

# *A Parish Profile*



*St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church*

*Pittsboro, North Carolina*

*March 2007*





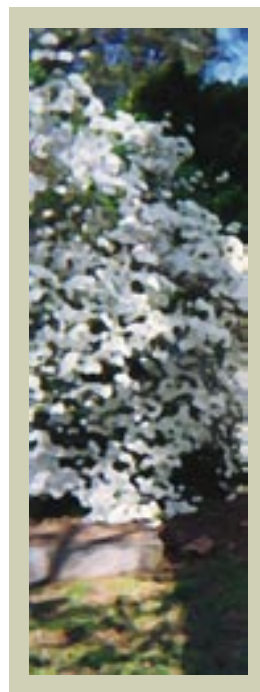
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March 2007



Graphic design Wilson, Ink.

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# Acknowledgments

We are grateful for the guidance and assistance of the Diocese.

We give special thanks as well:

- for the wholehearted support of our Vestry,
- for the generous advice of many individuals, especially the leaders of Active Ministries, whose vision and practical wisdom have enriched this Parish profile, and
- for the prayers of the parish, which have supported us in our task.

In this Parish Profile, we represent the scope and depth of Saint Bartholomew's as we have been enabled, by God's grace, to do. It is our prayer that among those priests who read this profile, one will come forward whose spiritual vision will enrich and expand our own. We seek a priest who desires to be among us, to minister and bless us in the Holy Eucharist and to share in our joys, sorrows, and struggles as faithful believers, to the glory of God and for the blessing of this parish and community.

Respectfully submitted,

The Profile Committee

March 2007



# St. Bartholomew's Parish, Diocese of North Carolina

The Bishop of North Carolina - The Right Rev. Michael B. Curry

Assisting Bishop - The Right Rev. Alfred Clark Marble, Jr.

Interim Rector - The Rev. Carl N. Edwards, assisted by the Rev. John W. Simons

Senior Warden - Sledd Thomas

Junior Warden - Caroline Betts

## The Vestry

Kelley Baker	Lyn Sims
Abraham John Harman	Ann Tysor
Don Krombach	Paul Volk
Allan Pegg	
Pierce Cassedy - Treasurer	
Beverly Donaldson - Clerk of Vestry	

Parish Secretary - Peg Shenton

Musician and Organist - Jo Snelling

Choirmaster - Nancy Harman

Christian Formation - Paul Volk

Altar Guild - Nancy Simons

## The Profile Committee

Caroline Betts	Anne Graham
Richard Church	Julia Haman
Beverly Donaldson	Sam Hudson
Sally Earnest	Susan Sipal
Janet Ray Edwards	Sledd Thomas



St. Bartholomew's Website: <http://www.saint-barts.org/>

# Mission and Vision

The Great Commission calls us to witness to the lordship of Christ. Our Lord enjoined us to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. As we share in the Eucharist, we commit ourselves to embody lives of discipleship in ways that respond to the needs of those around us in our community and the world. Our vision and mission statements express our desire to serve as vibrant and loving representatives of the body of Christ.

## Our Mission Statement

Our vision for St. Bartholomew's is to be a joyous community of followers of Jesus Christ, committed to the love, care, support, and nurture of all God's creation.

## Our Vision Statement

Our mission is to utilize the gifts, talents, and interests of the St. Bartholomew's community of faith, to nurture one another in worship and praise of God, to serve the community of need with the loving care of Jesus Christ, and to witness to the spiritual presence of the Holy Spirit by living the Good News of the Gospel.

In this spirit, we gather to commune together, care for one another and our neighbors, and discern together how to live in this place according to God's will.

We affirm our commitment to our baptismal covenant to:

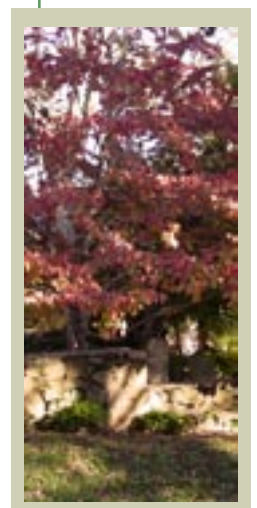
- seek, serve, and nurture Christ in all persons,
- strive for justice and peace, respecting the dignity of every human being, and
- minister daily in our neighborhood, region and the world.

