



Genesis



Messiah's Newsletter

November 2008

The Church of the Messiah

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From the Interim Rector:

About the time you receive this issue of Genesis, I will likely be in route from West Virginia to Baltimore in time to start work at Messiah on November 1 and to celebrate our first Eucharist together on November 2.

Interim ministry is my passion and my life. It is a high privilege to be with a congregation during the transition from one rector to the next. I like to think of interim ministry as a priest and congregation coming along side of each other for a time, celebrating our common life in prayer, sacrament and our baptismal ministries, doing all things necessary to then begin a new era of ministry with your new Rector. Generally speaking, your Vestry, other leaders, and I will be mindful of Messiah's core mission as we pursue our ministry together. Although I don't expect to make radical changes or to introduce major new initiatives beyond what would be consistent with present ongoing ministries, I know that some change is inevitable. Your Vestry, other leaders, and I will do our best to prayerfully and faithfully manage that change in a positive way. As your interim Rector, my first priority is appropriate and timely pastoral care. In future editions of "Genesis" I will speak in more detail of the interim tasks.

You all are a fine group of people, earnest in all that you do, sharing in God's work of reconciliation in Jesus Christ. I pledge to you faithfulness and prayer. I ask the same of you. With that, we will continue God's work and most of all enjoy one another.

I sincerely look forward to meeting you and hearing your personal and congregational faith stories.

In Christ's name,
Fr. Steve (Swift)

About Fr. Steve...

Fr. Steve, son of Rev. Robert and Mary Swift, both now deceased, has been an Episcopalian all his life. He is the second of their four children. Graduating from General Seminary in 1972 he has served congregations in Colorado, Florida, Indiana, Maryland and now in Baltimore.

After being a widower, he married Amy Panek in 1985. Amy grew up in College Park, MD. Their children are, Vanessa, an account executive for American Express living in Arlington, VA, and Philip, a Sergeant in Denver County Sheriff's Department. Fr. Steve's and Amy's grandchildren, Philip's two girls, Bridgett and Megan, 14 and 12 respectively, now live with their mother in Texas.

Fr. Steve began interim work in 1987. He has been trained for interim ministry through the Interim Ministry Network (Baltimore) and through Healthy Congregations (Columbus, OH). Ministry is his passion, interim ministry his specialty.

Fr. Steve loves to read and to reflect on history and popular culture. He has lived in Israel and taken over a dozen groups there. He enjoys playing chess and fantasy pro-football. (The Ravens quarterback, Joe Flacco, needs all our prayers this year.)

Fr. Steve says, "I am so thrilled to be called to Messiah! The people I have met and the ministries its members are engaged in are vital and energizing. I look forward to being with Messiah in this interim period."

Fr. Steve's first Sunday here will be November 2.

Messiah's Annual Meeting: November 23rd - 9AM

Messiah's Annual meeting will be held between the 8:00 and 10:30 services on Sunday, November 23rd. Please plan to attend so you can cast your vote in the election to fill four vestry seats, to review the 2009 budget, and to hear about and discuss the state of the Messiah and its mission in the year ahead. It's an important opportunity to participate in the life of this parish. Many denominations do not afford their members the same level of democratic participation that we in the Episcopal Church are blessed to enjoy. It is a legacy that we hold dear, and we hope that you will set aside the time to be part of it.

Vestry Nominees....

Four members of the congregation have been nominated to stand for election to the vestry, the decision-making body that leads the congregation in pursuit of its mission and ministry. Vestry service is an important calling, and we are blessed to have four relatively new members of Messiah stepping forward to answer the call: **Cathy Barrow, Tamara Dowd, Bob German and Bob Hayward.**

Look for these in the church library...

Look for these new books in the church library:
Lord, Change My Attitude - James McDonald
Notes from a Sojourner - Margaret Guenther
Celtic Psalter - compiled by David Adams
~Karen Hoffman



Please Return Your Pledges...

An appeal for 2009 financial pledges was sent to every Messiah member in early October. If you have not already done so, please take the time to review the materials, complete your pledge form and return it to the church office.

Your pledge is a promise to financially support Messiah's mission and ministry in the year ahead, but it is also more than that. Your pledge is an outward expression of your gratitude for God's blessings in your life. All that we are and all that we have are of God, and your pledge is one important way to give back in a spirit of abundance and thanksgiving.

If you did not receive a pledge packet, please don't hesitate to ask for one. Just contact the parish office at 410-426-0709 or messiah.episcopal@verizon.net.

Stewardship During the Holidays...

