



The Eagle

The Newsletter of St. John's
Episcopal Church
August 2010 Edition



The Rector's Corner

It certainly has been a hot one so far hasn't it?

Let your friends know, however, that we're air-conditioned and that there's room for them! By that I don't mean that that there's room in the pews for them although that much should be obvious to everyone. No, when we say "there's room for ya here" it means that there's room for diversity in opinion, outlook, spiritual journey style, approach to worship, personal orientation... you name it; *that* is diversity.



In the meantime, our Wednesday evening Bible study has ended for the season and we plan to begin again at the beginning of October. Dee Ashby and I are working together to come up with what we hope will be an engaging way to look at Holy Scripture for this upcoming season.

There will also be some new learning opportunities for everyone during the rather long period between services. On some Sundays, this will mean looking over the lessons for that day; on others it will be presentations from different voices in the Episcopal Church, be they spiritual voices or temporal voices. For instance, in October, I hope to bring a spiritual director to make a presentation to us to start an intentional spiritual group. In November, we may even get a visit from a well-known choir from Baltimore.

The goal is to make St. John's a place that people want to come to in order to be themselves and participate in the Reign of God. I encourage everyone to be excited as we enter this new phase of the life of St. John's!

B'Shalom,

Fr. Bill

August Calendar

Happy Birthdays:

- 9 Sandra Pope
- 9 Matthew Taylor
- 10 Virginia Wetter
- 12 Helen Snyder
- 13 Penny Schmidt
- 15 Mark Gengenbach
- 21 John Biondo
- 21 Samantha Biondo
- 25 Jerry Ashby
- 28 John H. Fisher III



Happy Anniversary:

- 13 Syd and Terry Drury

Dates to Remember!!!!

- August 7: Church grounds clean-up 9-1
- August 21: Grace Place. See Lillian Burch for infor.
- August 21: Vestry 7:00 pm

Please Give the Office Your Email Address

If Barbara has your email address, you will receive a monthly calendar and the Eagle. Due to postal regulations, we are no longer bulk mailing our newsletter. Please encourage anyone who wants to continue receiving the newsletter to email the office at: stjohnshdg@verizon.net

A Note from Gladys Keithley:

I want to thank everyone for their prayers and cards and goodies to help me get my appetite back. They took 1/3 of my stomach out. I'm feeling a lot better, but still a little weak. My daughter-in-law comes in twice a day to change dressings on the cut. I miss you all! The doctor says I should be able to drive in about 2-4 weeks.

Keeping Up Appearances

Have you noticed that our hedges along Congress Avenue and the shrubs around the church are being kept neatly trimmed? This is the handiwork of Keith Butler, who attends the 10:15 service. Next time you see him be sure to tell him THANK YOU for donating his time and expertise to help make our church look neat and attractive.

A MESSAGE ABOUT ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Dee Ashby

Our Bible Study group finished its last class on Wednesday, July 14th in which we studied the Jewish roots of Christianity via a DVD program. We were pleased to have Fr. Bill lead our last two classes and to give us a lot more insight regarding how Christianity evolved from Judaism following the resurrection of Jesus. For me, one of the benefits of watching the series on this topic was that it helped me to appreciate how different the world was then and to remember that Jesus was born a Jew. While it is clear from the New Testament that his message is for everyone, his roots were actually in the Jewish Old Testament teachings. It was also interesting to see how some of what the church follows today does tie into those Jewish traditions and rituals from so long ago.

Many thanks to all of those who were able to attend the Bible study programs. Your participation added so much to the study group because it brought your own distinct knowledge, understanding, and interpretations to the scriptures. It also brought your own thoughts and questions on what we were studying. That helped to make each week an interesting event and a lot of fun because without that type of participation, it is just reading. You ROCK!