All this we do for the sake of Christ Jesus and in response to a loving Creator God.



# Goals & Objectives for St. Bartholomew's Church (2007 - 2111)

- I. Love God more and grow in faith.
  - A. Actively involve children and young people in all aspects of the life of the Church:
    - In Sunday school, through study and learning;
    - In a youth-led quarterly worship service, in monthly service projects in the community, and in summer service projects that address global needs;
    - In 'after-hours' activities including music, drama, outreach through CORA and Thompson Children's Home.
  - B. Make worship increasingly spiritually alive through preaching, prayer, and music:
    - Include congregational voices through voluntary petitions and reading of prayers, and educate worshippers for understanding of these practices;
    - Include choral readings, dramas, and music such as cantatas.
  - C. Explore, identify, and deploy spiritual gifts in the congregation and wider community:
    - Habitat for Humanity projects through Apostles Build;
    - Offer opportunities to grow spiritually in small groups, in three annual faith journey retreats, and in an annual spiritual life week.
2. Develop an inclusive, welcoming and active faith community.
  - A. Work towards a church-wide culture of welcoming new members:
    - Designate rector or lay person to contact visitors within a week of their first visit;
    - Develop and distribute a Pittsboro newcomer's packet;
    - Establish a "Newcomer's Committee" with a concrete job description, including planning newcomer social events.
  - B. Widen mission to the community by increasing the scope of Outreach Ministries:
    - Recruit new involvement in CORA, including youth;
    - Continue support for Habitat for Humanity projects;
    - Engage and support youth in summer service projects that address world needs.
  - C. Better utilize present space as we continue the process of discernment about the creation of a new environmentally-friendly multipurpose building:
    - Present building proposal to congregation by 2007 annual meeting;
    - Proceed with building program funding and design, when approved.



## Our Goals & Objectives (continued)

3. Teach and nurture a community of disciples of Christ.
  - A. Teach stewardship as a spiritual discipline that provides opportunities for discipleship and the development of faith:
    - Form a “Stewardship Committee;”
    - Increase and diversify membership on committees and in other ministries;
    - Increase committed number of tithers who model faithful stewardship for new members.
  - B. Establish leadership training for different church ministries:
    - Offer annual training sessions for ministries including LEMs, altar guild, acolytes, lay readers, Vestry, and Christian Formation/Sunday School teachers.
  - C. Develop lay ministries for pastoral care:
    - Take communion to homebound or sick members;
    - Continue sending “Love your Neighbor” cards.
  - D. Involve and encourage everyone, no matter where they are on their faith journey:
    - Announce opportunities for ministry through newsletter, e-mail, and Sunday announcements;
    - Establish a “Nominating Committee” to engage more parishioners on committees.
  - E. Respond to the spiritual needs of people between the ages of 20 and 35:
    - Establish an e-mail listserv that enables working families and singles to connect with one another and to learn of opportunities for spiritual growth and service.



The Vestry will appoint an Evaluation Committee to make semi-annual reports on progress toward achieving these goals, make adjustments as needed in consultation with the rector, and communicate the results to the congregation regularly.

# Our Search Process: A Parish that seeks to grow spiritually

In summer 2006 St. Bartholomew's began the search process for a new rector. The vestry distributed a questionnaire asking members for their perceptions of our strengths and weaknesses as a parish, and of the qualities of leadership in a rector that would best help us to grow in our lives together. Many prayerfully-discerned responses emphasized that we as members of St. Bartholomew's are called to a variety of active lay ministries in and through the liturgy of the Word, education, the arts, and our daily lives.

The Vestry next appointed a committee charged with developing a Parish Profile. The committee includes parishioners serving on the Vestry, as well as long-time and more recent members. The latter are vital in helping to identify the broad needs of our parish in a rapidly growing area. The Profile incorporates responses from the parish survey as well as from leaders of our many Active Lay Ministries.

As the only Episcopal church in Chatham County, we are poised to grow into a future filled with challenges and opportunities. We eagerly await responses from priests who wish to share our journey of faith.



# Geography: Our place in the World

St. Bartholomew's church lies near the center of Pittsboro, the county seat. Chatham County, in the heart of the Piedmont region of North Carolina, is a good place to live and work.