The holiday season is upon us. Soon, we will be occupied with baking, shopping and catching up with loved ones. Although these are all delightful activities, it becomes very easy to forget about the needs of people who are not as fortunate as we are. The harder economy times also make it difficult to give to people or charities like we might have in the past. I encourage you to put aside the "busy-ness" of the holidays and the stress of the economy and to be generous in your giving, be it of your time, money or talent.

Luke 6:38 states: "Give and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you."

When times become difficult we need to pull together even *more* to help those people around us. God gave the church the commandment to serve others and to help those who are in need. This commandment does not change just because things in this world change or become more difficult.

Acts 20:35 states, "In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

Keep God's word close to your heart this holiday season. Remember to be a good steward and, in turn, God will bless your obedience.

Good Food & Music at the "BSA Meets CSA" Musical Community Potluck...

If you walked into the Church of the Messiah on the evening of Monday, October 6th, delightful sounds and smells would have beckoned you irresistibly down the stairs to the Lower Hall, where you would have encountered 60 or so people enjoying live music and a large buffet spread of home-cooked food. Adults gabbed and children danced and 8 musicians from the Baltimore Songwriters Association (BSA), along with our own talented Michael Dowd, performed a great array of wonderful songs. Everyone attending had a marvelous time and the warmth and energy in the room was contagious.

As well as Mike Dowd, many thanks go to the BSA musicians, who "sang real good for free:" Woody Lissauer, Beverly Horozko, Paul Schley, Paul Iwancio, Nita Paul, Spice, Ty Ford, and Rachel Schley. These local musicians were extremely gracious and generous with their enthusiasm and talent. Extra thanks are in order for Paul Schley for kindly bringing the sound equipment and lights that helped ensure the success of the evening.

And thanks go out, as well, of course, to all who brought a dish and to our own Messiah CSA Potluck Team, who helped set up, run the event, the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Pick Up site (going on at the same time!) and clean up afterward: Pam Cady, Stanley Wood, Ira Gooding, Elise Meyer-Bothling, Bryan Gardiner and Margaret Goode. A special shout-out goes to Janet Taylor, who prepared two huge entrees for the CSA Potluck, in addition to cooking food for the October Parish Potluck the day before. Be sure to check out her recipe in this issue for Chicken, Cauliflower and Spinach Gratin, which was devoured enthusiastically by musicians, CSA shareholders, community members and parishioners alike.

~Sarah Miranda, CSA Coordinator

Parish Life News

We will be welcoming our interim rector, Father Steven Swift, on **Nov. 2** which also happens to be a pot luck lunch Sunday. Make your best dish and come greet your new rector.

On the next Sunday, **November 9**, there will be two parish life commission meetings. The first one will be immediately following the 8 o'clock service and the second one will follow the 10:30 service. Please plan to attend and let's brainstorm what activities our parish will participate in for the coming year.

Keep the Date: Saturday, **January 3** will be our next tea which will be held at Messiah.

You may have already read about the great time that was had at the CSA/BSA potluck dinner. Parish life was involved in that dinner by providing two large pans of food. Here's the recipe for the dish some of us liked best. This was quadrupled for the pot luck. CSA cauliflower and spinach were used in this recipe.

Cauliflower, Spinach, & Chicken Gratin

SERVES 6 ACTIVE TIME: 25 min TOTAL TIME: 1 hour 20 min

- 1 Rotisserie Chicken (any flavor), meat diced (3-4 cups), juices reserved
 - 1 head cauliflower, broken into small florets (or 2 lbs cauliflower florets)
 - 1 pkg (10 oz) pkg Fresh Spinach, large stems removed, rinsed
 - Salt and pepper to taste
 - 1 cup Italian Seasoned Bread Crumbs, divided
 - 1 jar of alfredo sauce (I used Bertolli's garlic alfredo)
 - 1/2 cup Part-Skim Shredded Mozzarella Cheese
 - 1 Tbsp Extra-Virgin Olive Oil (plus extra oil for greasing baking dish if not spraying with Pam)
- You'll Need: 13 x 9-inch baking dish

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Add chicken and reserved juices, cauliflower, and spinach to extra-large mixing bowl; season with salt and pepper. Add 1/2 cup bread crumbs, alfredo sauce, and mozzarella; mix well. Set aside.

Make topping: Combine remaining 1/2 cup of bread crumbs and olive oil in small bowl. Set aside.

Grease baking dish (with olive oil or spray with Pam); add chicken-vegetable mixture.

Bake, uncovered, 40 min, stirring halfway through cooking time. Remove from oven; sprinkle with topping. Return to oven; bake 15 min, until topping is light golden brown.

This is a great way to get your daily veggies!