes and music). Returning migrants often do not discuss the poor work conditions and exploitation that they experience in the United States or the dangers of crossing the border. It is simply assumed for many male adolescents that they will go abroad when they are old enough.

Migration has positive and negative effects in Mexico.

New construction jobs are created by the building. There is more spending due to money being sent back from the States. Those receiving remittances have better food, clothing, housing, and medical care. Regional clubs of migrants in the United States also send back money for public works such as park improvement and wells, improving the environment. The Mexican government now matches these funds.

But the worker drain results in a loss of entrepreneurs and risk-takers vital for economic growth and development, since it is the risk-takers who migrate. The school dropout rate among male adolescents is high because there are better jobs requiring only minimal education in the States than there are jobs requiring a good education in Mexico. The loss of male role models at home, and the effects of broken families when a migrant father fails to support his family or fails to return, is devastating, often leading to poverty.

If you read both these books, you will find memorable detail on these issues, along with stories of individuals. If you only have time to read one book on this subject, I recommend *Crossing Over*. It focuses more on cultural issues than does *Antonio's Dream*.

(Editor's Note: Carol Clark is professor emerita, economics, at Guilford College. She has researched in Mexico and Central America, and taken students to Mexico to better understand economic situations. She traveled to Cherán in 2002 while tutoring migrant students in the South Toe area of Yancey County.)

*St. Thomas Parish Family is a joyful, warm and ever-widening circle of God's people prayerfully committed to serving Jesus in our community and our world. Through prayer, study and intellectual discourse on God's Word we seek Truth. Through Eucharistic fellowship we celebrate the gift of abundant new life. Through mutual care of one another and vigorous service to all of God's people and creation, we proclaim God's love and hope in Jesus.*

# St. Thomas

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Reminders

8

Dates

### *Come to the . . .*



. . . Local Outreach presentation: Sunday, September 16. Dawn Teale will speak on the Shack, and U-Turn Ministry. This teen ministry received the St. Thomas January 2007 monthly local outreach donation.



. . . Adult study hour, Sundays at 9:00 A.M. Jack Kaeck leads the current study. October's topic: environmental stewardship, led by Bob McGahey, a member of Celo Friends Meeting.



. . . October Simple Supper, Wednesday, October 10 at 6 P.M. The diocesan Canon for Spanish Ministry, Rev. Austin Rios, will speak to us about ways to meet the challenges of merging two cultures in a church.



. . . Atlanta Global Mission Event: Saturday, October 6, at Cathedral of St. Philip, Atlanta. Designed for all who are supportive of the Millennium Development Goals. Cost is \$12; register by Sept. 30. See [www.episcopalatlanta.org](http://www.episcopalatlanta.org) for more info.



. . . Ministry & Mission committee meeting: Thursday, October 18, at 5:00 P.M., at church. Please join us.



. . . *El Dia de los Muertos* (Day of the Dead) cultural exchange. Friday, November 2. Diantha Stevenson is the coordinator.

### *Don't forget . . .*



#### ... COFFEE & CHOCOLATE

Fair Trade/Equal Exchange gourmet, organic, shade-grown coffee and organic chocolate bars are for sale at St. Thomas. All proceeds go to the Building Fund to pay off the debt for our new church. Small farmers in third world countries also benefit by getting a fair price for their products, so everyone wins. Coffee is \$7 per bag. Chocolate bars are \$2.50 each. The display is set up at the back of the church. See Margie Haaga if you have questions.



#### ... CENTERING PRAYER GROUP

Centering Prayer meets every Tuesday at 9:00 A.M. Everyone is welcome—come now and then, or regularly. Contact Joann Collins at 682-5645 or Lynn McLure at 675-5900 with questions.



#### ... CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP LISTENING PROJECT

Pray for this project or contact Lynn McLure. It is ongoing through spring 2008.



*St. Thomas Episcopal Church*

[www.stthomasonline.org](http://www.stthomasonline.org)

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