- ❖ The county supports a diverse population from many backgrounds. Many of our citizens were born and raised here. In recent years many newcomers have made Chatham County their home.
- ❖ Two recently widened state highway systems bisect Chatham County in the heart of Pittsboro, thereby shortening travel times and supporting the current transition from an agricultural and bedroom community of the 50's through the late 90's to a destination place in the twenty-first century.
- ❖ Pittsboro lies slightly south of the Research Triangle formed by Raleigh (the state capital), Durham, and Chapel Hill. Its proximity to these three cities, each of which boasts its own great university—North Carolina State University, Duke University, and The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill—as well as two teaching hospitals, has meant that our local economy does well even when surrounding parts of the state have struggled. Unemployment in the area is less than 4.5% (+/-). In spite of these figures, many individuals and families still struggle to make ends meet.



## Geography: (continued)

- ❖ The county contains over 710 square miles and boasts over 55,000 residents. In the next ten years (2017), it is projected to grow to 70,000 residents, primarily through the development of many planned communities, including Ferrington Village, Briar Chapel, and Chapel Ridge. Jordan Lake, east of Pittsboro, provides numerous recreational opportunities, including fishing, boating, sailing, swimming, hiking, birding and camping, and is the site of an annual outdoor worship service for St. Bartholomew's.
- ❖ Siler City, the largest city in the county, lies in the western half of the county, which has remained largely agricultural. It has seen a rapid influx of Hispanics, the most recent group of newly arrived Chatham residents.

St. Bartholomew's is placed at the heart of the county in Pittsboro. It is in this good place that our parishioners have made homes, planted gardens, built businesses, and come to serve one another. It is in this good place that we worship and seek to serve our Lord and invite others to join us. To attend worship and participate in church activities, parishioners and newcomers travel anywhere from a few blocks to twenty-five miles, including some from adjacent counties.

We are a small church poised for growth. We enjoy the energy of those who have newly joined us but also see our small parish changing in ways that are challenging us as a community.



# Worship Attendance

From 1995 to 1999, during the tenure of the parish's first full time rector, the average Sunday attendance was 115. The parish began holding two Sunday services in 1998 and has maintained that pattern, with the exception of two summers, ever since. Average attendance figures for the years 2000 to 2006 are as follows:

Year	Avg. Attendance	Clergy Status
2000	105	Part time interim
2001	101	Part time interims
2002	98	Full time permanent
2003	92	Full time permanent
2004	84	Full time permanent ends August/ supply clergy
2005	82	Supply clergy/ $\frac{3}{4}$ time interim as of July
2006	86	$\frac{3}{4}$ time interim

In 2006, twelve persons have joined us through transfer of membership, six more have been confirmed, four have been received, and five have been baptized. We have consistently seen between two and four new faces every Sunday, and our rector calls on all who leave their information. On February 25, 2007, twelve persons were received,

confirmed, or baptized, and one person reaffirmed her vows. Today, the parochial report lists one hundred forty-eight members.



# 2006 Parish Survey Results

In August 2006, parish members were asked to fill out a survey to assist in preparing the parish profile. The questions, a summary of responses, and selected comments follow:

## 1) Why did you first come to St. Bartholomew's?

The most common responses were that 1) they were invited by or found out about us from a friend or 2) they had moved to the area looking for a new church home. Along with 'cradle Episcopalians,' we have in attendance several Lutherans, a sprinkling of Roman Catholics, and members with backgrounds in other Protestant denominations. Many survey respondents noted the welcoming and friendly atmosphere as well as the diversity and openness of the congregation.

- ❖ *"A friend brought me—I returned because I loved the beauty, the prayers, and the community feeling."*

## 2) Why did you join St. Bartholomew's?

An overwhelming number indicated that they joined the church because they felt welcomed. Several new parishioners reported that they felt comfortable on their first visit.

- ❖ *"I was welcomed warmly and felt at home. Also I liked the small congregation with many opportunities for service, an inclusive spirit, and community involvement."*

## 3) How is St. Bartholomew's special to you?

Parishioners listed the people, the physical setting, the community, and the diversity as factors making this church special. The warm and friendly nature of the people creates an open and accepting atmosphere where all are welcomed and respected. Many noted they loved the beauty of the church and its grounds.

