



# Genesis



Messiah's Newsletter

May 2009

**The Church of the Messiah**  
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***Vestry***

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Carol Waldhauser

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*Junior Warden*  
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Carolyn Janowski  
*Parish Administrator*  
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***Genesis Editor***

Phyllis Tyler

***From the Interim Rector:***

A most blessed Eastertide (season) to you and those you know!

I'm returning from a week's vacation during which I had time to catch my breath after Holy Week with its many liturgies and opportunities to think and reflect on the mysteries of its great events:

Leadership through humble service, a king on a donkey instead of upon a great and big war horse, community centered around Jesus, God in and around the least of us, the great feast of Easter that reverses all out fasting and disciplines of the Lenten season, the agony of Christ on the cross as the pledge of God to renew his creation, the incredible mystery of God's power helplessly nailed to a cross, the finality of Our Lord's death, the impossibility of resurrection, the incredible transformation of the women and men of Jesus' band of disciples and friends...Like the ever expanding circles of water around a stone that plunges into a pond, so expands the new life of Christ from the cross through generations now and into eternity.

I remember the joy and blessing of our choir and faithful service of all ministries that support our worship (Choir, Altar Guild, acolytes, Wednesday noon and evening programs, Chalicists, and Lay Ministers). I remember the Easter communions taken to our shut-ins to include them in our celebrations.

On a personal note, by Friday of that week of vacation I felt like I'd been away for a month. I hadn't taken any work with me save my prayers and intercessions and I was not anxious that I had left anything undone, nor was I feeling anxious about returning to work in three days. We remained in Baltimore and enjoyed the parks, museums and restaurants in Baltimore (the Afghani restaurant, The Helmand, for example). As I have said, it was a great vacation.

I am pleased to be back now and looking forward to sharing with you in the many ministries of Messiah.

Confirmation classes began last Sunday and will conclude with confirmation of three or four of our young adults and two recent newcomers. (See separate article) The Caroline Center plans to use our kitchen and parish hall to train women in the justice system for employment in the food service industry. A special entrance rite on Rogation Sunday, May 17 at 10:30AM which honors our relationship with the earth and orients us toward our neighbor (see separate article). Our support of One Straw Farm, an organically-certified farm will again bring fresh produce to its participants on the "close" outside our building. (See separate article, especially regarding how to reserve a share of this season's harvest for you.)

Fr. Steve (Swift)

## ***The Harvest is Bountiful - for supporters of One Straw Farm***

One half share in this year's harvest is still available for \$250. Contact Fr. Steve for information and details. Each week from June through mid-November shareholders will pick up fresh produce on site in the close on Monday evenings from 5:30 to 7:30 PM.

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### ***Thanks to all who contributed to "Nets for Life!"***

The Sunday School Lenten Project, "Nets for Life" collected over \$400 that will go toward buying long-lasting insecticide treated nets that can be used around beds at night to prevent mosquitoes from transmitting malaria. Malaria is one of the deadliest preventable diseases on the planet. The nets will help adults and children across Africa.

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### ***Moveable Feast Desserts Due: May 10th***

Bring your individually wrapped, homemade offerings (labeled "For Moveable Feast" ) and leave them in the Lower Hall kitchen on Sunday morning, May 10th. Carol Waldhauser, the program's coordinator, gathers and delivers these desserts to Moveable Feast, a non-profit organization that serves nutritious meals to people who have AIDS or who have cancer.

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### ***Year to Date Parish Financial Statement***

Amount Received	\$41,940.50
Expenses	\$59,131.53
Net Deficit	- \$17,191.03

## ***Confirmation Candidates to be Confirmed***

This year's confirmation will be at the Cathedral Church of the Incarnation on Sunday, May 31 at 4:00 PM. Our candidates are David Steppe, Casey Steppe, Katelyn Davis, Joseph Conrad Ellis, Jeffrey Michael Brickus and Aaron Willis. At that same service we will also present Jessica Paieczynski and Catherine Hall to be received from the Roman Church.

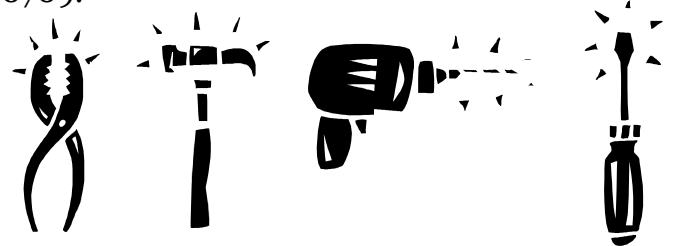
Attendance by our members is encouraged at this defining moment in the candidates' lives. Keep them all in your prayers.

Melinda Fowl and Fr. Steve will facilitate the candidates' preparation.

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### ***Building & Grounds Work Night: May 11th***

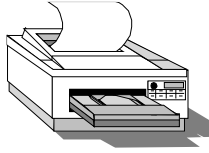
The Church of the Messiah was completed in 1922, so the maintenance on a building this age is an ongoing challenge. The Building and Grounds Commission does its best to keep on top of things by meeting once a month for a "work night." March's work May's work night will take place on Monday, May 11th at 6:00 PM. Everyone is welcomed and encouraged to come and lend a hand! All ages and skill levels are needed, and if you have tools, by all means bring them. If you don't have tools, please come anyway! For more information, contact Junior Warden Randy Steppe or call 410-426-0709.



