

CURATE'S REPORT

The Rev. Stanford Adams

We are an energetic, committed, and strong community of people here at All Saints'. We seek God's presence in our lives and in the world around us, and we are open to God's call to us—particularly God's call to serve the poor and those who suffer. I was reminded recently by one of you that we are in the business of sales, and that's right: we hope to deepen the engagement of the people who are already on this journey with us, and we hope that more people will join us on the journey. That is what we're selling. These products, however, don't lend themselves to measurement. It is hard to know at any given time how our sales are doing. I would like to report on some ways in which I believe that these things happened in 2013.

It was an honor and a privilege to journey with several of you through difficult times in your lives during the last year. I continue to be amazed at how easily you welcome me and others from our community into your lives during times of difficulty. Pastoral care is a misnomer because there is very little care that anyone can provide during these times. Perhaps our presence in times of difficulty can be a sign that somehow God continues to be present in these times too. Thank you for this privilege.

It is a tremendous privilege to preach sermons and to facilitate our discussion of Biblical texts during the Christian education hour on Sunday mornings. In preaching and teaching, I try to apply critical tools to the Biblical text by asking questions like: When was the text written? Who was the author? What historical events were happening at the time the text was written? What was culture and society like at the time the text was written? What was the author's intent in writing the text? These questions are the easy part—then comes the hard part of finding what the text tells us about God and what the text tells us about our own call to be God's people today. I appreciate that many of you ask these questions with me on Sunday mornings.

It is an honor for me to be part of a community that makes such a significant commitment to outreach. Many of you give hours and hours of your time each week, and others of you make significant financial contributions, to feed the homeless and needy in Tupelo. It is my privilege to support you in that high calling.

It has been a pleasure to spend time in silent prayer with several of you each week during the last year. Our Centering Prayer group reminds me that I am closest to the mystery of God when I am silent.

These are ways that our community has deepened my faith journey during 2013. I hope that for some of you these have also strengthened your connection to our community. Thank you for the honor and privilege of being with you here at All Saints'.