



The Signs of St. John's

September, 2010

Dear Friends,

Being awakened from sleep by an alarm clock at 3:00 a.m. is not high on most folks' list of things to do. This is especially true if you are participating in the world's understanding of a time of rest, refreshment and renewal. However, 3:00 a.m. is when I started each of my days for a week while staying as a guest of Holy Cross Abbey in Berryville, VA. The first Office of the day was prayed at 3:30 a.m., so I had just enough time to get to the chapel for ten minutes of meditation before the cantor intoned the ancient "Lord, open our lips." The Greater Silence had been kept since 7:45 p.m. No talking, no unnecessary noise—you did nothing that would interfere with a special time of quiet that allowed the community to rest, physically and spiritually. The first words spoken reminded the community that their lives are in God's hands, and their first responsibility is the worship and reverence of God.

To get to the chapel, I had about a ten minute walk from the guest house. While there were no outside lights to assist in finding the way, I did not need a flashlight. The moon gave just enough light, and on the walk back, the first hints of dawn were all I needed. The light from the moon and the breaking dawn reminded me that where God is concerned, there is no place that is truly dark. God is always somehow present. The chapel was dark except for one candle burning to remind of Christ's sacramental presence. The smell of incense reminded me of the yesterdays that had been given to the worship of God in this place.

As I joined in a response to the cantor, "And our mouth shall proclaim your praise," I knew I was joining with others around the world and in the past that had made the decision to put things in their proper order and start the new day with God at the center of my attention. With the realization and practice of God at the center of our being comes a sense of rest, refreshment and renewal that no amount of sleep can ever give.

For the sake of full disclosure, St. Benedict's *Rule* allows for a period of reading or rest in the early afternoon. My half-hour nap helped me be attentive to my reading and writing in the afternoon and early evening.

My friends, I cannot begin to express in words my gratitude for my having been given a time of sabbatical. While the time away from St. John's was wonderful, I am happy to be back home! I look forward to our continued walking together down the path God leads us!

Grace and Peace in Christ,

Dale+

September Highlights

- 8 *Choir Dinner and Workshop*
- 12 *Sunday School Resumes*
- 14 *Holy Cross Day Service*
- 15 *Supper Seminar*
- 19 *Parish Picnic*
- 21 *Young at Heart Luncheon*
- 22 *Supper Seminar*



Notes from the Vestry Meeting

August 19, 2010:

- ✠ finances remain within budget
- ✠ routine repairs have been made to the rental property (Sibley house)
- ✠ the clearing of the wooded area on the property line of the home behind the youth house will be accomplished in the fall/winter
- ✠ there was general discussion and clarification of duties of the ushers and greeters
- ✠ Joan Carter reminded all of the variety of books available in the church library and welcomes suggestions
- ✠ the Nominating Committee is at work to replace members rotating off the Vestry
- ✠ two Vestry members will attend meetings next week related to the high speed rail system that is proposed to travel on the rail behind the church
- ✠ all of the carpets in the church will be cleaned in the near future

*Teresa Duncan
Junior Warden*

Parish Life

There are a few dates you need to mark on your calendar. The first is the Parish Picnic on September 19. Parish Life will provide meat; please bring your favorite covered dish to share. The picnic will be immediately following the 11 o'clock service. Also, mark your calendar for October 30, this will be the Annual Adult Oyster Roast. Watch for tickets to go on sale in the coming weeks. The next 5th Sunday will be October 31. The church service will be at 10:00 a.m. and we will have lunch afterwards. Look forward to seeing each and every one of you!

Fontaine Gibbons & Mary Smith

Articles and information for *The Signs of St. John's* should be submitted by the 19th of each month. Submissions may be made in email format or as an email attachment in any word processing format directly to Alex Heggie, aheggie@comcast.net. Photographs or other illustrations may also be submitted. Digital images are preferred but not mandatory. Typed articles and photos may be left in the "Newsletter" folder in the Armstrong Room.

Sanctuary Choir Returns September 19

After their summer recess, the St. John's Sanctuary Choir will be heard once again supporting our 11:00 a.m. services, beginning on Sunday morning, September 19, 2010.

The choir will open the season with Martin Shaw's "With A Voice of Singing" and Mozart's "Ave Verum." Dr. Erin Freeman will have worked the finer choral points of the piece during our September 8 workshop, so the choir should be well equipped to sing at its aesthetic best.