Have you ever sat in church on a Sunday listening to the lectionary wondering what in the world a particular reading was about? It is not possible to take the time to go into a lengthy explanation during the church service so, during the last three weeks of the adult Bible study we began to delve into the weekly lectionary. This helped to give us a better understanding of the Old Testament, the Epistle, and the Gospel readings. It was sort of like prepping for the service without the stress of having to take a final exam.

While it is true that Bible study has ended for now, the good news is Bible study will resume in the fall with new topics and new challenges to expand and explore our Christian knowledge. Fr. Bill will continue the weekly Wednesday Bible study classes at 7:00 PM in the Parish Hall beginning October 6th. A topic for the October class has not been finalized as of this issue of the *Eagle*, but will be announced in the September *Eagle*. Generally, topics for the classes will run for six to eight weeks and student guides will be furnished to each participant.

Also, starting October 3rd, there will be adult Bible study classes each Sunday morning from 9:15 AM to 10:00 AM in the Parish Hall. The topic will be the weekly lectionary readings. Fr. Bill will discuss with group participants the Old Testament, Epistle, and Gospel readings during that time, sort of a finale for the eight o'clocker's and a prologue for the ten-fifteener's.

If anyone would like more information or has some ideas of topics they wish to study, please let me know so that we can do our best to work them into the adult education program. My contact information is email: jdsashby11@comcast.net or phone: 410 272-5091.

God's Peace,
Dee

Adult Bible Study Classes

Meeting Place: Parish Hall

Sunday, October 3, 2010 - 9:15 AM

Wednesday, October 6, 2010 - 7:00 PM

From the Treasurer

I want to remind everyone again that although we may all take vacations during the summer months, the bills do not go away. Please don't forget to keep up with your pledges!

We're still operating in the red, of course, and I'm sure that's no surprise to anyone. Our investments are holding fairly steady with losses and gains just about balancing out for each quarter. We still have not completely rebounded from the huge hits we took in the fourth quarter of 2008, but we've made some positive progress.

I'd like to bring something to your attention that recently arose. On a routine service call, Bowder's found some issues with deterioration on various parts of the organ. This is causing air to leak out where it shouldn't. Left untreated, the deterioration will only continue, the air leaks will worsen, and our organ will not sound well at all. There are two repairs to be done. The more immediate one is \$600, and the one that can wait a couple of months is \$2400. Please pray about this and see if there is any way you can donate toward these repairs. \$5, \$10, \$20, it all adds up! Let's treat these issues now so they don't become even more costly down the road! If you wish to donate, please annotate "organ repairs" on your envelope/check.

Don't forget, if you want an update as to where you are with your 2010 pledges, feel free to email me at kallie67@comcast.net or call me at 410-939-1203. Keep in mind I don't have the records at home, so it may take me a day or two to get back to you with this information.

Blessings and peace--
Kallie

An Idea Bears Fruit

Several years ago Ann Green was inspired to start a special Altar Guild Fund. She wanted to build up a reserve to help meet the needs of the Altar Guild. Parishioners who wanted to participate would pay into the Fund instead of purchasing flowers and Ann would donate and arrange the flowers herself. Little by little the money accumulated. This Fund recently reached \$1,000 and the Altar Guild was able to buy a new fair linen to replace the rather shabby old one and they also bought new candles with clear holders for use on Christmas Eve and at the Easter Vigil - plus there is still some money left in the fund. THANK YOU to Ann for her great idea! Saundra Pope is continuing this tradition. If you would like to help the Altar Guild while honouring or remembering a loved one with flowers, see Saundra for more information.

FROM THE SENIOR WARDEN

You Are Welcome!

“The Episcopal Church welcomes you”. Most of us have come across this phrase but are we living up to it? Is St. John’s a welcoming church? Are we encouraging new people to try us out? Do we welcome the newcomer and try to get to know them? I’ve seen us go from one extreme to the other in the past. There have been times when I’ve had to join a long line in order to speak to a visitor during coffee hour but there have been other times when a visitor has been ignored. Of course, this is never done on purpose; sometimes we all have something to do and rush around without noticing someone standing all alone.