## ***Used Printer Needed!!***

The Interim Rector needs a reliable, just the basics, printer. If you have one that you could loan or give to the church please contact the office at 410-426-0709.

A recent attempt to use the one we have resulted in 15 "Print" commands to get one complete set of a 5-page document!



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## ***Office Volunteer Needed***

Messiah is in need of one or two volunteers to perform basic clerical work (filing, copying, stuffing envelopes - no computer skills required) in the parish office on a weekly or biweekly basis. The help is needed during office hours which are 9:00 to 1:30 Monday through Thursday. This is a great way to contribute your time and talent in support of Messiah's mission and ministry. To volunteer, please contact Senior Warden, Ira Gooding at 443- 388-8268 or [igooding@jhsph.edu](mailto:igooding@jhsph.edu).

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## ***CSA Starts June 8th!***

The Church of the Messiah's 5th season as a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) pick-up site with One Straw Farm begins on **Monday, June 8th**. If you're interested in purchasing a share of produce or want more information, brochures are available in the Tower Room and there's also plenty of info on Messiah's website. **Volunteers are needed** and you don't have to be a shareholder to help.

The CSA Pickup will operate each Monday from 5:00 to 7:00 pm. We've shortened the pick-up time by a half-hour in the beginning with the hope this will enable more volunteers to fit it in their schedule. ***We especially need help from 5:00 to 5:30 pm with setting up***, which involves helping unload the produce onto the pick up tables. Greeters to sign-in the shareholders and produce helpers to keep the boxes full, breaking down the tables at 7PM and (continued in the next column->)

putting the remaining produce in the hallway are the jobs for volunteers. Sarah Miranda and Elise Meyer-Bothling will deliver the produce to the Senior Center on Tuesday mornings throughout the season and would welcome help during that time as well.

This weekly, visible outreach to our community is a fun, hospitable way to meet our neighbors and support the good stewardship of our resources. For more information or to sign up to volunteer, see Sarah Miranda or Ira Gooding.

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## ***Special Rogation Sunday Liturgy on May 17th***

Messiah will celebrate Rogation Sunday with a special liturgy on Sunday, May 17th. We will be going outside the church to "beat the bounds," sing "A Song of Creation," and recite prayers for each direction of the compass. We will have bells and branches and process around the boundaries of the church and then go back inside the church for the readings and the rest of the service.

***So what is 'Rogation Sunday?'*** The word "rogation" comes from the Latin "rogare," which means "to ask," and we ask God's blessing of the harvest, of the earth and sea. Don Palmer, in an essay found at <http://stpaulsms.org/rogation-days/> explains that Rogation Sunday was "originally an agricultural observance...broadened and made more inclusive - the crops, the catch of the sea, the fruits of our labors, in all their aspects." He continues: "As countries became more industrialized and less agrarian, we have seen a lessening of the celebration of Rogation Days - and we are the worse for it...They are privileged times to celebrate stewardship, to remind ourselves of our roles, not as masters or owners, but as stewards."

With the renewed understanding of global warming and the interdependence of all living things on our small planet, Rogation Sunday is coming back into its own as a way to acknowledge our deep connection with creation, the community and each other.

**Easter tide Greetings to all. I have important and exciting news to share.**

In the April issue of Genesis, I wrote about the important decisions that would be considered by the vestry at its April meeting. With Messiah facing another year with a large projected deficit and a struggling investment portfolio, the vestry felt that it was important to seriously look at the possibility of searching for a part-time clergyperson to serve as our next Rector. Many of you took the time to make your thoughts known to the vestry either by speaking with a vestryperson in advance or by attending the meeting, and we are grateful to those of you who chose to do that.

During the meeting, a motion was presented that Messiah call a full-time clergyperson to serve as the next Rector. After much discussion and prayer, the question was called, and the vestry and officers voted in favor of the motion, choosing to search for a full-time clergyperson to lead Messiah into the future as we pursue our mission together.

My impression based on some of the comments made while discussing the motion is that the pursuit of our ministry and mission at this time and in this place requires the leadership of a full-time clergyperson who will have the time and the clarity of focus to work with us, to listen to God, and to minister to our surrounding community. I believe that this choice was made as an act of faith in God and in ourselves.

The fact remains that Messiah still faces significant financial problems, but we have already experienced the abundance and generosity that exists within this congregation. Just last week, I received a verbal commitment from an anonymous parishioner who intends to give Messiah \$50,000 over the next two years. It is humbling to witness such a gesture, and Messiah is truly blessed to be the beneficiary of such abundant generosity. This gift will help to ease our burden over the short-term, and I hope that it will also help to give us and our next Rector some breathing room to explore how we will go about pursuing our ministry together.

Nevertheless, the vestry will still need to closely monitor our finances and look for opportunities to both limit our expenses and maximize our revenues. If you have any ideas to share or if you are feeling called to increase your level of financial giving to help support Messiah's ministry, please contact me or a vestryperson. We are eager to hear from everyone.

As always, please hold the vestry in your prayers as it goes about its work during the interim period and into the future.

Peace,  
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