- ❖ *"St. Bartholomew's mixes the tradition of church with individual spirit to create a unique feeling of community."*
- ❖ *"Saint Bart's helps me feel close to God."*



## 2006 Parish Survey Results (continued)

### 4) What do you like most about St. Bartholomew's community?

What respondents liked most about St. Bartholomew's is that the church is a loving place. Once again, the attitude of the people, the community, and the diversity were the top answers. Words like *"gentleness, acceptance, tolerance, and diversity"* were common answers.

- ❖ "I like the diversity and love that encompasses a range of income, race, age, and disability."

### 5) In what church activities/ministries do you currently participate?

Respondents in our small church serve in varied activities and ministries. While many do more than one thing, others come primarily to worship in the congregation. Parishioners serve on the vestry; they assist in worship as lectors, Lay Eucharistic Ministers, acolytes, musicians, choir members, ushers and altar guild; they teach in Christian Formation for all ages. Others are active on the Evangelism committee and the community food pantry, CORA; and maintaining our buildings and grounds. Several parishioners have shared their talents as lay preachers with us, ranging from a teenager reporting on a mission trip to El Salvador to a lawyer with theological training, a musician and writer, and others seeking to become postulants. A few see service opportunities in hospitality (coffee hour), in the church office, and in finance and other church administration.

### 6) What changes or additions do you see in our future?

Far and away, communicants see a new building on our adjacent land and a growing congregation in our future. The lot next door, home of the old rectory, has been cleared and awaits a new parish hall/classroom building plan. We currently have a vestry committee planning the new structure and a portion of the funds required for building are in hand.

- ❖ "A growing congregation and a new multi-purpose building."



Carl Edwards  
Interim Rector

## 2006 Parish Survey Results (continued)

- ❖ *"I'm wondering if this beautiful community of people will change as new members flood in."*

### 7) How do you see yourself actively participating in these changes?

Some communicants plan to continue in their current ministries, with the great majority saying they would *"participate if asked."* A rector who can guide discernment in spiritual gifts has fertile ground here!

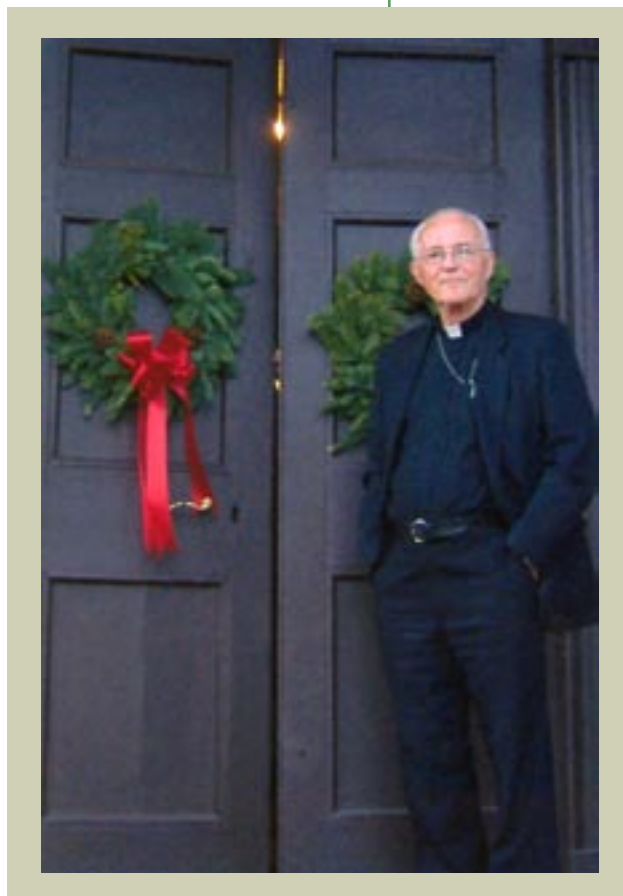
### 8) Desired attributes in a rector (listed in order of preference), were as follows:

Fifty percent listed Spiritual Guide as the most important quality in a rector, with pastor, preacher, and counselor following a distant second.

