

St. Bartholomew's Beacon

for members and friends of St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church; Laytonsville, Maryland
March 2006

Dear Friends,

This first day of March also marks Ash Wednesday, and the season of Lent. I hope that each one of were able to take part in our delicious Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper which benefited our international outreach ministry.



The strength of a congregation is only as strong as the spiritual strength of our individual members and families.

Lent is a particularly appropriate time to address our spiritual health and strength, beginning with the recognition of our own brokenness through the imposition of ashes in the Ash Wednesday liturgy.

During these weeks of reflection during Lent, St. Bartholomew's offers two special opportunities to support this time of reflection and discipline:

1) *What's So Amazing About Grace?* – This six week class is offered on Sundays, from 9:15 – 10:15 am in the Education Building. Based on a book of the same name by Philip Yancey, it will assist us in recognizing and celebrating grace – God's unearned and undeserved favor towards us.

2) 7:30pm Wednesday Eucharist – This additional worship of word and sacrament is to provide you an opportunity for reflection and nourishment in the middle of the week. Reflections will be drawn from writings of and about the Benedictine spiritual discipline.

In closing I want to borrow from the words of the Ash Wednesday Service of the Book of Common Prayer in saying: I call each and every one of us, in the name of the church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word.

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:

Judy Docca Jim Lynch

Deborah Turton Frank Dall

Tim Smith Jeff Taylor

John Kaufmann Judy O'Neil

Lonnie Pera

Organist – Marilyn Carollo

Sunday School Coordinator

Ann Fitts

Webmaster – Harry Bennett

Senior Warden's Letter

Dear Fellow Parishioners:

I first want to thank you for electing me as your Senior Warden. I hope I can live up to your expectations. You have heard me say that last year was a year of transition, but that is over. I firmly believe that this coming year will be a YEAR OF OPPORTUNITY. I am, as I think we all should be, looking forward to it.

First, and foremost, we will be getting a new Rector this year. I am excited about this. There had been some concern that we are looking for a part-time Rector. However, after listening to Bishop Chane and Canons Sulerud and Flanagan in their meetings, first with the vestry and search committee and then with the congregation, I believe that this provides us the opportunity for something new. Other parishes have hired or are looking for part-time Rectors, and it could be the way that many parishes will be very successful. We should not look at it as "only being able to hire a part-time Rector." It still will be a full-time ministry. I hope you will join me in "seizing the moment."

I believe this year will be the year that we strengthen our community, both within the church and our position in the greater Laytonsville community. The Vestry has just completed a successful mini-retreat, albeit a snowy one, and is coming up with some good ideas to make this happen. As I said at the Annual Meeting, I personally would like to have us get to know each other better. We have a diverse, fascinating parish. If you were to get to know some of your fellow parishioners, I believe you will find them quite interesting and enjoyable. Please plan to participate in the parish activities that we will be having. They are a lot of fun.

We will be continuing our wonderful outreach programs. Those who have participated in them have found them quite rewarding. I also am hoping that we can use our facilities more for functions that attract those outside the parish. If people get to know us, they will come back to see us. In this regard, be on the lookout for friends and neighbors that might like to join us and invite them to come. If you see an unfamiliar face in church, please introduce yourself and make them feel welcome.

For my part, I am going to try to improve the communication between the Vestry, the parishioners and myself. I want to make sure everyone knows "what's going on." If ever you see me and have a question, just ask me.

I hope you will join me in making this a year of opportunity.

