



Genesis



Messiah's Newsletter

October 2009

The Church of the Messiah

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From the Interim Rector:

As I write this article we are officially into the fall. Where did the summer go? Or as some of you have noted, Baltimore did not have the summer it usually does, hot and humid August and September. Blessed be God for his loving kindness!

We have much to be thankful for. The Discernment Committee has pared down the number of candidates to five. Phone interviews will be conducted the week of September 28. The committee is on target to have a recommendation to the Vestry by the end of November. This is a significant milestone in the call process. Keep the committee and the candidates in your prayers.

On September 12 the ceiling in the choir room collapsed. Thanks to Phyllis Tyler we had a team of experts on site the following Tuesday to assess how to clean it up and repair the ceiling. Fortunately we have experienced only minor inconveniences and quickly will get going on the repairs.

Our resident school, A&I, increased their enrollment from 13 to 40 this school year. We are so pleased for their success and our continued partnership with them. The school is amazing. If I had not been told about the increase, I would not have known about it. The staff and kids are so very mindful of each other and where they are.

This month I will be attending two conferences: continuing education during the week of October 5, and clergy conference after services on October 18.

Please keep Cathy Hall and Aaron Willis, officially new members through confirmation last June, in your prayers as they will be joined together in Holy Matrimony on Saturday, October 3.

Take note of our busy fall Sunday schedule which over a month's time include the following activities (see separate calendar for details): Adult Bible Study, Youth Forum, Sunday School, Choir practice, Hand Bell practice, Cafe conversations, pot luck dinners. Many thanks to Tamara Dowd who volunteered to organize our monthly potluck, as though she didn't have enough mouths to feed at home (The Dowd twins, Owen and Hamilton, were born in July).

Some of you have asked about my next call. I have put my name in for any interim position in the diocese of Maryland and in the surrounding dioceses. God willing, I will find a position here in the greater Baltimore area. As Messiah is in transition, so now am I.

In Christ, always with hope,
Fr. Steve

Prayer requests....

From time to time some of our members request the prayers of the congregation beyond remembering them in our intercessory prayers during worship. Indeed, we are all called to intercessory prayers daily.

Anyone desiring such prayers are asked to contact Fr. Steve who will then place your request in the bulletin insert and if the timing is right, Fr. Steve will also put the request in our monthly newsletter. He will also call attention to the request during announcements with periodic updates as appropriate.

Currently, two of our members have requested our on-going prayers. Stanley Wood faces surgery in October. Leo Caron, recovering slowly from a leg fracture in May and now at home, has also requested your prayers. In Christ's name may Stanley and Leo both be strengthened and healed. In Christ's name. Amen.

POT LUCK LUNCH SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18TH

Join us for a Pot Luck lunch following the 10:30 service. Bring your favorite dish or just bring yourself - there's always plenty for every one!



Liturgical Practices During the Flu Season

In an effort to encourage participation in our liturgical practices during the flu season, our Bishops have offered a few guidelines regarding contact during worship and especially around the Holy Eucharist.

1. **Go to Church!** As long as you are feeling well, continue to worship as usual. Take the normal precautions including staying home if you or a family member is ill. [Editor's note: if you must sneeze or cough cover your mouth by sneezing or coughing into your elbow. This prevents contaminating your hands.]
2. **The Passing of the Peace:** A handshake is not mandated by the Church, and is discouraged during this time. Continue to verbally share the Peace of our Lord. Making eye contact, slightly bowing your head or a friendly wave are good substitutes for the traditional handshake or hug.
3. **The Common Cup:** Medical experts agree that the danger of transmitting communicable diseases by sharing the chalice is negligible. History has borne this out and we still highly encourage this ancient liturgical practice. Intinction (dipping the bread into the cup), however, poses a greater potential threat, especially when the bread is handled with unwashed hands. Therefore, we discourage this practice during this period. No fingers in the cup!
4. **Chalice bearers:** Be sure to wipe the rim of the cup and turn it after every person is served.
5. **Hand hygiene:** All are encouraged to wash their hands and use an alcohol hand gel.

