



Genesis



Messiah's Newsletter

August/ September 2009

The Church of the Messiah

5801 Harford Road

Baltimore, MD 21214

Phone: 410-426-0709

messiah.episcopal@verizon.net

www.messiahbaltimore.org

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Cathy Barrow

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Melinda Fowl

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Vince Vanneman

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From the Interim Rector:

Here we are in Baltimore in the dead of summer and approaching the dog days of August. I've been warned about Baltimore's summers, yet it has been wonderfully cool. After three weeks of vacation that included: trips to Wilmington where we saw a replica of a 17th century ship that brought Swedes to the area in 1638, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the annual re-enactment of the battle at Gettysburg, seafood, coffee houses, the Aquarium's invasion of the Jellies and Australia exhibits, lots of reading history for me, especially regarding Baltimore neighborhoods, more reading, catching up with family and friends...I'm telling you it is the best vacation we've had in 10-12 years. Thanks for your support and your continuing prayers.

The latest set of twins at Messiah arrived in July to the Mike and Tamara Dowd household. Owen Richard Henry (the oldest by one minute) and Hamilton Louis Hastings (the youngest by one minute). All are home and doing well. Bless the Lord for God's greatest gift, new life and the hope it brings along with it.

The discernment committee carries on with the business of sorting through candidates for your new Rector, planning to make a recommendation (one or more names) to the Vestry by November 30. Meanwhile the congregation will continue faithfully with support and prayer.

"Next year" (September-May) starts next month as the Vestry takes up the on-going business of worship, ministries, prayer, fellowship, fun and carryings-on. You are a strong and vital congregation. God has continued to provide all that is needed for faithful service in your journey toward hope, the hope that is grounded in God's grace and the faith that it inspires. God will never leave you, or desert you; rather He will bless you and uphold you. God is your salvation and your peace.

In Christ with hope,

Fr. Steve

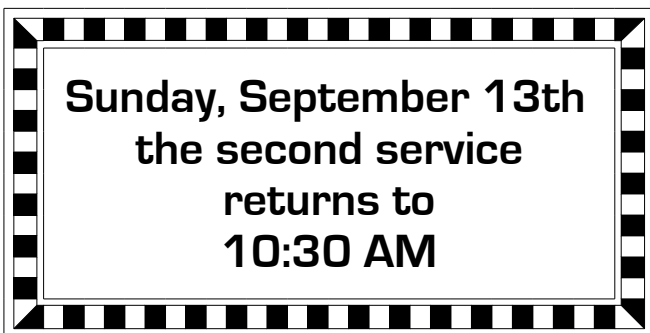
Christian Formation Brew and Bake Time...

Those involved with Christian Formation work at Messiah are busy concocting, percolating, brewing and mixing some different ideas for the season before Advent in the fall, or for the seasons after Epiphany in the spring. They include:

- a Sunday School parent co-op for 2 and 3 year olds (please see the new soft play space in the Lower Hall).
- a Youth Forum group on Sunday mornings for teen students and for those who were confirmed recently.
- intergenerational events once a month.
- hospitality opportunities.
- Bread for the World Sunday and community bread baking with our young adults.



Questions? Please contact Melinda Fowl at church, by email or phone.



What We Did - a year in the life of Sunday School at Messiah

We give thanks to God for a good Sunday School season this past year that ended with "The Lord of the Dance" play in church on Pentecost Sunday. The Holy Spirit wove its way through our school year, like the pole ribbon Katelyn waved over church on Pentecost as we processed down the aisle singing the Shaker hymn. It was a blessing to come to this point together: students in the younger class with the older class, along with members of the new confirmation class and with other adults who stepped in to act and to sing, joining in Pentecost praise.

Do you remember using or making an Advent Calendar? The older class met on Sunday mornings this past year to make not just an Advent Calendar, but a calendar that reflects all the church's seasons and major feast days of the year. Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent Easter, Pentecost, Season after Pentecost. The experience allowed us to learn more about scripture and the events of Christ's life honored in the feasts and seasons of our liturgical year. The project engaged us in the Prayer Book, in the hymnals, in scripture, in art materials and in the design process. Our hope is to develop this project into something larger so that more people might benefit from creating or using a Christian Season calendar, devotionally, during the year as they consider the movement and shape of time in the life of the church. More on that to come...

