

Ash Wednesday Services February 17th

There are three services of Holy Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes, February 17th, 2010.

7 a.m. in the chapel

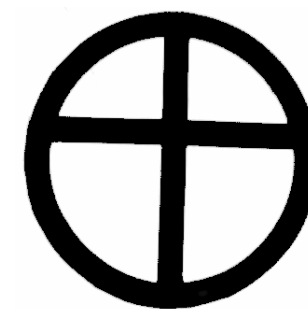
12 noon joint service at St. James

7 p.m. service in the main church

Join us as we begin the season of Lent with the liturgy for Ash Wednesday.

Lenten Program 2010

This year's Lenten Program will be a book study on six Tuesday nights. The book is Barbara Brown Taylor's *An Altar in the World: A Geography of Faith*, and it has been described as "Twelve chapters that mine the potentially sacred meaning of simple daily activities and conditions like walking, paying attention, saying no to work one Sabbath day each week. Taylor invites her readers to 'do church' everywhere - from interacting with the cashier at the grocery store to walking a moonlit path." You are invited to come read and explore this book and the spiritual practice it invites us to during six Tuesdays, beginning February 16, 23, March 2, 9, 16, and 23. Sign up in the narthex on Sunday or let Connie+ know of your interest in participating.



The Wider Circle

St. George's Episcopal Church
Glenn Dale Parish, Maryland

"Shape a circle ever wider and a people ever free."

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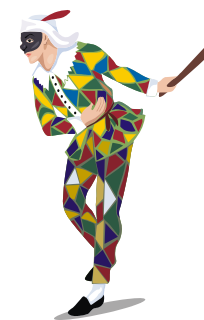
February 2010

Volume 9, Number 2

Annual Meeting February 7

The St. George's Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 7, at 11:15 following the 10 a.m. service. At the meeting we will elect new vestry members, say thank you to outgoing vestry members, elect a delegate to our Diocesan Convention, and hear the report on the state of St. George's. This is our yearly business meeting and everyone is invited and encouraged to attend and participate.

Mardi Gras is Saturday February 13th!



February 13th is almost here and St. George's needs you to participate in our annual Mardi Gras Party. There are lots of things you can do to help with the party. The most important thing to do is to attend the party and silent auction from 6 pm - 10 pm on Saturday night 2/13/10. The second most important thing, and something you can do in conjunction with attending the event, is to donate items for the auction. Please consider making something (such as a craft item), donating a service or making something "to order" (such as lessons, baked goods, a portrait sitting or playing music for a party) or creating a gift basket of food and/or gift items. If you work someplace or volunteer with an organization that would be willing to donate an item for the auction, please ask them on behalf of St. George's and thank them for their generosity! Popular items in years past have been tickets to sporting events and arts performances, films or the theatre. Gift certificates to restaurants are always a top draw as are "weekend getaways" at nearby hotels or resort properties. Think of asking your hairstylist if they would be willing to donate a coupon for a haircut or other salon service. Massages, facials, fingernail treatments or even a daylong spa visit are things that people are always interested in. The only way to find out if they will donate is to ask them...don't be shy! All items you or others donate are tax deductible to the value of the item. Any auction items can be dropped off with me at the church on Friday evening 2/12 from 7 pm - 9 pm or Saturday before the event starting from 12 noon on.

Besides the exciting things to bid on at the silent auction, there will be a wonderful dinner provided by the talented chefs at Main Street Catering. Their food is always delicious and will have that New Orleans/Cajun focus to really make it seem like we are transported to Louisiana for the evening. Think of inviting your friends and treating them to the friendliness that is such a wonderful part of St. George's. Advance tickets are \$25.00; ticket prices are \$30.00 at the door. Children 10 years and under are free. I look forward to seeing you all at this year's biggest fundraiser and a really wonderful party! By Roy Peterson, Sr. Warden

Address correction requested

The Wider Circle
St. George's Episcopal Church
P.O. Box 188
Glenn Dale, MD 20769

Letter From the Rector

Dear Friends,

February is going to be a very full month! As we move through the second half of the season of Epiphany and move into Lent, there are many ways for you to participate in the life of St. George's. These include the 'business' of the church, with the Annual Meeting on February 7; the fun/fundraising life of the church with Mardi Gras on February 13, the outreach life of the church with collections for Gaywood and goats; and the spiritual life of the church with the February 2 special service of light, Ash Wednesday services February 17, and the Lenten program starting Tuesday, February 16. And this isn't all that's going on, just the highlights! You can read more about each of these events and activities inside the newsletter.

Of course, these events, like most things, aren't so neatly categorized. The outreach is also spiritual. The Mardi Gras is also fellowship. The Annual Meeting is a chance to give thanks to those in leadership and to God for the ways our parish and our life together have been blessed, as well as covering the necessary business. Perhaps what matters most is that there are a number of opportunities to support St. George's, have some fun, and enhance your spiritual lives.

