



Genesis



Messiah's Newsletter

September 2008

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Messiah and the Call to Discernment

Here we go again. We've said goodbye so often. Do you think that we will ever learn how? The word goodbye - originally "God-be-with-ye" or "Go-with-God" - was a recognition that God was a significant part of the going. When you dreaded or feared the journey, there was strength in remembering that the One who gave and cherished life would be there to protect and console. Goodbye was a blessing of love, proclaiming the belief that if God went with you, you would never be alone, that comfort, strength, and all the other blessings of a loving presence would accompany you.

To the traveler it meant: "We cannot keep you from this journey. We hurt deeply...you have made your home in our hearts. Yet, we know your leaving is essential for our growth. So go, go with God. May you always rest in the assurance that 'God will lead you, will be with you, will not fail you or desert you. Have no fear. Do not be disheartened by anything' (Dt. 31:8)." These words from Joyce Rupp in *Praying Our Goodbyes* can provide us with great solace during this time of clergy transition.

It has been more than a month since Lee Ann+ last preached and conducted services at Messiah. In some ways, it seems like yesterday...in other ways much longer. It is probably fair to say that not one of us would raise a hand to say that we particularly loved or were ready for this most recent goodbye. There are as many reasons for this as there are Messiah members. We each have our own special story about the meaning of goodbyes. God knows what they are, even when we might be less than clean about them ourselves.

Goodbyes can take us to the depth of our soul. Yet it is from within this very depth of our humanness that we perhaps need to reach out and find our connectedness to God through the members of Messiah community. Our spiritual health and congregational well being are at stake. We are all called into a self-study and discernment process. We are in that transformational spot that Lee Ann+ has referred to as *in between "the already" and "the not yet."* We are in the dark. We doubt more. We pray more. We try to be more faithful. Why?

We are fearful, cautious, and not sure if we should invest in God and each other more than ever at a time when we probably need each other more than ever. We are very, very close to calling our Interim. Bryan Gardiner, Ira Gooding, and I have been prayerfully working toward a timely resolution of this process. We ask that you be patient, peaceful, and prayerful during this time. That journey of self to God becomes significantly more essential when placed within the context of Christian community. Simply: be prayerful and help each other.

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Ira is finalizing the Self-Study and Discernment Committees, which will be prayerfully guided through our journey toward calling Messiah's next Rector by the guidelines of our Diocese. For those not called to serve on either committee, there is perhaps a quieter, less obvious need. This need is to be prayerful and supportive of the members called to serve on these committees while continuing our present ministries and continuing to explore our own spiritual gifts. As we move into the self-study process and discernment for our next Rector, rest assured that we will need the spiritual and talented gifts of each and every one of us. The whole of Messiah is greater than the sum of all our gifts. Let us move with **GRACE** through the next year, or thereabouts. "Traveler, there is no road. The way is made by walking." (Machado).

Be Peace,
Margaret Goode

"BSA Meets CSA" at a Musical Potluck Monday, Oct. 6th

As I write this we're not quite half-way through our fourth Community Supported Agriculture season with One Straw Farm of White Hall, MD (13 weeks to go!), and we've been having a very successful "vegetable party" under the maple tree every Monday evening from 5:00 to 7:00 pm. We have a group of steady volunteers but can always use some help, especially during set up at 4:30 pm when the crates of produce are being unloaded from the delivery truck, and then again at the 7:00 pm closing, when we put everything away.

A new development this year is the switch away from plastic bags - see Joan Norman's letter in this issue about One Straw Farm's commitment to eliminating them, with the help of some great kids.

Another development is that thanks to Beverly Horozko, a charter NE Baltimore One Straw Farm CSA shareholder, our next CSA potluck will have music! Beverly is a member of the Baltimore Songwriters' Association and they have been invited to come "sing for their supper" through her gracious offices. Beverly reports that our invitation has been met with a good response so please mark your calendar for Monday, October 6th, plan to bring a dish to our musical potluck from 5:00 to 7:00 pm, and spread the word! An RSVP would be appreciated so that we can get a rough head count in order to set up the hall and fill any gaps in the menu, so please see me. Hope to see you there!

~Sarah Miranda

Baltimore Interfaith Hospitality Network (BIHN)

The Baltimore Interfaith Hospitality Network is alive and well, still remaining within the sabbatical status. Since stopping service to homeless families in March 2008, a new Board of Directors has been established, a strategic plan has been developed, fundraising is underway, and there is active recruitment now for a new Executive Director. (The job description is posted on our Messiah bulletin board. If you know someone qualified who might be interested in a full time position, please make a copy of the job notice and leave one copy on the board for others to see). Thanks.