The younger class worked through "Season's of the Spirit" lessons with Kimberly and Heath Dewrell, and joined the older class during advent to prepare the five scenes of the Christmas play for Christmas Eve service. On All Saints' Day, they made luminaria, and during Lent they learned about the Millennium Development Goals and the Episcopal Church's support of "Nets for Life." The younger class raised over \$400 to give as a lenten offering for nets. On Palm Sunday, they gathered for a Holy Week Walk through the events of Passover and foot washing, the the Passion on Good Friday, and to Christ's decent into hell where they paused through Holy Saturday. When it was time, the students ascended from a dark, cramped stairwell in the church's belly, releasing great energy and shouts as they poured outdoors into the garden close, running excitedly around trees, lampposts, flower beds and each other in a wonderfully unscripted Easter joy! Later, the younger class rehearsed the Pentecost play during Eastertide, changing roles from the year before and highlighting new themes with different props and stage directions. As one grandparent said, "The Lord of the Dance" this year for him was a play "full of meaning." We believe, like him, in the fullness of God's life in Christ, a fullness that knows no bounds. For this we give thanks.

~Melinda Fowl.

***No Moveable Feast Desserts
Due in August...***

but be sure to bring them in on Sept. 13th

Members of the Church of the Messiah's Moveable Feast Baking Team bake scrumptious desserts and bring them to the church for people who are HIV positive or who have cancer. Carol Waldhauser, the program's coordinator, gathers and delivers these desserts to Moveable Feast, a nonprofit organization that serves nutritious meals to its homebound clients in Central Maryland. This happens on the second Sunday of every month, so interested bakers may leave their individually wrapped, homemade offerings (labeled "For Moveable Feast") in the Lower Hall kitchen on Sunday morning, **September 13th**

Pilgrim's Path

We are replacing the sidewalk that borders the close, starting at White Avenue to Harford Road. Inscribed bricks will be sold for \$150 each to be set in the concrete sidewalk. These red bricks will be approximately 4" X 8" and will be etched and highlighted in black. Inscriptions will be limited to 15 spaces per line with a 3 line maximum.

Inscriptions may be in memory of someone, thanksgivings or special moments. To help build The Pilgrim's Path see **Randy Steppe, Vince Vanneman** or contact the parish office.

Parish Life is Changing Hands!

In case you don't know, I work full-time for the Social Security Administration. My job has become more demanding and I sometimes work nights and weekends to meet the ridiculous schedules that are set for us, often by Congress. The last year and a half have been particularly stressful and I need to make a change in order to keep from losing my mind. Since I need the job, I am going to take a break from chairing Parish Life.

Have you ever wished you had done more to help with a pot luck, or a farewell party, or some kind of parish dinner? Have you ever wished that we would do some kind of church-wide field trip - such as to Sight and Sound or the National Cathedral, etc.? Now is the time to step up and volunteer to make parish life events happen. Just speak with Ira or any of the vestry members to offer your services. They will be delighted!

Even if you haven't felt the urge to be involved, please pray about what God would have your involvement be with our parish community. Maybe God wants you to try something new.

Peace,
Janet Taylor

**Sunday School Registration
begins on
Sunday, September 6th.**

**Sunday School door open on
Sunday, September 20th**

The article below was featured in this month's "Episcopal Life" Visit the website:

http://www.episcopal-life.org:80/81799_112749_ENG_HTML.htm
to see the whole article and pictures.

Nice publicity for us and the Norman's!

Farmers put churches on the map

By Lynette Wilson, July 20, 2009

[Episcopal News Service] Drew and Joan Norman started growing vegetables on their farm in White Hall, Maryland, in 1985 and eventually [One Straw Farm](#) became the state's largest organic vegetable farm, selling wholesale to up-market grocers including Whole Foods and Dean & DeLuca. "But it wasn't really profitable," Joan Norman said, in a telephone interview.

Then 10 years ago the Normans got involved in Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), which eventually led to collaborations with more 40 drop/pick-up location partners, including ten churches and a synagogue. One Straw Farm and [Episcopal Church of the Messiah](#) in northeast Baltimore are partnering for the fifth year. "It's like a triangle; the smallest structure that can support itself," Norman said. "I need the church as much as I need people to buy shares, and the church needs me to get people across the threshold."

It works like this: participants buy shares, providing the farmer with money up front -- money that farmers traditionally borrowed from banks -- in the spring. Then, beginning in late May, shareholders pick up eight items a week for 24 weeks, including fruits and vegetables, from drop/pick-up locations. A share in One Straw Farm costs \$540 annually; the farm has about 2,000 shareholders, Norman said. For every ten shares purchased by CSA members using a faith-based drop, Norman -- herself an Episcopalian and member of St. James in Monkton -- tithes one share, leaving it up to the church to decide how to use it -- to donate to a food pantry, a family, a senior center, a soup kitchen.

Messiah holds the pick-up site on Monday evenings under a maple tree.

"We'd lost some members and were looking at new ways to do outreach ... and in our conversations, food kept coming up," said Sarah Miranda, coordinator for Messiah's pick-up site, adding that there used to be a farmers' market serving the area but that it closed in 2000. "The CSA has deepened our relationships in the community. People slow down to get to know each other, drink ice water and chat. It's a wonderful little meeting place for a few hours every week."