



# The Circuit Rider

Life in the Big Bend Episcopal Mission – December 2006

## Threshold Retreat House Takes Shape



In late spring 2007, The Threshold will be offering guests an opportunity for quiet contemplation at our first retreat house, Casa de la Rosa, the residence of Don Viator and Tom Graf. Casa de la Rosa will have three guest rooms, a chapel, a small library, quiet paths and gardens and beautiful views of the Davis Mountains.



Work is underway now on the guest rooms and chapel. If you wish to help with the furnishings you may send your tax deductible gift to The Threshold at PO Box 716, Marfa, TX 79843. Still needed are funds for the chapel furniture, guest room furnishings, garden benches, linens, towels, etc.

## Flowers for Christmas

As we approach the Christmas season, St. James' Flower Guild members are thinking poinsettias! It's important to plan and order these plants in advance; and if you wish to contribute toward the purchase of Christmas flowers, please make your contribution by December 14. Suggested amount: \$10 per plant.



If you wish to give the flowers in memory or in honor of someone, please write their name or names on a separate sheet of paper and enclose it with your contribution. Make your check payable to St. James and indicate that it is for flowers. Put it on the collection plate or give/mail it to Thelma Hoyle, P.O. Drawer 1628, Alpine, TX 79831. Thank you for your support.

*(St. Paul's members, please purchase poinsettias individually and bring them to St. Paul's before Christmas Eve. If you have names you would like remembered, please get them to the Vicar no later than December 19th.)*

## Record Attendance at Thanksgiving Dinner



St. Paul's annual Thanksgiving dinner attracted record attendance again this year. The service before dinner included the service of Holy Baptism for Hanna Stephens daughter of Diane & Sandy Stephens. Members of the Big Bend Mission cooked, organized, set up, and served a delicious meal with more kinds of food than can be imagined. Diners turned out from all around the community and meals were packaged and delivered to many who could not attend. A big thank you to everyone who helped make the event such a success.



## Assistance Fund Needs a Boost

The Big Bend Episcopal Mission maintains an assistance fund for emergency needs in the community. The fund is getting low. In recent months, expenses for our medical assistance van have been paid out of the fund. The van makes regular trips to Midland, Odessa, and El Paso to transport non-critical patients to doctor's appointments. Passengers are either unable to drive themselves, or cannot afford the trip. The drivers are community volunteers, but gas and maintenance are paid for by the Big Bend Mission. As in years past, our Christmas offering will benefit the assistance fund. If you will be unable to attend Christmas services, or wish to make your donation separately, make your check to the Big Bend Mission, mark it "assistance fund", send it to the address on page two, or drop it in a collection plate.

## More Thanksgiving Photos on Page Two

*"Lord Jesus, master of both the light and the darkness, send your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Christmas. We who are blessed in so many ways long for the complete joy of your kingdom. We whose hearts are heavy seek the joy of your presence. To you we say, 'Come Lord Jesus'"*  
- Henry Nouwen

## House Blessing at Nancy Antrim's

Recently Nancy Antrim's friends gathered at her new home in Alpine for a house blessing. Both Judy and Elaine led the liturgy which involves going to each room in the house and saying a prayer.



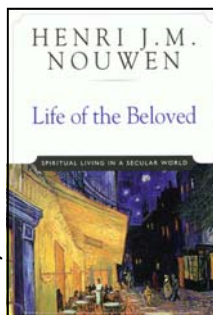
## New Floor at St. James'

A new tile floor was recently installed in the sanctuary at St. James' in Alpine. The old floor, probably in place since the 1950's, had become quite worn and dingy. New kneelers are in the works and will be installed before long.



## St. Paul's Group Starts New Book

The book group at St. Paul's is starting a book by Henri Nouwen. *Life of the Beloved* is about spiritual living in a secular world. When asked to write a book explaining the spiritual life in terms that all of us can understand, avoiding theology and technical language, Nouwen produced this book which has become a spiritual classic.



The book group meets in the parish hall at St. Paul's each Thursday at noon. Bring your lunch. Discussion follows.

*"The Child is but a day old, yet we have seen the light of our God in His eyes and the smile of our God upon His mouth"*

- The Three Persian Kings  
from *Jesus the Son of Man*  
by Kahlil Gibran

## Thanksgiving Dinner Continued



**Last Month's Question:** What is the New Commandment?

**Answer:** The New Commandment is that we love one another as Christ loved us.

**This Month's Question:** Where is this sign located?

*"To all who are young and need counsel, to all who are strong and want a task, to all who are weary and need rest, to all who are lonely and want companionship, to all who mourn and need comfort, to all who are sinful and need a saviour - to whosoever will, this Church opens wide its doors and in the name of Christ our Lord, says - WELCOME."*



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