The new season welcomes back Linda Blake from her (too long) sabbatical, joining her voice with that of the other sopranos to enrich our spiritual experience

Subsequent to the choral workshop with Dr. Freeman, the choir has a busy season ahead. They will sing the Advent Festival of Lessons and Carols at 4:00 p.m. on the first Sunday in Advent, and the October and November Vesper Services, at 4:00 p.m. on the second Sunday of each of those months.

Christmas eve will bring some new anthems from the choir and sing-a-long hymns for the congregation in place of the cantatas of previous years.

We do need additional voices, so if you can spare Wednesday evenings (even two or three in the month), please give me a call (804 732-6879)

Paul R. Bartsch

ECW

Hope everyone is having a great summer and staying cool. Please mark your calendar for the ECW meeting on September 9, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. I would like to send out a special thanks to Kitty, Jackie, Christey, Joseph & Christiana for helping out with Bible school snack. We had a lot of fun, like always! Stay Cool.

Fontaine M. Gibbons

September Birthdays

1-Jane Markwood; 3-Mary Frances Howsmon; 5-Gayle Murman, Bob Armstrong; 7-Kathleen Truesdale; 10-Don Gardner; 11-Marguerite Alley; 12-Jukie Harris; 14-Charlé Gouyer; 18-Kim Courington, Warrie McBrearty; 20-Bailey Galstan; 22-William Greenwood, Sharone Ward, Michael Gardner; 23-Joyce Beveridge, Scott Robertson; 25-Elaine Gardner, Samantha Keophila; 26-Mary Grace Andrews, Don Raybould; 28-Lamese Essey, Terry Fields, Julie Robertson; 29-Joshua Johnson

If your name should be included here but is not, please call Debbie at the Church Office so your record can be updated.

More Info from the Rector

Special Services for September

The Feast of the Holy Cross is celebrated on September 14. St. John's will mark this Holy Day with the Eucharist at 7:00 p.m. This day allows the faithful to ponder the paradoxes of the Tradition. True power comes from surrender; life comes from death, the cross, an instrument of shame and death, points to resurrected life and eternity with God. The day is also a reminder of the Christian responsibility to walk the path of Jesus. "Mercifully grant that we, who glory in the mystery of our redemption, may have grace to take up our cross and follow him." (Collect for the Feast of the Holy Cross)

Beginning in September, St. John's will offer Vespers on the Second Sunday of the month at 4:00 p.m. On September 12, Prayers, silence, music and scripture readings will be used to create a space where worshipers can rest in God's presence. The style is meditative while following the pattern of Evening Prayer in Our Prayer Book.

Week Day services

Two liturgical chances to reconnect with God are scheduled at St. John's during the work week.

Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m., St. John's offers Evening Prayer. It is a time to pause and refocus on God's presence in our lives. At the conclusion of the service a time for quiet and reflection, for those who wish to remain, is held until 6:50 p.m.

Thursdays at noon, Noon Day Prayers are offered with time for intercessory prayer especially for those named on our prayer list. We end by 12:30 p.m.

Education Opportunities:

Tuesday Evening Bible Study

The Tuesday Evening Bible Study meets in Dale's office from 7:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. The group continues to study the Book of Genesis. If you are interested in attending, need more information or you would like to receive the study notes please email Dale+ at rdalecuster@gmail.com.

Adult Forum

This fall, the Adult Forum's third Sunday of the month offering will be a series of discussions entitled "The Episcopal Way." In the community of Christian Faith Traditions, there is wide spread agreement that the Anglican/Episcopal approach to being the Body of Christ is unique. In these conversations we will look at and celebrate that uniqueness. On September 19, we begin with a brief history of the events that created and formed what is now known as "The Episcopal Church USA." Handouts will be available to individuals who are interested, but not able to attend.

Supper Seminars

The Supper Seminars in September will focus on the reading Dale+ did during his sabbatical leave. Scholars, secular and ecclesial, are examining the trends of our culture. Generational ideas of community, goals, and spirituality, to name only a few, are significantly different. How does the Church work within these different ideas in carrying out the task of introducing Christ to all persons? Please let us know you are attending by placing your name on a sign-up sheet. This allows a proper amount of materials and dinner to be prepared.