I encourage you to spend some time reading the statements from the seven vestry nominees as we prepare to vote in the new vestry at the Annual Meeting. I also encourage you to read about what is happening and choose one or two or ways to be involved. As we elect a new vestry and begin to shape our priorities and direction of St. George's for the upcoming year and beyond, I invite your prayers and your participation.

Blessings,
Connie+

Sunday School Schedule for February and March

The Sunday School classes meet every other week at 9:00 am in the classrooms downstairs. These are the upcoming dates for Sunday School:

- February 14
- February 28
- March 14
- March 28

The Wider Circle

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Glenn Dale Parish Vestry

- Roy Peterson, Senior Warden
- Carol Thomas, Junior Warden
- Marion DePriest, Treasurer
- Matthew Gallagher
- Leslie Horne
- Jessica Johnson
- Joan Marionni
- Margaret McHale
- Rosa Soliz
- Donna Haselton, Clerk
- Alix Volel-Stech, Convention Delegate
- Susan Geiger, Alternate Convention Delegate

Mission Statement

The mission of St. George's is to build a Christian community of love and support that actively seeks and includes all people.

We commit ourselves to spiritual growth through worship and education that empowers us to follow Christ's example in the world.

The Equality Maryland Lobby Day

On Monday, February 8, Equality Maryland will be holding their annual Lobby Day in Annapolis, Maryland. Starting with a rally for marriage equality and for equal rights for all GLBT folks in the state of Maryland, it also offers the opportunity to give direct feedback to our state delegates and senators about the issues at hand.

This year presents a special urgency for discussing equal rights with our politicians. DC has recently approved resolutions to recognize same-sex marriages performed in other states and to allow civil same-sex marriages. Attorney General Douglas Gansler will issue an opinion on whether or not Maryland can recognize same-sex marriages that were performed in other states. Our state legislature will have two bills introduced this year that will impact our rights in a positive way. The first bill is the Religious Freedom and Civil Marriage Protection Act, which would allow for civil marriages to be performed in Maryland and that the clergy would have the choice on whether or not to perform a same-sex marriage without penalty. The other bill, the Gender Identity Anti-Discrimination Act, would add gender identity to the state's non-discrimination and civil rights policies. Finally, there is a bill being introduced to limit civil rights for same-sex couples. This is HB 90, a bill proposed by Delegate Emmett Burns from Baltimore, which aims to prohibit recognition of same-sex marriages performed in other states or countries.

Besides talking with our state representatives about these bills, we should also take the time to thank those who have given us their support for civil rights in the past. I know from personal experience that I do have some allies that represent my district, and they deserve to be thanked. However, they still need to hear from us. Join with others from the parish to lobby the delegates and senators who represent us. We need to send a message from our faith tradition and its commitment to justice and respect for the dignity of every human person. If you sign up at the Equality Maryland web site (www.equalitymaryland.org), you will be put in touch with someone who will set up a time with you and other folks in your voting district to meet with your legislators. The Lobby Day program begins at 5:00 pm in the Lawyer's Mall outside the State house with a rally. The main speaker this year will be DC Councilman David Catania, who championed the marriage bill in the District. After the rally is when you will usually go and visit with your legislators

We will do carpooling from St. George's starting at 3:30 PM and a sign-up sheet is posted in the narthex. Directions to lobby day may be found at the Equality Maryland website. Typically you can park by the Navy Stadium and there will be a shuttle bus to the rally.

We will also do a special Adult Forum at St. George's prior to the Lobby Day. So, even if you cannot make it to Annapolis on Monday, February 8, be sure to come to the forum at 9:00 AM on Sunday, February 8 to learn more about the issues and how your voice can be heard.

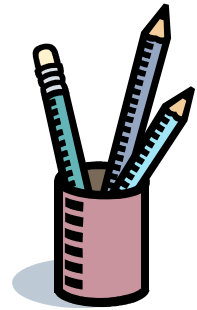
If you have any further questions about Lobby day, you can speak with Michael Mangiapane or Terry Doyle. ity Maryland Lobby Day

Special Service of Light February 2 at 7 pm

On February 2 we will celebrate the next in our series of special seasonal liturgies. The beginning of February is celebrated as both a Celtic marking of early Spring, as well as the Christian celebration of St. Brigid, keeper of the sacred flame. Christians also have blessed candles for the coming year during this time. You are invited to come to a service which celebrates the light, drawing on Celtic and Christian traditions. The service is at 7 pm in the main church.

Outreach Opportunities at St. George's in February into March

There are several ways for you to participate in outreach projects at St. George's over the next six weeks.



