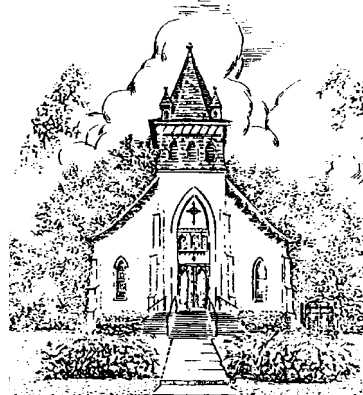


# St. Bartholomew's Beacon

*for members and friends of St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church; Laytonsville, Maryland  
December, 2005*

Dear Friends,

In fifth century Constantinople, an important government official by the name of Kyros was accused in the community of being a pagan. He sought sanctuary from the church, and then became a priest. Later appointed the Bishop of Kotyaion, he appeared for his first service on Christmas Day. The congregation, which had killed four of its previous bishops, was suspicious of this appointment and called out for Kyros to preach to verify his faith.



He rose to the pulpit and shared these brief words:

*Brethren, let the birth of God our Savior Jesus Christ  
Be honored with silence, because the Word of God  
was conceived in the holy Virgin through hearing  
alone.  
To him be glory for ever. Amen.*

With those words he won not only his life, but the hearts of his congregation and went on to serve as a well-beloved and deeply admired bishop.

We would be well-served to heed those words of Bishop Kyros this holy season.

May each of us make time in the hectic schedules and commitments of our lives to pause and be quiet, to be silent, and hear again the message of the angels and to welcome anew the yearly remembrance of the birth of thy Son Jesus Christ. To him be glory for ever! Amen.

Pax,

The Rev. John D. Stonesifer  
Interim Rector

## St. Bartholomew's Mission

**To Proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit to a diverse community gathering in Laytonsville.**

### How We Accomplish This

- Practicing hospitality to newcomers
- Providing fellowship & pastoral care
- Encouraging education & growth for all ages
- Providing inspiring Episcopal worship
- Serving the world in Christ's name
- Valuing our traditions and looking to the future

### Our Vision

With the guidance of the Holy Spirit and leadership of our Rector, we will continually grow as individuals and community in the knowledge and love of the Lord.

### Leadership to Achieve This

Ministers -The Congregation

Bishop – The Rt. Rev. John  
Bryson Chane

Int. Rector - The Rev. John DeWitt  
Stonesifer

Sr. Warden – Art Elgin

Jr. Warden/Treas – Bill Fitts

Register – Judy O'Neil

### Vestry Members:

Sue Davis

Herb Grabau

Jeff Taylor

Judy Docca

Jim Lynch

Deborah Turton

Frank Dall

Tim Smith

Frank McMurtray

Organist – Marilyn Carollo

Sunday School Coordinator

Ann Fitts

Webmaster – Harry Bennett

## Senior Warden's Letter

Dear Fellow Parishioners:

We have just celebrated Thanksgiving; and Advent, the beginning of a new church year, is upon us. Christmas is just around the corner. In another month a new fiscal year for St. Bartholomew's will start. It is a time of mixed emotions for me.

I sometimes worry about what will happen to St. Bartholomew's in the future, even waking up in the middle of the night; but then I remember where the Church has been and that in many ways we have been blessed and have many things for which we can be thankful.

Over the next month, the Vestry will be working on the budget for next year. Pledges are not what we had hoped they would be. The budget will be very tight, and I sometimes wonder how we will make it. We are looking for a new rector, and we are going to have to have a budget that will attract someone we will like. Then I remember—unlike a lot of churches we do not have a mortgage. We have made it every year for a long time. It was not that long ago that the Diocese thought we were not going to make it when we suddenly lost a minister for the second time in a relatively short period of time and under extraordinary circumstances. However, we did make it; and if anything, we became stronger. As we enter the new church year and look for a new rector, and even though the budget is tight, we are in a lot better position than we were when we were looking for a new rector the last time.

This is not just happenstance. It really is the result of a lot of parishioners working for the common good of the church, often unnoticed and, in my opinion, often underappreciated. It is these people for whom I am especially thankful.

During the service on Wednesday evening before Thanksgiving, I, like everyone else at the service, was struck by how beautiful the altar looked with the cornucopia provided by Frank and Janet McMurtray. If you weren't there, it was gorgeous. For as long as I have been a member of St. Bartholomew's the McMurtrays have been providing the beautiful flowers for the altar without fanfare but with the heartfelt thanks of the congregation.