15 September—"What is the Post-Modern World? How does it Color the Life of the Church?"

22 September—"Spreading the Gospel in an 'I'm not religious, but I'm spiritual' Culture"

6 October—"Wisdom of the Desert Mothers and Fathers for 2010 and Beyond"

Adult Confirmation

Adults, who are interested in Confirmation or being Received into the Episcopal Church, please contact Dale+ at rdalecuster@gmail.com or 748-2182. Ideas around Confirmation have changed greatly in the last 40 years. Once seen as a "completion" of the Baptismal Rite, today (as did the Church for her first 200 years) we understand Baptism stands alone as a marker of one's initiation into the Body of Christ and Confirmation as a mature proclamation of one's life in Christ. For Adults baptized in some other traditions, Confirmation is an expression of a wanting to live a Christian Life within the practices of the Episcopal Church. Also, adults who have been Confirmed in certain traditions, being Received is an expression of wanting to live within the practices of the Episcopal Church.

Youth Confirmation

A reminder to parents and youth: Youth Confirmation Classes restart in September. We will meet on the 12th and 26th from 1:00 until 2:30 p.m. **Bring your Bibles!**

Mark your Calendars—October 10 at 2:00 p.m. – Blessing of the Animals

Looking Ahead

October	
6	Supper Seminar
12	Blessing of the Animals
30	Adult Oyster Roast
31	5th Sunday Service
November	
7	Congregational Meeting

Outreach Committee

Tools for Schools

Congratulations and thanks to all that participated in the Tools for Schools project this year. We provided 60 book bags filled with school supplies for needy children to begin their school year. The need this year was more than last year and, as usual, St John's parishioners responded to the challenge.

Shelter Box Project

Parishioners embraced this effort to help the Salvation Army's Shelter for Men in Petersburg. We delivered 21 boxes of towels, wash cloths and men's toiletries to a very appreciative group of men.

Elderhomes Ramps

The 4th quarter ramp project is scheduled for component construction on October 14 and ramp build October 16. If anyone would like to help on either of these days, please contact Joan Carter.

Mentoring at Beulah Elementary School

With the continuing cuts to teaching jobs throughout Chesterfield County, Beulah Elementary School's need for mentors this coming school year has increased. Please consider spending time being a mentor at Beulah this Fall. The request is for 1 hour, 1 day a week. Llewellyn Slayton was a regular mentor last year and plans to mentor again. Feel free to discuss the program with Llewellyn.

"Pass It On"—St Ann's Roman Catholic Church, s

St Ann's "Pass It On" ministry helps needy families with children's clothing and accessories. Twice a year they set up their church hall and allow needy families to shop and fill 2 bags with goods donated by their parishioners. St John's Outreach would like to support this ministry by collecting children's clothes and accessories during September. Please drop off any children's item by the food collection containers in the Narthex or outside Debbie's office.

Needed items: Maternity Clothing; Newborn to teen clothing; Toys; Books; Videos, Shoes, Coats.

If you have baby equipment (strollers, cribs, etc.) please call Chris Day (743-9810) for pick-up.

Perpetual Food Drive

Thanks for all the contributions. We have collection containers in the Narthex and outside Debbie's office. Contributions are being donated to Martha for the Homeless and St Matthews' Food Pantry. Please continue your generous donations.

Monthly meetings

Please consider joining the Outreach Committee. We meet at 7:00 p.m. in the Armstrong room the 3rd Tuesday

of each month. If you have questions, please contact Dorna Clark (dwclark@hotmail.com) or Chris Day (ch-day73@gmail.com).

Upcoming/current events:

September—Support St Ann "Pass It On" ministry

October—4th quarter ramp for Elderhomes and Thanksgiving meals

November—Thanksgiving meals

December—Christmas Mother & Beulah Elementary School Angel Tree

Chris Day

Election Of New Vestry Members

Each year the terms of four members of the vestry expire. Brian Carpenter, Joan Carter, Jim Cook, and Fontaine Gibbons, retiring vestry members, and Donald Gardner form this year's Nominating Committee to seek four new vestry members. The new vestry members will be elected by our parishioners at the annual congregational meeting on Sunday, November 7, to take office on January 1, 2011.

The canons of the diocese provide that a member of the vestry shall be an adult enrolled confirmed communicant in good standing who regularly participates in the corporate worship of the congregation.