- **Gaywood Elementary School** — From January 31-February 14, we will be collecting items to donate to Gaywood Elementary School. Gaywood is in Lanham, less than three miles from St. George's, and serves a population that is particularly in need. In particular, the school could use these items: Liquid soap (large refill containers and individual dispensers), tissues, hand sanitizer, composition books, 3 ring binders, rulers, , glue, writing paper, crayons, pencils, and pens.



- **Lenten Goat Project:** Josephine Ross's son Jared is serving in the US military and is currently deployed in Mali. In recent conversations, Josephine and Jared found themselves discussing the Heifer Project's practice of donating animals to families in poor countries, not for slaughter, but as an ongoing source of food. The animal that can make a difference for the people where Jared is serving is goats. Starting on February 17, Ash Wednesday, there will be available cards that you are invited to fill with quarters during the season of Lent. Each person who fills a card will end up with \$20 by Easter – or half of the price of a goat. There will also be boxes for children to fill with coins during Lent. All the money that is collected will be made available to Jared Ross to buy goats for local families he interacts with in Mali.



- **Safe Haven March 1 and 2.** Each winter Good Samaritan Lutheran Church participates in the Safe Haven program, in which churches volunteer to host up to fifteen homeless men a week at a time. The host church makes and serves dinner and breakfast for the men, and gives them a warm place to sleep overnight. For the second year in a row, St. George's has volunteered to take two nights – this year Monday March 1 and Tuesday March 2. St. George's volunteers are needed to help make dinner both nights and breakfast both mornings, as well as spend the night Monday and Tuesday. If you are interested and able to help, please contact Joann Prosser at jprosser@umd.edu

Vestry Refelction

By Margaret McHale

Because the cycle of our year at Saint George's – at least as far as vestry terms run – begins in early February and runs through the end of January, the last meeting of this sitting vestry was held on January 11. Given the ongoing merger conversations throughout this past year, it was an unusual time both for the parish and the vestry. Looking back, we all could readily identify the “bumps in the road,” the communication glitches, the things we wish we knew then the way we know them now.... In some ways, it was a year of “dry dock” for our ship of faith, a time to draw back from a strong outward thrust and stay ashore to repair leaks and make our vessel more seaworthy for future excursions. In reflecting on the words of Catherine McAuley, *“Another year ended, that seemed but a few days begun. ... If we have been trying to love and serve God faithfully, then this was a blessed year for us,”* we likewise realized it had been a year of important inner growth, new insight and perspective, and fresh creativity in looking ahead. Yes, it was a difficult year for all of us, but, in our shared desire to love and serve God faithfully, for this vestry at this time in Saint George's history, it has likewise been a year of blessing.

Also on January 11, the vestry approved the operating budget for the current fiscal year (which is the same as the calendar year). We ended fiscal year '09 with a budget deficit of approximately \$3,000, but the good news is that that deficit is actually less than had been originally projected (about \$7,000). In reviewing the '09 figures and looking ahead to '10, the vestry faced a number of difficult choices; some items are absolutely necessary to maintaining our physical space, and some items are absolutely necessary to maintaining our faith community; the challenge, of course, is in the balance, especially in light of these uncertain economic times. One issue on which we worked long and hard was addressing the gap between the rector's current income and that provided for in the diocesan scale; the vestry has chosen to prioritize phased-in increases over the next three to four years in order to bridge that gap. The fiscal year '10 budget anticipates a deficit of about \$10,000, and the vestry is poised and ready for the additional marketing and fundraising focus that will be necessary to meet this challenge. To the parish as a whole we say: Come one, come all – we need your ideas and energy!

Finally, even though both the calendar year and our church fiscal year are already well underway, it's almost time for another New Year's party! And that party is scheduled for **Sunday, February 7**, when we will gather after the 10:00 service for our annual parish meeting. And speaking of *everyone's* ideas and energy, how might you be called to the ministry of parish service? Might that call include a term as a member of the vestry? (If so, please contact Matthew Gallagher who is coordinating the upcoming vestry election process.) As of the date of this writing, those who have assented to this call include: Leslie Horne, Joann Prosser and Josephine Ross – whom are available for a one-year term; and Lori Kears, Michael Mangiapane, John Rebstock, and Betty White – all of whom are available for a two-year term. You can learn more about each one of these individuals by checking out the candidate reflections in this edition of *The Wider Circle*. (Rounding out the upcoming vestry will be Joan Marionni and Roy Peterson, both of whom will continue as members by serving the second year of a two-year term.) See you at this important meeting on February 7!

Vestry nominee Biography

Name: Leslie Horne

Occupation: Analyst and editor for DoD

When did you come to St. George's? 1999 **What attracted you to St. George's?** The diversity of the congregation; the presence of young families; the feeling of community, fellowship and mutual support, where orientation is not an issue.