At the Thanksgiving service Lauren Fisher played the organ, and I again thought how thankful we should be for our young Laurens. Lauren Fisher has meant so much to our music program. She led the youth choir, has written hymns and now comes home from college to help during her vacation. Lauren Bray has been a wonderful acolyte for many years; and even though still in high school, she is on the Search Committee and has stepped up to take charge of and train the younger acolytes.

These are just examples of many of the parishioners for whom the congregation and I are extremely grateful for the work they are doing. I am sure many others will continue to keep us going.

Now for the new church year--let's kick it off right. I hope all of you will visit the Christmas Festival. Plan on having a meal there. It's a wonderful time to socialize with your fellow parishioners, and bring your whole family, neighbors and friends. I look forward to seeing you there and have a wonderful Christmas.

Thanks,

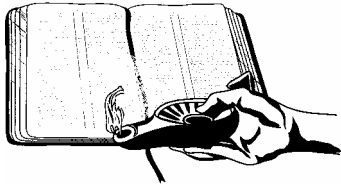
*Art Elgin*  
*Senior Warden*

## Worship Schedule and Notes

- Sunday, December 4     Adult Education: "Journey to Christmas" continues through the 11<sup>th</sup>, Ed Bldng.
- Sunday, December 18     Pageant at the 11:00am service.  
Caroling through town, 7-9pm, meet in the undercroft.
- Saturday, December 24     5:00pm Family Eucharist, Rite II (music at 4:30pm)  
11:00pm Holy Eucharist, Rite I (music at 10:30pm)
- Sunday, December 25     One Service at 10:00am, Holy Eucharist, Rite I
- Sunday, January 1, 2006     One Service at 10:00am, Lessons and Carols

**The Season of Advent:** The four Sundays before Christmas have been devised as a season of preparation for the coming of Christ. The Latin word *adventus* means "coming." The First Sunday in Advent is the beginning of the Christian year...The background of Advent is the kingdom of God, the rule of God over his creation, which is said to be "at hand." One prepares for judgment in the presence of the great king, and when Advent is over, one confronts the child in the manger. – *Liturgy for Living*, p. 236

### *Special Prayers* *For Those in Need*



*Heavenly Father, giver of life and health: Comfort and relieve your servants, and give your power of healing and care to those who minister to their needs, that they may be strengthened in their weakness and have confidence in your loving care; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

#### Sick/Need:

Rob Glasby  
Audrey Petrie  
Sal Carollo  
Michael McGee  
Bob Duffy  
Robert Floyd  
Kate Washburn  
Rob Schaaf  
Helen Cook  
Phyllis Varano  
Steven Stiles, Jr.  
Erin Shaw  
Ken Augustin  
Martha Clark  
Robert Knesil  
Daisy Black  
Leonard Palmer  
Jackie Lynch  
Margaret Louie  
Elizabeth Dame  
Patrick Ard  
Tisa Braud  
Jim McMurtray  
Paula Hoffman  
Lee Gamson

Mike Smith  
Brian Skidds  
Lucille & Bob Van Vliet  
John Parker  
Eloise Elliott  
Tim Smith  
Jackie Davis

#### Military:

Stephen Mutziger  
Chris Meachum  
Nicholas Lynch

#### Local Outreach:

Hurricane Survivors

#### International Outreach:

Mirembe School

*Note: This is our most current prayer list. Please call the office with updates or changes.*

### **Pastoral Visits & Care**

Rufus Butts would enjoy visits from parishioners. His new residence is Our Family Assisted Living, 16350 Camalo Dr., Mt. Airy, MD 21777. Please call first 410-442-5188.

Fr. John Stonesifer is available for pastoral visits and care, please contact the church office. For emergencies, call Fr. Stonesifer at home 301-251-9965.



**-- opportunities and activities in our parish life**

### **Caroling**

Caroling will be Sunday, December 18, from 7-9 pm. We'll meet in the undercroft and go caroling around Laytonsville. Last year we were out for about 45 minutes. Remember to dress warmly and bring some Christmas cookies to share. Hot drinks will be provided.

We're still looking for a couple of families to host parish dinner parties in January and February. The host family can pick the date, number of people attending and what type of dinner party they'd like to host. If you don't feel up to hosting a dinner party, but feel up to bringing a dish to share, please be a guest. Hosts and guests can contact Deborah Turton at 301-482-0675.

Trivia - At the next coffee hour, see if you late service parishioners can find anyone who graduated from high school in France, or took actress Linda Evans down the Snake river, or managed a baseball team, or was a mathlete in high school (and do you know what a mathlete is??)