Art Elgin, Senior Warden

Vestry Retreat

On Saturday, February 11, the vestry members met for a planning retreat. During the day they discussed the following themes and elected the following officers and committee chairs:

- "This is the Year of Opportunity"
- Find a new rector
- Build strength within the congregation
- Create better understanding of finances with full disclosure
- Welcome new people
- Define to develop our ministry
- Fellowship—a sense of church community
- Looking forward—a need for our church to obtain major spiritual success
- Ecumenical out-reach—expand our ministry for growth

Committee Chairs

Rector Search	Jeff Taylor	Local Outreach	Judy Docca
Building Fund	Bill Fitts	International Outreach-Liaison	Frank Dall
Budget & Finance	John Kaufmann	Adult Education	Anne Wasson
Every Member Canvas	Tim Smith	Sunday School	Ann Fitts
Property Maintenance	Jim Lynch	Altar Guild	Stevie Grimes
Parish Activities (fellowship)	Deborah Turton	Ushers	TBA
Legal	Art Elgin	Acolytes	Lauren Bray
Audit	Lonnie Pera	Assistant Treasurer	Harry Bennett
Music (worship)	John Stonesifer	Beacon Newsletter	Harry Bennett
Memorial Fund	Lonnie Pera		

Worship Schedule and Notes

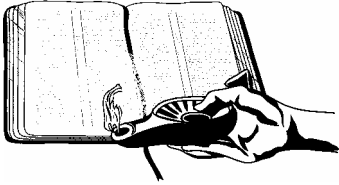
Sunday Schedule

8:00 a.m. Service of Holy Communion
9:15 a.m. Adult Bible Study — Education Building
11:00 a.m. Service of Holy Communion - first, third and fifth Sundays
Morning Prayer - second and fourth Sundays
Sunday School Activities are held during the late service

Upcoming Events

March 1 Ash Wednesday, Holy Eucharist Rite I, 7:30pm
March 8 - April 5 Wednesday Evening Services in Lent, 7:30pm
March 5 – April 2 Adult Education: A 5-week study each Sunday morning at 9:15-10:15am between the services. “What’s So Amazing About Grace?” by Philip Yancey will be our text for this audio/video program.
March 26 Congregational dinner & meeting about Rector Search, undercroft

Special Prayers *For Those in Need*



Special Prayers

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
Robert Floyd
Kate Washburn
Rob Schaaf
Erin Shaw
Ken Augustin
Martha Clark
Robert Knesil
Daisy Black
Jackie Lynch
Margaret Louie
Patrick Ard
Tisa Braud
Jim McMurtray

Lee Gamson
Mike Smith
Brian Skidds
Lucille & Bob Van Vliet
John Parker
Eloise Elliott
Jackie Davis
Eva Valenzuela
David Davis
Jocy Villa
Rachel Penkert
David Reynolds
Nina
Nancy Harding
Roy Meachum
Dana Burton
Jingle McEver

In Thanksgiving:

for the recovery of
Frank Ducharme

Military:

Stephen Mutziger
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

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.

Report of the Rector Search Committee

The Search Committee accepted the charge from the Vestry to search for a part time rector. We have completed the Parish Profile and are submitting it to the Vestry for approval. The next step will be the insertion of parish photos and the forwarding of the finished document to Bishop Chane. We will then meet soon with staff from the Diocese to get the new rector selection process underway.

Local Outreach – Judy Docca

We had a large turnout for the Thanksgiving in February dinner at the Flaming Pit restaurant in Gaithersburg. Thanksgiving in February is an activity sponsored by the Community Ministry of Montgomery County. St. Bartholomew's is a member of this organization which operates several shelters, community clothing centers and which evaluates the needs of persons coming to them to direct them to appropriate resources. Sophia House where we provide meals several times a year is one of the shelters for women. The Thanksgiving in February event usually nets over \$30,000 to support the varied programs of CMMC.

Copies of letters of thanks sent to us by the families at Gaithersburg Elementary School were placed in the rear of the church for your perusal. One was signed by the children who received your generous and thoughtful gifts for the Christmas Wish Tree.

We will be collecting toiletries and Easter candy for children at the Krahnke Center beginning in March. Please place any items you would like to give for the baskets and gift bags in the vestibule of the church on March 19th, 26th and April 2nd. We will put the bags and baskets together on the 2nd after the 11 o'clock service.