As long as we all use common sense we will be fine. If a member of our parish does fall ill, please remember them in your prayers.

Cafe Conversation - October 11th During Coffee Hour

Tired of small talk? Do you want to connect with other Messiah members on a more meaningful level? Cafe Conversations are a great way to break the ice and start talking about the things that are on our minds and hearts. Our October Cafe Conversation will be coordinated with our annual pledge campaign and will offer opportunity to talk about our vision of Messiah's future. What ministries might we be called to undertake? Who might be sitting next to us in the pews? How will we be called to serve? Will we be prepared?

Please plan to attend. This is your chance to get past the small talk and participate in an important and engaging conversation.

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.

Bishop Sutton to Lead Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

You have the opportunity to accompany Bishop Sutton on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The trip is scheduled for February 9-20, 2010, and will include visits to ancient sites on both sides of the Jordan River. On Ash Wednesday, pilgrims will prepare themselves for a Holy Lent by going to the wilderness where Jesus was tempted. Pilgrims will also pray the Stations of the Cross in Jerusalem, walking the ancient way of Christ to his death and resurrection. More urgently, pilgrims will learn more about the roots of conflict in the Holy Land and establish deeper ties with our brothers and sisters in the Anglican Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East, seeking ways for our Diocese to partner with them in their important ministry of reconciliation in that region. A detailed itinerary is available on the Diocese of Maryland web site (www.ang-md.org). For reservations and all inquiries contact Izzy Winn, 410-849-2605, ewinn421@verizon.net.

Connect with Messiah on the Web

Don't forget that valuable information about Messiah is available on our parish web site: www.messiahbaltimore.org. Sarah Miranda is our heroic volunteer webmaster, so please let her know if you would like to see information about a particular activity included in the site.

You can also connect with fellow Messiah parishioners on Facebook by joining the Episcopal Church of the Messiah Facebook Group.

From the Senior Warden....

In the April and May issues of *Genesis* I wrote about the vestry's decision to call a full-time clergy person to serve as Messiah's next rector. The vestry made this decision because the pursuit of our ministry and mission at this time and in this place requires the leadership of a rector who will have the time and 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.

This month, you will be receiving a letter and a pledge card in the mail. In that letter, you will be asked to envision the Messiah of the future, to think about our hopes and dreams for the years ahead. I'm encouraging everyone to be mindful of these things while making their pledge decision for 2010 because this will be a pivotal year for Messiah's mission and ministry.

You will also have an opportunity to discuss your thoughts about the future of Messiah with your fellow parishioners at our monthly Cafe Conversation on October 11th after the 10:30 service.

When you receive your pledge letter, please give it your time and attention. The vestry has taken a leap of faith by calling a full-time rector, and I hope that you will join them by acting in faith to help Messiah be prepared to answer YES! to God's call in the future.

~ Ira Gooding

Maryland State Boychoir Concert on Sunday, October 11th at 2:30 pm

The Maryland State Boychoir (MSB) presents its popular autumn concert and spaghetti dinner, specially honoring the elders, grandparents and senior citizens in attendance. Concert-goers of all ages are welcome! The concert will be held at The Maryland State Boychoir Center for the Arts, 3400 Norman Ave., Baltimore, MD 21213.

Enjoy the signature sound of the MSB's 140 voices in three tiered choirs performing classic to gospel and everything in between! After the concert enjoy "fine dining" family style in the MSB's dining hall. Salad, bread and butter, spaghetti and meatballs, dessert and beverage and you will be served by choristers.

The cost is - \$10 for the concert and \$10 for the dinner or pre-order and get both for \$15. For more information and to order tickets, please call the MSB at 410-554-8644.

Messiah has our very own chorister in the MSB - J. Conrad Ellis, age 15, recently returned from a one-week tour of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and New England with the MSB's concert choir in August 2009.