

March 2008

The Grapevine

The newsletter of St Albans Episcopal Church,
Brandywine Hundred, DE



The Rector's Thoughts

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:1-3)

Dear Partners in Ministry,

On April 21 over 20,000 folks will run the Boston Marathon. Imagine running 26 miles and 385 yards with something called Heartbreak Hill right before the finish line. I will not be there. While I have neither the knees nor the desire to even think about such a thing, I have a great deal of admiration for the discipline and determination it takes to prepare for and complete a marathon.

On March 23 we will celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the days between now and then we will watch him run a very different race towards Jerusalem and the cross that awaits him there. The readings from the Gospel of Matthew in our Sunday and Holy Week worship services will trace the growing opposition, the danger, the suffering and death. We will admire the discipline and determination it takes for him to continue on the journey to which God calls him.

And what about March 23 and every day before and after that? What of us? Will we *run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith?* The traditions of Christianity offer us the disciplines of worship, prayer, Bible reading, fasting, serving, and giving. Our determination ebbs and flows. At least mine does, and when it does, the community of faith is important. We need the support and encouragement of others. We need to feel accountable to our brothers and sisters in Christ.

I hope you are finding that support, encouragement, and accountability through the worship life and programs of Saint Albans. If not, please talk to a member of the Vestry or me. The race of life can be difficult. The race of life lived faithfully can be challenging. No one should have to run alone.

God's peace,
Jim+



The music of Holy Week and Easter The choir is working diligently to prepare a great deal of special music for the important feast days from Palm Sunday through Easter Sunday. In truth, the music is one glorious concert setting of the gospel message and is another *GOOD REASON* to set aside time to share all of the special services being offered during Holy Week. If you have to choose, I boldly suggest Palm Sunday (of course) followed by Maundy Thursday, March 20 at 7:30 PM (how could you miss the memorial of The Lord's Supper?), Good Friday, a solemn moment of reflection on March 21, at 12:10 PM, The Great Vigil at 7:30 PM on March 22, and finally arrive at the big party on Easter Sunday. If you made these services a *must do*, you would have experienced a journey that should not missed by any believer; and a greater joy than you might have otherwise.

Come and share this experience with all of us. We are singing for God and his children!
Peace and joy! **Don McFarland**



Beautiful Brass Vases in need of some TLC..... We recently discovered that our two beautiful brass 12-inch-high vases need to be professionally shined and polished. These vases will look spectacular with spring flower arrangements in them! We are looking for sponsor(s) for this effort as it will be approximately \$275 to have them refurbished. If you would like to contribute to this endeavor, please contact Nancy Young at 998-4251 or, if you wish to contribute anonymously, simply send a check with "Vases" in the memo line to St. Albans Church. **Nancy**

Ushers Needed A convenient way to meet others in the congregation and to provide a very meaningful service is to volunteer to be an usher. Ushering duties involve arriving 30 minutes before the service, greeting parishioners, handing them service bulletins, making an attendance count, taking up the collection, and guiding the parishioners to the communion rail for Eucharist. Assignments are arranged in advance every 3 months to meet your schedule. We can always use new ushers in our schedule. To volunteer see, call, or email John Norman (302-478-7317) **John**

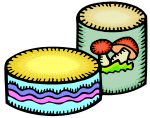


The Flower Guild invites anyone interested in learning the basics of flower arranging to a two session workshop on February 24 and March 2 after the 10:30 service. The first 30 to 45 minute session will introduce three basic designs with examples, descriptions by flower guild members and a hand out. The second session will be a hands on session in which participants make an arrangement to take home. We will focus on arrangements suitable for home use but will also show how these can be increased in proportion suitable for a church arrangement. We hope that some of the participants will be interested in joining the Flower Guild, but that is not a requirement of the workshop.

Please join us for a relaxed but instructional event. Please call Susan Barefoot (479-5871) or Diane Wegner (656-0188) if you are interested so that we will be sure to have adequate material.

The Food Closet Alice Ritzinger is one of our most dedicated volunteers at the Food Closet. She has been collecting data regarding the Food Closet and I have invited her to share the details with you.

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In last month's Grapevine, Sister Sheila was able to report that the Food Closet was well stocked as a result of holiday food drives. What a difference a month makes! The shelves are once again low, or empty, of many items.