Christmas Festival – 2006 – Sonja Elgin & Morna Golletz

Four parishioners opened Santa's workshop with our first scheduled Christmas Festival workday of the year on Feb. 14. We had fun, accomplished a lot and even enjoyed the holiday with a tray of Valentine's cookies.

We have workdays scheduled on the second Tuesday of each month, so mark your calendar to join us. Our next workday is March 14 from 10 am to 2 pm in the undercroft. We have sewing projects planned, so bring your sewing machine. If you don't sew or have a machine, don't let that deter you. We need people to cut and press fabric. If you have any questions, give one of us a call.

Sunday School News

During February, we continued our study of the New Testament with a focus of the miracle of Jesus, the feeding of the 5000, and the thankful man. We want to say thank you to Lauren Bray and Maggie Schneider who provided activities for the Sunday School during the annual parish meeting.

During the parish meeting we made an appeal to get one more Sunday School teacher to work with Karen Parker one Sunday per month. We received three volunteer responses!!! Thanks very much to Jean Sommerville (our first volunteer) who will be joining Karen. Also thanks to Charles Hendricks and Jamie Kaufmann for their willingness to help as well. We will make plans to take both of them up on their kind offers of help. It is our goal to have volunteers one Sunday per month so that we get lots of fresh ideas and rested talents.

We look forward to our annual Easter Egg Hunt (Easter Sunday), Herb Garden planting, Mother's Day Tea and Father's Day picnic in the coming months. We will also have swim parties on Sunday afternoons as well. We will provide more information in future newsletters.

Exciting time at St. Bartholomew's – Bill Fitts

I have been a member of St. Bartholomew's for more than 20 years. I have served on the vestry in some capacity for at least 16 of those 20 years. I can honestly say that I have never been more excited about our prospects.

We have been talking about growth for years and somehow we remain about the same size. To grow we need to become a church that is more attractive to people in the community. It is about doing things that people want to be a part of. We do some things very well. I've seen more congregational participation in the past year than in all the years I've been here. More help with Sunday school, more help with the Christmas festival, more fellowship events, more choir members, and more help with outreach. The problem is we need to do more. I don't think we can look at our congregation as it is and ask for a lot more. We have a very dedicated core of individuals. I've heard in meetings with clergy and diocesan staff that characteristically 20% of the people do 80% of the work. I think that we have a very high percentage of our congregation involved in some way. However, as a small parish, we have a smaller base number to carry the load.

I know I said I was "excited" about the prospects of our church and instead I'm droning on about the same old stuff. I'm excited because we are coming closer to calling a new rector. I'm excited because he or she will not be full time. In the past we have paid as much as 80 cents on each \$1 contributed in order to have a full time rector. That leaves 20 cents for everything else. Twenty cents to pay the administrative assistant, the organist, to heat and clean the church, to cut the grass, office supplies, church program and so on. When the search committee looked at the list of attributes for our priest profile survey, we were told that we shouldn't expect anyone to be strong in more than four. I don't think that any one person is going to be able to manage/lead our already stressed resources, both human and financial, into greater production.

I think that we should embrace the ministry of our new part-time rector. I believe that we can better serve our parish with a team approach to provide for the needs of the parish and the community. A team with the tools necessary to help us grow, not just talk about growth. Tools such as a director of music – Marilyn is doing a wonderful job trying to be both organist and choir director, but it is difficult. Tools such as a director of Christian education – we are blessed with a dedicated Sunday school staff, but we could use some help. Tools such as a pastoral care priest – a priest dedicated to the pastoral care of the parish. According to the Canon of Deployment with our diocese, these resources are available. We can add these professional people for the cost difference between a full-time and part-time rector. As one search committee member said, "We have a need for full time ministry, and a part time rector is only a piece". With the greater flexibility, we have the potential to make St. Bartholomew's better able to meet the needs of our congregation and community.