In July, Melinda Fowl, Karen Edsell and Margaret Goode met to explore Messiah's continued role with Hospitality and BIHN through continuation as a Buddy Congregation to St. Michael's in Perry Hall. Follow-up conversation with Mark Ermer from St. Michael's has indicated that they still, as a congregation, plan to be a host parish and they, of course, want us to continue to be their buddy parish.

It is unlikely that we will be called to actually host until sometime in spring 2009. This does not mean that we can go to sleep. This is an active sabbatical...being in prayer, reading/studying about homelessness and spirituality, and digging deeper into ourselves (personally and as a congregation) as to just what is meant by the word and work of *HOSPITALITY*. Messiah's role will continue to be that of providing *HOSPITALITY*. At the present time, it was decided at the Outreach Commission Potluck, that we will not be active in terms of meetings and fundraising, due to the size of our parish and our present self-study and discernment process to call a new rector. This does not preclude anyone of us doing something we are called to do personally, but just not as a representative of Messiah. Further information may be gotten through Karen Edsell or Margaret Goode. New brochures are in the Tower Room.

Parish Life Forms New Group

The outing to the Tea by Two teahouse in Bel Air, MD was so enjoyable that we are forming a Tea Fellowship group at Messiah. We will be meeting in member's homes with the first tea to be held at Stanley Woods' home at 4506 Ridge Road, 21236 on Sunday, September 21st at 3:00pm.

We will have sweet and savory treats and a special tea that Stanley has chosen for the occasion. You may join this group by contacting Stanley Wood at 410-882-3515 or Janet Taylor at 410-426-1854. We will each bring our own teacup but if you need one, just let Stanley or Janet know and one will be provided for you.

If you would like to host a tea but do not have room, Stanley is graciously offering his home for our use.

For this first tea, quiche is on the menu. Here's the recipe for Janet's quiche:

One 9 inch deep-dish pie crust

4 eggs

Half and Half

1 to 1 1/2 cups of filling, such as broccoli, spinach, mushrooms, cooked bacon, cooked sausage or a combination of these

Herbs for veggie combos - thyme, basil, oregano (1/2 to 1 tsp. each

1 to 1 1/2 cups of cheese (I use cheddar with broccoli and a 4 cheese Italian mix with most others)

Garlic powder (1/4 tsp.)

Onion powder (1 tsp.)

Mustard (a couple squirts)

Defrost pie crust if frozen

Preheat oven to 350 degrees

Fill the pie crust with the ingredients of your choice and toss the ingredients, including the cheese to mix well.

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In a blender combine the 4 eggs, and enough half and half to bring the total volume up to 2 cups, with the garlic powder, onion powder and mustard. Blend well and pour into the piecrust filling until the liquid touches the bottom of the pie crust edging. Discard the rest of the liquid (you probably will have a bit left depending on how much filling you have in your pie crust). Bake at 350 for 45 minutes - if center isn't firm, bake a little longer.



Messiah Church Library

Messiah's church library has expanded into a larger lovely space in the undercroft! And not just the space is larger...Lee Ann has given the library copies of all the Book Club titles discussed over the months. Come and see!

Books are easy to check out - just sign your name and the day's date on the cards in the books you choose and take them home to enjoy them. (Directions are posted on the bookcase.) Many, many thanks to everyone who helped make the wonderful new space!

~Karen Hoffman

Stewardship...

I Corinthians 4:1-2 says:

"So then, men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the secret things of God. Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful."

Being a good steward or stewardship can take on many different definitions. The first one that pops into our minds is the stewardship of money. Although it may seem different in today's society, money isn't everything. We need to be good stewards of God's love and be faithful to the commands God has for us. A challenge for this week is to reach out to your neighbors. Share God's love with them this week. You may do this by bringing in trash cans, sharing a baked good, or simply smiling or saying "Hello."

Hello CSA Members,

Our goal this year was to eliminate the use of plastic bags. I looked out my window one day and saw a plastic bag in a tree near our house. It is 30 feet up in the tree flapping in the breeze like a flag. It made me angry that I was so careless. It is so ugly. So that was the impetus to order bags.