Deborah Turton (phone: 301-482-0675)

[cannonturton@comcast.net](mailto:cannonturton@comcast.net)

### **Ladies Guild**

December is a busy month for the Guild members. In addition to helping with the Christmas Festival on Friday and Saturday of this week, we will be making up our Christmas baskets. Later we will distribute them to friends, family and members of the Parish who are very special and some who may need an extra amount of cheer.

### **Adult Education**

The Adult Education Class began the first of a three-part series entitled "Journey to Christmas" on Sunday, November 27<sup>th</sup>. The class will continue for two more sessions on December 4<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. The group is studying the Season of Advent, the beginning of the Church Year. All are welcome to join the group that meets from 9:15-10:15 in the Education Building.

### **Nursery Volunteers Needed**

Vickie Fisher, who has faithfully served in our nursery, is stepping down so she can join us in worship. We are grateful for her ministry and are in need of a nursery volunteer – call the office for more info.

### **Junior Warden Property Report.**

At the October vestry meeting your vestry established a property improvement committee. The purpose of the committee is to establish a plan for property improvement and to review all proposals for property improvement. Our goal is to review all proposals of property improvement and to make a recommendation to the vestry. Our plan is to give the vestry our recommendations two weeks before the

regular monthly vestry meeting in order to give the vestry ample time to review the proposal before a vote would be called for. The vestry has the discretion to take longer. We hope that this will alleviate any misunderstandings that have occurred in the past when groups have proposed things that were not immediately approved. Our goal is to make this a fair process for all who have a desire to improve the church property. The property improvement committee members are Jim Lynch, Herb Grabau and Bill Fitts. Please bring all property improvement proposals to one of the committee members for consideration. We appreciate your cooperation.

### **Local Outreach Report**

The Local Outreach Committee completed the Thanksgiving boxes on Sunday November 20th and they were delivered on the 21st. Thanks to everyone who contributed non-perishable foods for the families at Gaithersburg Elementary School. Many people helped to pack and deliver the items. Among them were Ethel Ollivierre, Tim Smith, Sonja Elgin, Louisa Riggs, Jeff Taylor, Frances Stanford, Nancy Harding and the Davis'.

Our next project is to deliver and serve food at Sophia House on December 5th. The Sunday School students of Karen Parker made delightful, colorful mufflers for the residents of Sophia House and also for the residents of the Krahnke Center.

We will be collecting for the Krahnke Center on December 4th, 11th and the 18th. On the 18th we will assemble the items for delivery on the 19th. Bring any cosmetics and toiletries you would like to donate on those dates. The Fitts' will be Santa and Mrs. Claus as in the past few years and have assorted toys for the children. There are approximately 30 women and 25-30 children of all ages at the Center. The population changes daily, so it is very hard to know the ages or gender of the children. If you wish to donate to the children, the items will have to be generic. Christmas bags of candy and other goodies are also prepared for the children.

Thanks again for your concern and your help with the Katrina families and the persons in the shelters. If you have linens, furniture or clothing, it is always appreciated at Gaithersburg Elementary. There are many needy families in this school and any donated items help. You may continue to contact Judy Docca at 301-977-7591 about donations you would like to make.

*Judy*

### **International Outreach Report Mirembe House**

**Here is a gift idea** for that person who has everything: a donation in her or his name to the Mirembe Home for orphans in Migori, Kenya. Contributing is simple, just make your check payable to St. Bartholomew's and write "International Outreach" on the memo line. **Single contributions are as welcome and needed as pledges.** Forms for pledges are available from Brent and Stevie Grimes, Les Cannon and the bulletin board in the undercroft. If you prefer to avoid paperwork, you can just talk to the parish office or one of us. We then provide a sheet of coupons to help you remember each month's contribution. Include the coupon with your separate check in the collection plate or mail.

If you have not yet reaffirmed your Mirembe pledge for this coming year, please do so now. We thank those who have updated or confirmed their pledge information. We would like all of our contributors to do so.

*Les Cannon*

### **Eunice Ngeso of Mirembe**

On November 12, 2005, Father Demo called Brent and Stevie Grimes with the sad news that Eunice Ngeso, one of the girls St. Bartholomew's is helping to support at the Mirembe Orphanage in Kenya, passed away. She was 18 years old.

Eunice had fallen ill the previous week, complaining of a severe headache and a fever, which were thought to be caused by a cyst on her eye. She was taken to the hospital where her eye condition was diagnosed as a malignant tumor. She underwent an operation to remove the tumor but did not survive the operation. Doctors said her death was the result of meningitis and complications from the surgery. Although she was HIV positive, her death was not related to HIV.

Eunice was one of the original Mirembe girls who came to the orphanage after her parents had died of AIDS. She was in the eleventh grade and “doing quite well in her studies.” She was one of the girls featured on our web page about Mirembe where you can see her photo. Father Demo apologized for having to deliver such sad news and said, “Eunice was a part of us and we are a part of you.”