In the mean time, let's work together with Father Stonesifer to improve where we can. Change can be good if given a chance. Remember, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few". Keep up the good work and see you in church.

Thanks.

Bill Fitts

(Junior Warden)

Stewardship – Tim Smith

Last October/November, I called most everyone in the parish with a “friendly reminder” about the Pledge Campaign. I spoke with one person right before a party. Another person was waiting to hear about a new baby. Other people had less happy items to share with me. What struck me was there was that there were a lot of situations that don’t necessarily show up on the prayer list that could be brought before the Lord in prayer.

As my Lenten observance, I will be praying through the St. Bartholomew’s phone directory. Conveniently, there are seven weeks in Lent and seven pages in the new directory. Week 1 starts Sunday, February 26. So at a page a week, a few families a day during my personal prayer time, I’ll get to everyone by Easter. I mention this so if you wanted to join me, we could all be on the same page. The Sunday bulletin will have which page we’re on that week, so you can join anytime. If you don’t have the latest phone directory, please pick one up from the back of the church or the choir vesting area. The directory has a bright yellow cover.

Not knowing everyone personally, I thought prayers for strong marriages, good relationships with children, health, Godly wisdom and guidance, and a closer relationship with the Lord would all be welcome. The people we do know can be prayed for more specifically.

As for the Stewardship application, I think this is a good use of my time this Lent.

Adult Education

We completed an eight-week Epiphany Bible study in February. Harry Bennett led the group in a study of the Letters of Paul to the Corinthians. The class met in the Education Building at 9:15 between the two services. The group thanks Harry for his scholarly research and delivery that led us to a greater understanding of Paul and his missionary trips.

Harry quoted a leading principle of Paul: “Everything is permissible for me—but not everything is beneficial.” (1 Cor. 6:12) Christians should use their freedom not for self-advantage but for the glory of God and the good of their neighbors. He also noted that First Corinthians 11 is our earliest record of the Lord’s Supper, and First Corinthians 15 is our earliest record of the resurrection in the New Testament.

The Adult Education **Lenten Study** is an audio-visual study using the book “What’s So Amazing About Grace” by Philip Yancey. Come join us in the Education Center from 9:15 – 10:15 each Sunday morning between the services for this five week class on the unearned, undeserved gift of God.

Ladies Guild

Spring is just around the corner and Springs means AZALEAS to our Guild. We will begin our sales in April when the azaleas begin to bloom. You will find us at the corner of Route 108 and Brink Road on Friday and Saturdays. Exact times will be announced later. Our supplier, a local grower, will tell us when to begin selling and we will let you know too. We continue our Lions dinner on March 23rd. Our next meeting will be on WEDNESDAY, March 15 at 12:30 in the Undercroft. Bring a sandwich and join us as we send out our flyers for the Azalea Sale. Thank you for all of your past support.

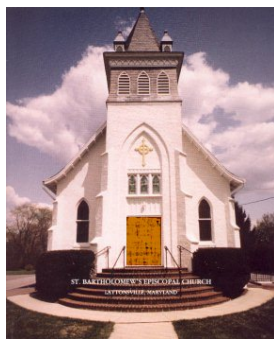
March Birthdays

Louisa Riggs	March 2	Jean Spaans	March 18
Brian Horton	March 4	Jack Stonesifer	March 19
Kathy Cousins	March 9	Amy Horton	March 20
Paige Bennett	March 12	Cory Bennett	March 21
Karen Parker	March 12	Richelle Vincent	March 23
Charley White	March 13	Amy Hager	March 24
Kendall Bray	March 15	Ann Fitts	March 27
Dylan Bennett	March 18	Sarah Penkert	March 27
Wade Henderson	March 18	Al Wasson	March 27

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

Special Events

March 1	Ash Wednesday, Holy Eucharist Rite I, 7:30pm
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March 26	Congregational dinner & meeting about Rector Search, undercroft



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