What should we talk about with the stranger in our midst? We need to find out about them without prying. Listen to what they have to say. I remember Bishop Rabb speaking to Vestry about newcomers during one of his visitations. He said that we need to hear their stories and incorporate them into the life of St. John’s. This means we as a parish have to change but that’s OK: we cannot grow if we’re not prepared to change.

Now that we have a new rector we need to work with him to attract new members. Fr. Bill has new ideas for us to try. He also has fresh eyes and ears and notices things which need to be improved upon. We should not be afraid to put these ideas into action nor should we feel insulted when he wants to change the way we’ve always done something. We all want St. John’s to flourish and that means doing some things differently. We have to be willing to try new ideas.

Fr. Bill’s new tagline “There’s room for ya” is short, simple and to the point. We are here to welcome and serve others, just as Christ did, no matter who that person may be, where they’re from, or what their background, lifestyle or family situation might be. We have to welcome diverse opinions and lifestyles. We are not here to judge. As everyone is aware, there is no dress code, no upper or lower age limit, no minimum salary requirement. No minimum donation is required and we’re not affiliated with any particular political party. Jesus loves everyone and we are called to do the same. We have to learn to live into our mission statement: to become dedicated disciples doing the work of Christ.

It might be a challenge for some of us to get to know a stranger but it can be so worthwhile. We want that stranger to become involved in St. John’s. When they feel at home in our parish family we will have one more person to invite family and friends to attend. Let’s be open to new people and to changes in the way we do things.

The good people of St. John’s are here because we love our parish. We do much good in the community, especially with hosting Grace Place, AA and NA. We have not always had much ourselves but have found ways of helping out less fortunate people at Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas and many times in between. We want to see St. John’s thrive so we can do more of God’s work.

We have so much to give. Let’s build on that and welcome everyone, from all walks of life, to our parish family and give them a chance to tell their story, become an integral part of our life together in Christ and help us shape our future.

Blessings.

Jan Biondo, Senior Warden

Please see below the letter we received from President Obama concerning the 200th Anniversary

**THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON**

May 17, 2010

Dear Friends:

I am pleased to congratulate you on your 200th anniversary. Throughout our Nation’s history, places of worship have been a cornerstone of our communities.

On this occasion, we are reminded of the abiding truth that each of us has the power to create a better world for ourselves and our children when we do God’s work here on earth. As you celebrate this important milestone, I hope you will look back on your achievements and contributions with joy and pride.

I wish your congregation continued success and blessings in the years to come.

Sincerely,



of our church. This letter will be placed in the relics case at the back of the church.

From the Buildings and Grounds Committee:

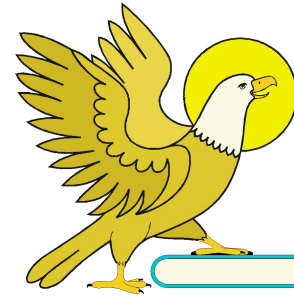
Feel like getting your hands in the dirt? got a little Rembrandt in you? Well, Buildings and Grounds is for you! Buildings and Grounds is the committee that is responsible for maintaining our church and surrounding property. We have typically done a spring and fall clean up, and with the help of volunteers, have handled the Honey-Do list throughout the year. If you would like to participate in keeping our church beautiful, drop me a line at williamprice3rd@msn.com. For immediate gratification, we are having a summer clean up on August 7 from 9am to 1pm. food and drinks will be provided...rumor has it Fr. Bill will be grilling his world famous brisket. Ok, maybe not world famous yet, but it will be!

Summer Clean Up

August 7

9-1

Bring tools and gloves. We will be mulching.



St. John's Eagle

The Monthly Newsletter of
ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
114 N. Union Avenue
Havre de Grace, Maryland 21078
Barbara Snyder, Editor

PLEASE DO NOT DELAY! TIME-DATED MATERIAL