The tragedy of Eunice’s death was compounded by the financial burden it placed on Mirembe. None of the girls has medical insurance and there was approximately \$500 in outstanding medical bills. An anonymous parishioner paid the medical expenses as well as the \$350 coffin, funeral, and a burial plot expenses. Had it not been for this generous contribution, the Mirembe committee would have had to borrow from tuition funds to meet the emergency needs of this tragedy.

Mirembe is a living embodiment of Christ’s love at work in the world. It provides a continuing opportunity for St. Bartholomew’s to express and participate in that love while directly and positively influencing the lives of these young women; women who would otherwise be left to fend for themselves. Mirembe provided Eunice Ngeso with love and hope during the final years of her all too short life. She will be missed by Father Demo, Mary, and all her friends at Mirembe as well as by those at St. Bartholomew’s who did not know her, but loved her.

### **Search Committee Report**

The Search Committee continues to be busy working on the Parish Profile. They have incorporated the results of the Parish Survey into the document. The committee has decided to begin the Profile with St. Bartholomew’s Vision Statement. Following this, there will be an overview of St. Bartholomew’s. The next section will contain an overview of the community that will have information including Education, Recreation, and Area Opportunities. The report will conclude with information concerning Parish Resources, and Financial Management.

The committee plans to produce an electronic version of the Profile that will incorporate illustrative photos. They would like church members to submit recent photos to the church office so that they may be included in the Profile. The committee thanks everyone for their cooperation.

### **Stewardship**

The Liturgical year has started, but the calendar year still has another month to go. This gives us a chance to reflect on the previous church year and make plans for the next year. It’s a chance for us to see if we are where we want to be and still have to time to get there.

So here are my thoughts for December. First, I am assuming that I will continue as head of Stewardship, at least until the annual meeting. The annual Pledge Campaign was a major part the Stewardship effort, despite my showing Stewardship as result of a Christian lifestyle, and not just money. There are some aspects that could have worked better and will change for next year. If you have any feedback on this year’s campaign, I would like to hear it now. Next year, I’ll be set in my ways and unable to change.

I’m planning on continuing my Saint Bartholomew’s Beacon column discussing Stewardship as I understand it. Hopefully, they will provide some tasty food for thought. I’m thinking about some other activities throughout the year, probably during Lent and beginning of summer. They will be fun, different than Six Flags fun, but still fun.

Those are my thoughts and plans as I gear up for the Christmas Festival, an Advent Adult Education class, and some fantastic Christmas church services. I pray that God richly bless you in everyway through His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

### **Sunday School**

During November we had many great lessons from the Old Testament and a wonderful Thanksgiving Celebration and Feast while learning of the Pilgrims and the food they shared with the Indians.

We will finish our study of the Old Testament during the last week of November and then prepare for the birth of our Lord with our Christmas Pageant which is scheduled for December 18<sup>th</sup> during the 11:00 service. All children are welcome to select a role and participate in our Pageant. Please let us know if your child would be interested in a speaking part this year (no pressure but volunteers are appreciated). It is never too late as we add many children to the story on the day of the Pageant (December 18<sup>th</sup>). Planning begins on December 4<sup>th</sup> with roles being assigned and scripts put in place. Please plan to join us and bring friends!!!!

We also will have our annual New Year's Blessing Celebration on January 8<sup>th</sup> and take time to count our blessings and welcome in a new year during the 11:00 service. We will have chili and 5 feet long subs and put a blessing pine cone on a tree to feed the birds during winter.

We offer thanks to all those who work so hard to make Sunday School a great success and a place where all children are welcome. We teach our children they are special and loved by God. They all have been blessed with great gifts to use for his glory.

## Special Events

December 18 Christmas Pageant at 11:00 a.m. service  
Caroling later that day

December 24 Christmas Eve  
5:00 p.m. Family Eucharist, Rite II (Music at 4:30 p.m.)  
11:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I (Music at 10:30 p.m.)

December 25 Christmas Day  
10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I

January 6, 2006 One service at 10:00 a.m.  
Lessons & Carols

## Regular Sunday Schedule

8:00 a.m. Service of Holy Communion  
11:00 a.m. Service of Holy Communion - first, third and fifth Sundays  
Morning Prayer - second and fourth Sundays  
*Sunday School is held during the late service*



### St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church

P.O. Box 5005  
21611 Laytonsville Rd.  
Laytonsville, MD 20882

Office Phone: 301-948-8201  
[www.saintbartholomews.org](http://www.saintbartholomews.org)