This is a result of the increased number of people in need of food. Last year an average of 95 households a month came to the Food Closet because they did not have enough food to feed themselves or their families. This number has been increasing for the last several years; in 2005 the monthly average was 70, in 2006 it was 83. Comparing the number of people helped through the Food Closet from November 2007 through this year-to-date with the same period the year before, there has been a startling 70% increase in households served! The Food Closet is funded partially by United Way. The remainder of operating funds come from cash contributions (corporate, churches and individuals). Our continued donations of non-perishable food items and cash donations that allow more food to be purchased are critical to our hungry neighbors. During the annual congregational meeting this year, Jim used a wonderful interpretation of Matthew 25:40. "When you feed the hungry, you feed Jesus." Alice Ritzinger

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I recently learned that the current director of the Food Closet is leaving to accept a position in her native state of North Carolina. We will surely miss Kim! This will put additional emphasis on the need for volunteers not only on Tuesdays, but also on Wednesday and Friday afternoons. Any way you can help will be most appreciated. Food items in short supply this month are ***oatmeal, dry cereals, and tuna fish***. Monetary contributions may be made by checks payable to the Claymont Community Center or to St. Albans with *Food Bank* on the memo line. ***Sister Sheila Brigid***



Book Club Anyone interested in being part of the Book Club and taking part in the choice of a book, there will be a meeting in the Vestry Library after the 10:30 a.m. service on February 24th. The group meetings will resume on March 25th, the Tuesday after Easter.

Coffee Hour If you participate in the Coffee Hour on Sundays would the last person leaving the church please turn the thermostat back to 60 degrees. Thank you.

Easter Flowers Please submit your donations for Easter flowers by March 14th. If you need an offering envelope they are on the table in the Narthex.

Church Kitchen A reminder for everyone not to leave cookies, chips or other snacks that are in boxes or bags on the counters or in the cabinets. All foods, with the exception of canned goods, should be stored in the refrigerator, or in metal containers out of the reach of rodents. Thank you.

Junior High Wintercamp March 7-9 at Lake Champion, Glen Spey, New York. Please see Flyer posted on bulletin board in Hall or contact The Rev. Sarah Brockmann at 443-553-0349.

Habitat for Humanity The Rev. Sarah Brockman will be leaving for Romania on March 28th. If you'd like to participate by donating funds please send your check to St. Thomas' Parish, 276 S. College Ave., Newark, DE 19711 and note "ECM Romania" on the memo line of your check.



March Birthdays

Matthew Norman 03/04
Rob Hausel 03/04
Sarah Cuprak 03/04
Joseph Mullen 03/05
Diane Wegner 03/06
Bryan Renz 03/08
Barbara Harrell 03/09
Kevin Lane 03/10
Doris Wissler 03/12

Darren Quinlan 03/13
Rebecca Meyers 03/14
James Hicks 03/14
Tom Smith 03/16
Warren Coffin 03/17
Pat Troiani 03/17
Betty Donley 03/18
Louise Ringlé 03/19
Elaine Ringlé 03/20

JoEllen Derecskey 03/21
Jack DeLuca 03/24
Lisa Goodwin 03/25
Christopher Young 03/26
Margaret Chandler 03/27
John Norman 03/30
Carol Hanssmann 03/31
Jack Wright 03/31

March Anniversaries

Jack & Winnie Harris 3/15/52
Charles & Hazel Yeagle 3/15/44
Rob and Jane Burrus 3/28

Remember to pray for Jimmy McKeon, Thomas Kerr, Erin Brennan, Doris Wissler, Nancy Norman, Roger Goldyn, George Wood, Mary Kelly, Jane Weber, Bob Lenhart, Arlene and Ann Burns.

ST. ALBANS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Church Services: Sunday, Holy Eucharist Services: 8:30 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. – Wed. Eucharist & Healing Service: 5:45 p.m.

Office Hours: Mon.-Wed. 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.; Thur. 9:00 to 1:00 p.m.; Fridays - Closed

Contact Information: St. Albans contact information: Phone: 478-7778; Fax: 478-7762;
Interim Rector: The Rev. Jim Wolford; Phone: 443-553-9172;
Organist/Choir Director: Donald McFarland;
Website: www.stalbansde.org

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