What activities have you taken part in or office have you held here? Vestry member, 2008-2010, during the merger exploration process; evangelism/marketing workshops; vestry email list administrator; coordinator for Sunday hospitality volunteers; counter, reader, greeter, and contributor to our special events.

What areas of spiritual interest would you like to see added to our congregational life? Revival of pastoral care and community outreach; youth programs; supplementary worship opportunities (such as centering prayer) if there is sufficient interest.

What qualities, training and experience would you bring to the vestry? Strong writing and editing skills.

What is your dream for St. George's for the upcoming year? The coming 5 years? That we harness the momentum created by the merger exploration process over the past year and carry it forward to the next generation of new and future parishioners; that St. George's be known throughout the area as "the welcoming church."

Vestry nominee Biography

Name: Joann Prosser

Occupation: Research/Counselor

When did you come to St. George's?: 12 yrs ago

What attracted you to St. George's? Having been raised Roman Catholic I was looking for a church that had both traditional and progressive components, and the Episcopal Church was a good fit. I wanted a church that reflected my values – equitable, open and welcoming, and actively seeking social justice. While we "shopped around," none could compare to St. George's. And so 12 years ago while attending a service at nearby church, Dave (my children's father) said to me, "If we leave now we can make it to St. George's." Thus while everyone went up the aisle for communion, we quietly left and headed to St. George's – and I've been here ever since.

What activities have you taken part in or office have you held here? Over the years I have assisted in a number of ways both formal and informal – with Confirmation class, hospitality, reading, working with the kids, painting the narthex and Miller Hall, and altar guild. I served on the Search Committee that resulted in the calling of Connie, and this past year I was part of the Merger Exploration Team (MET).

What areas of spiritual interest would you like to see added to our congregational life? I would like to see greater adult and children's formation over the next several years. I believe that the Merger Exploration Process (MEP) provide the gift of reflection and insight. With this knowledge I think our community is poised to delve deeper into our spiritual lives and address the challenges inherent in any community. I would like us to capitalize on the lessons of the MEP to further God's mission within our parish and the local community.

What qualities, training and experience would you bring to the vestry? My degree is in Counseling Psychology, and this training has been very helpful to me in working with individual and groups. Having had the opportunity to serve on both the Search Committee and Merger Exploration Team, I have learned a great deal about how our parish operates. I think these qualities would be good assets to our vestry.

Vestry nominee Biography

Name: Lori Kears

Occupation: Public Events Specialist

When did you come to St. George's? I started attending St. George's when we were still meeting in the Chapel.

What attracted you to St. George's? Convenience & location

What activities have you taken part in or office have you held here? Attended a few of the merger meetings and sold some raffle tickets

What areas of spiritual interest would you like to see added to our congregational life? Have an informational session/series with a focus on current trends within the Episcopal Church. Being a "cradle" Episcopalian, what has changed with regard to the church doctrines & prayers? In addition to the "New Comers" orientation, present an "Old Timers" update via, luncheon, or "breakfast chat" with pastries, juice, coffee etc.

What qualities, training and experience would you bring to the vestry? My experience in communications, organizing and planning seminars, meetings and workshops, etc. are skills that I could bring to St. George's and the Vestry.

What is your dream for St. George's for the upcoming year? The coming 5 years? To see and facilitate the expansion of the Church's congregation - Topical bible study sessions - Life courses i.e. funeral & burial preparations, importance of Wills, etc - Fellowship with another Church denomination at least once a year - Providing "College Bound Baskets" for students going to college. The baskets include supplies, gift cards, etc - Recognizing St. George's home bound Seniors and possibly some Seniors in the community on Valentine's Day especially who might be alone

Vestry nominee Biography

Name: Michael K. Mangiapane

Occupation: IT Specialist – U.S. Census Bureau

When did you come to St. George's? July 2006

What attracted you to St. George's? A newspaper article about Connie being called to St. Georges made me curious about going. I found that I was allowed to ask questions and debate without judgment.

What activities have you taken part in or office have you held here? I regularly help plan our involvement in the DC Pride parade, several performances with the St. Georges players, content editing of the website, and attendance or help with various other activities.

What areas of spiritual interest would you like to see added to our congregational life? I would like to see more involvement and outreach in our local communities.

What qualities, training and experience would you bring to the vestry? For experience I've served on the boards of several community and planning groups in the past. I would bring a desire to see St. Georges become as important as Bishop Chane says we are for Prince Georges County.

What is your dream for St. George's for the upcoming year? The coming 5 years? My dream for St. Georges in the future is to bring in more people from the surrounding communities who are looking for a place to worship and for it to become a more vibrant place to gather.