Please consider being a nominee for the vestry. Any member of the congregation entitled to vote at the annual meeting may nominate someone to serve on the vestry, after first obtaining that person's consent. If you wish further information, feel free to speak to any member of the Nominating Committee: Brian Carpenter, 796-9125; Joan Carter, 768-4240; Jim Cook, 748-6211; Fontaine Gibbons, 530-3867; Donald Gardner, 530-0003.

Please give this matter your prayerful and thoughtful consideration. This is a responsibility which belongs to the congregation itself.

Jim Cook

Sunday School Classes to Resume

On September 12, Sunday School will begin for the 2010-2011 year. Classes will begin immediately following the 9 o'clock service (about 10:00) and end at 10:50. As in past years, grades Pre-School through 5 will meet in classrooms in the Parish Hall and middle and high schoolers will meet in the Youth House.

The Adult Forum will return to the Christian Education schedule. John Howsmon will be leading the class, which will look deeper at selected lessons from the weekly lectionary and apply them to our life in the church today.

If you have any questions, please contact the Christian Education co-chairs, Kim Courington or John Howsmon. We look forward to seeing you on the 12th!

John Howsmon

High Sea's Adventure VBS 2010

During the week of July 25th, 35 preschool and elementary school aged children sailed the High Sea's learning of God's love. There were 11 Middle and High School young adults as well as 22 adults who helped put on VBS this year. Personally, it was a very rewarding week with the young people of our church. I don't know why I am sometimes surprised what a great and loving group of kids they all are. I would recommend if you can spend some time with them you would see God's work in action. During VBS we sang and danced (even the adults, quite a sight to see!) made crafts(snake pillows,) ate theme fun snacks, saw a drama show, watched our friend Chatter, played fun games, and last but not least, sailed the High Seas where we thanked God for all he does for us. I don't know about you but I'm already wondering what the songs are going to be like for next year!

If you would like to see pictures go the St. John's website—www.stjohnschester.com.

God loves you! Let's go!

Kim Courington

An Afternoon Tea Party

The Shepherd Center of Chesterfield is holding "An Afternoon Tea Party" on Saturday, September 18 at 2:00 p.m. at the Chester United Methodist Church. This will be an old fashioned elegant affair—a cup of tea, luscious goodies and relaxing entertainment.

Tickets are available for \$20. Contact Thea Shoop at 796-5238 or tfshoop@verizon.net.

Thea Shoop

Thank You

To all of our "family" at St. John's,

Words cannot express how your outpouring of love and support helped our family through this difficult time.

Thank you to everyone who helped honor Billy by presenting such a fine reception after the service.

I love all of you,

Kitty, Christiana, Joseph and family

To the staff and members of St. John's

Thank you so much for your helpfulness and kindness in assisting me with arranging the funeral for my grandmother, Mattie Arnold. There were church members who brought food that we were so thankful to receive. A special thanks to Martha Jenkins who took time out of her schedule to meet with us and who displayed such kindness. My grandmother attended a very special church and we will be forever grateful for everything.

From Karen Earls

and the family of Mattie Arnold

Lectionary for September

September 5—15 Pentecost (Proper 18)

Jeremiah 18:1-11

Psalms 139:1-5, 13-17

Philemon 1:21

Luke 14:25-33

September 12—16 Pentecost (Proper 19)

Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28

Psalms 14

1 Timothy 1:12-17

Luke 15:1-10

September 14—The Feast of the Holy Cross

Isaiah 45:21-25

Psalms 98

Philippians 2:5-11

John 12:31-36a

September 19—17 Pentecost (Proper 20)

Jeremiah 8:18-9:1

Psalms 79:1-9

1 Timothy 2:1-7

Luke 16:1-13

September 26—18 Pentecost (Proper 21)

Jeremiah 32:1-3a, 6-15

Psalms 91:1-6, 14-16

1 Timothy 6:6-19

Luke 16:19-31

Mozart's Requiem

Mozart's *Requiem* will be presented on Sunday, September 12, 2010 at 2:00 p.m. in the sanctuary of Chester United Methodist Church featuring the Chester Community Chorus under the direction of Joshua Wortham with Cheryl Van Ornam as organist. There is no admission charge and all are welcome. Come enjoy this special music and bring a friend.

Joan Carter

Resurrected to New Life in Christ:

Max Barnes

Buck Brooks

Marie Surber

Joan Wright

Rest eternal grant to these, O Lord: let light perpetual shine upon them. May their soul, and the souls of all the departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.