- ❖ *"I would prefer a rector who has the spirit of the servant—a nurturing servant."*
- ❖ *"All are important, plus being a good listener—an essential quality of leadership."*
- ❖ *"I want an open, vibrant, caring leader, teacher, and spiritual guide—I want us to grow with care and love."*

### 9) Additional comments were invited.

- ❖ *"This church is a nurturing, intimate, supportive environment of people sharing their spiritual journeys. Let's keep this incredible gift of spirit alive in St. Bart's."*
- ❖ *"With a growing community I believe our focus should be on families and using the facilities for youth activities."*
- ❖ *"I pray God will guide and bless our new rector. God knows who it should be so hopefully we can get out of the way and be ready to be blessed!"*



John Simons  
Assistant to the Interim Rector

# Our History

The parish was formed in 1831 by a group from the port of Wilmington, North Carolina, who had settled in Pittsboro as long ago as the 1790s. The cornerstone for St Bartholomew's Church was laid in 1832. A year later, Bishop Ives consecrated the sanctuary, in which we still worship. Our first parishioners consisted primarily of these families and the African-Americans who served them as slaves. After the Civil War, the Vestry voted to establish a separate mission for "the colored people in Pittsboro," and St. James Mission was activated in 1883. This congregation of African-American Episcopalians existed until 1968 when Bishop Penick deconsecrated the church, as there were not enough members to keep the mission open.

- ❖ In a moment when the kingdom was made real in our presence, many of the families who attended St. James came to St. Bartholomew's to become a part of our parish family in 1968. Together we have gone forward as a unified congregation. It is our intentional practice to welcome all who wish to join with us in seeking God's will for our lives.



Although St. James' church building no longer exists, St. Bartholomew's takes ongoing responsibility for the maintenance of St. James' graveyard, and for preserving its history in our living memories.

St. Bartholomew's church property today includes a large graveyard surrounding the 1833 sanctuary. This well-maintained burial ground is beautified by graceful trees and

## Our History (continued)

plantings. Our sanctuary includes original stained glass windows and chandeliers. In 1955, a parish hall was added to the original church building to provide space for offices, restrooms and some limited classroom areas. The Hill House, an adjacent home owned by the church, served as a rectory for some years and later was converted into classrooms used on Sundays and for a time, for a Montessori day school. In 2005 Hill House was demolished because of the presence of lead-based paint in the building as well as irreparable structural flaws. As we look to the future, we seek to discern potential uses for this property as the site for a multi-use building for church use, a playground for children, and a community resource. The new rector will have a role in shaping these decisions.



Over the last sixty years St. Bartholomew's communicant strength has varied. In the 1950's it hovered around ninety persons; by the 1970's it had declined to about seventy. In 1980 the Diocese proposed to place the parish on mission status, but an influx of new members averted this action. Over the next two decades substantial growth continued under the leadership of the Rev. William Coolidge and the Rev. T. Scott Allen, both of

## Our History (continued)

whom emphasized outreach ministries and community involvement, and under the Rev. Ida Louise Johnson, our first full-time African-American rector. She served us from Advent of 2001 until August of 2004 when she resigned in order to pursue a special ministry in the San Francisco area. Our present communicant strength stands at one hundred forty-eight.

In the intervals between our last two full-time rectors, we have been well served by a combination of interim rectors and supply clergy, including a number of retired priests who live in the community and are a significant resource for our parish. From July 2005 through January 2007, the Rev. John Simons served as Interim Rector. He fostered a renewal of congregational commitment and prepared us to welcome new opportunities to serve the needs of our growing St. Bartholomew's family. Following the onset of some health problems, Mr. Simons called on the Rev. Carl Edwards, a retired priest active in interim ministry, for assistance. On January 23, 2007, the vestry called Mr. Edwards to assume full responsibility as Interim Rector. He brings his experience, energy and love for the church into our midst. Mr. Simons continues as his assistant. Fortunately for all of us, they make a great team.

Each of our spiritual leaders has contributed uniquely to the shape of who we are as a parish. As we look to the future, we are eager to receive the gifts and challenges that a new priest will offer us.



# Active Ministries

## Children And Youth

*“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.”*

At St. Bartholomew’s, we seek to be an open door to Christ for children and youth in our community. This is our goal, as well as our challenge. Current programs include Sunday School (Christian Formation) for all ages (from four to ninety); special programs throughout the year such as a Christmas pageant and other family events coinciding with the liturgical calendar; confirmation classes; an active acolyte program; and a summer Vacation Bible School. We also offer a nursery during Sunday School and the 10:30 a.m. worship. Regular attendance is a challenge upon which we seek to improve.