Cheryl Wade, Mill Valley Garden Center, and I began a search for bags. We tried to find an American company who made the kind of bags that I wanted. There are none. All are made in China. One day while in The Common Market in Frederick, I found a bag that seemed interesting. When I got home I looked up the company who made the bags on the Internet, 1BAGATATIME. This company has "factory monitoring by the non-profit organization Verite." The bags are fair traded. 1BAGATATIME also contributes 1% of total sales to an environmental non-profit group through our membership in 1% for the Planet. This is a company I could spend my money with. We ordered bags to be delivered in June.

You might ask, "Why now in August are we getting the bags?" Remember I said it was a fair traded company? Well when there was an earthquake in China they let all the employees go home to check on their families. Guess whose bags got delayed? They are here now and the story continues.

**On April 21, 2008 I received an email from Judy Sandler, the third grade teacher at Friends School:
Hi!**

My name is Judy Sandler and I teach 3rd grade at Friends School of Baltimore. This year on Earth Day, the third grade decided to sell their gently read and used books to each other -- a quarter for paperbacks and fifty cents for hardbacks. The sale was a great success -- the children taught each other about some good books and they tried to save some trees in the meantime. The class would like to donate the money they collected to One Straw Farm in support of your efforts to continue to produce organic food and use the food locally. I would like to send you a check in the amount of \$90.00.

We decided to use this money towards the One Straw CSA Reusable bags. The recycled book sale project would 'support' local organic food and reduce the use of plastic bags, thus recycling just like them. A 'pay it forward' idea.

Recently legislation was introduced to the City Council by James Kraft to ban plastic bags at grocery stores:

City plastic-bag ban fails

Council votes down anti-litter measure

By John Fritze | Sun reporter

July 22, 2008

Legislation that would have made Baltimore the second city in the nation to ban plastic bags at grocery stores and retail chains was killed by the full City Council last night.

Intended to keep plastic bags from clogging waterways, the proposal would have required large stores - those with \$500,000 or more in gross revenue - to bag groceries in paper or reusable bags only. Days after it was approved by a committee, the full council voted against the proposal, 11-3.

"I know there has been a lot of pressure on this bill," City Councilman James B. Kraft, the lead sponsor, said of opponents who have lobbied against the measure. "I think they're wrong about this."

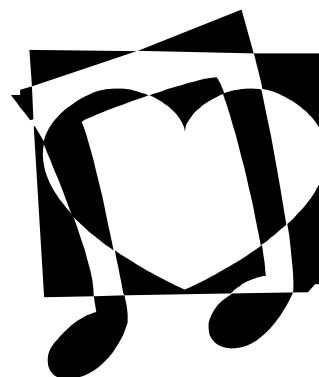
Well I supposed we need to show them how it is possible. If third graders could make use of old books, we can certainly continue the effort. My hope is that when they see these bags walking the streets of Baltimore they begin to realize that the efforts of even a third grader make a difference.

Imagine what will Baltimore could be when children like these become the politicians that govern us. I can hardly wait.

Some of these children handed out bags at the 32nd Street Farmer's Market Sat August 9, 2008 to the CSA members there. Every CSA share will receive one bag. If you would like to order additional bags they can be delivered with your shares. They will be sold at The Mill Valley Garden Center, and all our farmers markets. Any profit from these bags will be donated. At all of our farmers markets we will have donation containers. For every person who uses no plastic bags, we will make a \$.10 donation. There will be several choices to drop your donation in. So no one is punished for using a bag, but encouraged to not use them.

Thank you the Friend's Third Grade Class of 2008, now fourth graders, for setting such a great example for the rest of us.

- Joan Norman



Music Opportunities at Messiah:

Choir Rehearsals Begin: August 28th

The Choir usually rehearses Thursday evenings from 7:30 to 9:00 pm and Sunday mornings at 10:00 am throughout the program year, and new members are always welcome to come and help make a joyful noise! You don't even need to read music; only that you must be able to commit to attending rehearsals regularly. Choir rehearsals for the program year begin in the back of the stage in the Upper Hall (the Choir Room) on Thursday August 28th, so now is a good time to come and join Messiah's choir family.

Handbell Choir Rehearsals Begin: September 7th

Messiah's music program is growing! The newly-formed Handbell Choir will start rehearsals on Sunday, September 7th in the upstairs Choir Room from 12:30 pm until 1:30 pm. Love music but shy about singing? There's still plenty of room for members of Messiah's newest choir, and anybody who is interested is very welcome to join!

For more information about either choir, please contact Jim Gautsch, Messiah's Music Director.