Over the last two years, as town and county growth have increased, visitors to St. Bartholomew’s have included a significant number of parents with young children. Some have not stayed due to a lack of depth and vibrancy in our children’s ministries. Thus, we have an urgent need to support and expand our existing programs for children and youth in order to meet the needs of current members and to be a welcoming community for those seeking a new church home. A regularly-scheduled youth group combines service and fellowship. We would also like to solidify the nursery program during worship services. In our new rector, we seek a priest with a commitment to provide enthusiastic leadership for an expanded children’s and youth ministry.



# Active Ministries (continued)

## LAY EUCHARISTIC MINISTRY (“LEM”)

Members of the LEM team view their service as personally fulfilling and rewarding in their faith journeys. At each of the two Sunday worship services, according to a schedule prepared by the coordinator, a LEM assists the rector at the altar. The team numbers eight to ten faithful volunteers, trained by the rector and licensed by the Diocese. Although some LEMs are trained to serve shut-ins, this year most of our “shut-ins” are well enough to attend church.

We are in the happy situation that “the LEMs are willing, but the communicants are not weak.” The coordinator describes the LEMs as “a diverse and scattered bunch, who manage to bring good cheer and willingness to help others by filling in when needed. It’s a key part of our ongoing role as members of the Parish and as Christians seeking and serving others in community.” In a few instances, teenagers serve as acolytes on the same Sundays that their parents serve as LEMs. One husband and wife LEM team call their service “a contribution that we both enjoy making, and we feel that we are the better for it, plus it helps with our journey of faith.”



# Active Ministries (continued)

## Evangelism

The Evangelism Committee was formed in 2005 to reach out to the community, particularly the neighborhoods surrounding St. Bartholomew's. Based on the charges of the Great Commandments and the Great Commission, the committee of five has:

- ❖ Developed a brochure for the congregation to be distributed among residents of the neighborhood and to visitors and newcomers;
- ❖ Prepared name tags for all members so that they can be identified by name during services and coffee hour;
- ❖ Created seasonal welcome signs to be hung in the entrance to the church yard;
- ❖ Gone door-to-door in three different neighborhoods after services on Palm Sunday with invitations and seasonal gift baskets;
- ❖ Invited neighborhood residents to an annual autumn parish block party on Rectory Street after Sunday services, with different forms of live music and other activities;
- ❖ Invited neighbors to our annual 'impromptu' Christmas Eve Children's pageant and to Midnight Mass; and
- ❖ Held conversational Spanish sessions to make ourselves more receptive to Hispanic visitors.

Hispanic visitors.

The Evangelism Committee joins other ministries of the parish in seeking to make St. Bartholomew's presence known in our community as a welcoming congregation for all people in the name of Christ Jesus.



# Active Ministries (continued)

## CORA Food Pantry

*“What you have done unto the least of these, you have done unto me.”*

Chatham OutReach Alliance is an all-volunteer, ecumenical Christian organization in Pittsboro, helping to feed people who are hungry in Chatham County (see <http://corafoodpantry.org>). It was formed in 1988 by an alliance of several churches. St. Bartholomew’s was one of the main spark plugs in getting this valuable service off the ground and is still highly involved. Many of our parishioners serve in leadership roles at the pantry, and many more give with their hearts by donating food each week for this worthy cause.



## Quiet Garden

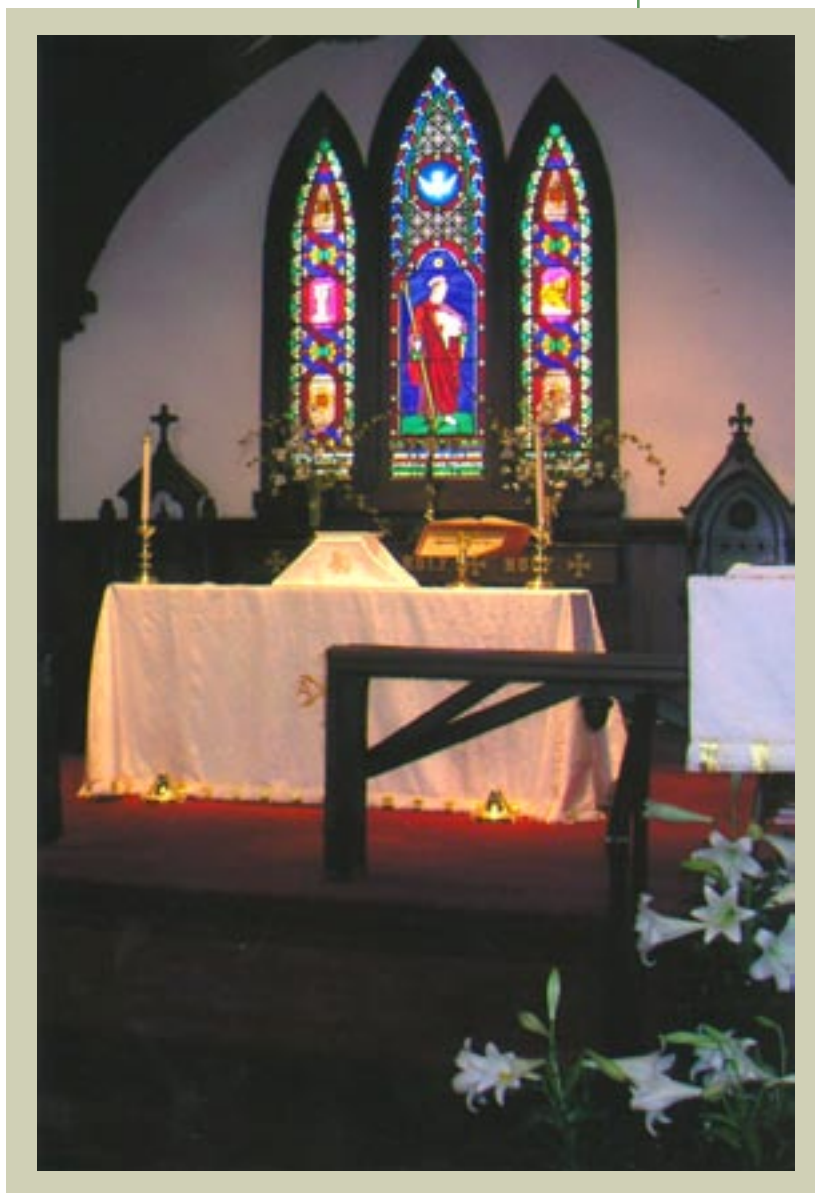
On October 2, 2005, Bishop Michael Curry dedicated the garden and graveyard surrounding St. Bartholomew’s church as a Quiet Garden, dedicating it as a space for hospitality and prayer (see [http://www.quietgarden.co.uk/quiet\\_garden\\_ministry.htm](http://www.quietgarden.co.uk/quiet_garden_ministry.htm)). The garden is lovingly cared for by volunteers under the direction of a parishioner who is also a professional gardener. It is open to all as an area of beauty and peacefulness dedicated to quiet prayer and solitude and as a place of creativity and healing in the context of God’s love.



# Active Ministries (continued)

## Elder Ministry

Through the aging of the population as a whole and the influx of retirees to the area, the population of older persons in Chatham County is significant and growing. Seniors contribute to all of our ministries; indeed, they are the mainstay and backbone of many. The monthly Eucharist at the Cambridge Hills Nursing Home is the ministry most closely dedicated to seniors as a group. We envision expanding this program for and with our seniors within our congregation and outward into our community. We hope our new rector will help to guide St Bartholomew's toward developing a caring, loving appreciation of our elders in varied ways.



# Conclusion

The dominant strength of our church family lies in our ability to create and nurture an open, diverse, and welcoming community. Our spiritual unity, founded in our desire to worship and serve God, allows us to accept and understand each other as we make our individual journeys together at St. Bartholomew's. There is a very real sense of relationship, of family, and of home within St. Bartholomew's that is evident in our lives together. This speaks to our ability, as a congregation, to nurture the empowering "oneness" that comes from responding to a shared calling to be the body of Christ.

This profile reflects our sense that there are as many ways to serve at St. Bartholomew's as there are individuals in our church. Each of us strives to give of ourselves, serving God through active participation in the life and spirit of our church. Without the talents and dedication of many, St. Bartholomew's would not be the strong Spirit-filled church that it is today.

We are a growing congregation called to serve a growing community. We are together envisioning a new building to house a growing number of people and activities. It will take courage to face change, and we believe that we have the strong foundation that will allow us to change, to develop, and to grow into what God calls us to be. It will take the work of us all to achieve God's dream for us in this good place. We seek a new rector who will accompany us on this journey.



# *A Parish Profile*

## St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church

Pittsboro, North Carolina

March 2007

