



Spring Chimes



March - May 2016

Quarterly News from St. James's Episcopal Church

VOL.5, No.3

Even the Salvation of the Cross Does Not Prevent Persecution

The Rev. Caroline Smith Parkinson

In January former Congressman Frank Wolf told those of us gathered at St. James's that 74% of the world's population live in countries that do not allow religious freedom. He spoke passionately about the fact that central to a person's human dignity is the right to freedom of worship, yet the church in the West is silent about the genocide that is going on now in the Middle East and Africa. He quoted three Roman Catholic nuns from Iraq who asked why the Church had abandoned them. It has been said that religious liberty is the proverbial canary in the coal mine of a society's health. It does not tell us everything, but it tells us enough.

He was making the point that the Church (again) is silent at what he and others believe is genocide: the persecution of Christians, Yazidi, Kurds, Shi'ite Muslims and Turkmen in the Middle East, the far East and Africa. I compare it to the silence about genocide against Christians, Muslims and Jews in communist countries from 1917 to the present. Open Doors (a non-denominational American organization) produces an annual World Watch List ranking the top 50 countries in 2015 where Christians face the most severe persecution. Among the worst are: North Korea, Iraq, Eritrea, Afghanistan, Syria, Pakistan, Somalia, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Vietnam and Iran. Open Doors calculates the level of violence and the pressures on

all areas of life. They predicted that 2014 would be the worst for Christians in modern times, however 2015 was worse on every continent. Churches and synagogues are being converted into Mosques; houses *Please turn to page 11*

What's inside...



Cooking with Youth...
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Sacred Spaces...
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Find us online all the time:



Holy Week and Easter

Palm Sunday, March 20

7:45 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I

8:30 a.m. Pancake Breakfast
prepared by Youth

9:30 a.m. Stuart Circle Parishes
Parade

10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II and
Reading of the Passion
Gospel

Monday- Wednesday

March 21-23

5:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist

Maunday Thursday, March 24

7:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist,
Footwashing, and
Stripping of the Altar

Good Friday, March 25

Noon and Litany for Good Friday
7:00 p.m.

Holy Saturday, March 26

11:00 a.m. Stations of the Cross hike

Easter Sunday, March 27

7:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I

9:00 a.m. Festival Eucharist with
the Children's Flowering
of the Cross

11:15 a.m. Festival Eucharist



From the Rector's Desk

It's As Close As Breathing

The Rev. Randolph Marshall
Hollerith, Rector

If we only had eyes to see and ears to hear and wits to understand, we would know that the Kingdom of God in the sense of holiness, goodness, beauty is as close as breathing and is crying out to be born both within ourselves and within the world; we would know that the Kingdom of God is what we all of us hunger for above all other things even when we don't know its name or realize that it's what we're starving to death for. The Kingdom of God is where our best dreams come from and our truest prayers. We glimpse it at those moments when we find ourselves being better than we are and wiser than we know. We catch sight of it when at some moment of crisis a strength seems to come to us that is greater than our own strength. The Kingdom of God is where we belong. It is home, and whether we realize it or not, I think we are all of us homesick for it.

Frederick Buechner, The Clown in the Belfry

What is the Kingdom of God and why did it matter so much to Jesus? Why did he talk about the Kingdom more than another other subject? Why should it matter to us? I think for some people the coming of God's Kingdom sounds a lot like some utopian dream. To this way of thinking, the Kingdom is a sort of unrealistic socialist system where every thing is shared and everything is owned in common. It's like Bernie Sanders on steroids. Well, the earliest Christians did live in small communities where everything was held in common. They cared for one another in such a way that no one was left out. Moreover, I'm sure that if the Kingdom

of God was fully realized in our lifetime, the nations of the world would function quite differently. But that would be a byproduct of the Kingdom's coming, not its purpose. It is inadequate to think of God's Kingdom as some divine form of government, because it is much bigger than that.

Buechner said it best, the Kingdom is "as close as breathing and it is crying out to be born within ourselves and within the world." For Jesus, the Kingdom was any place, any person, any moment where God's will was being made manifest. The Kingdom was anytime and anyplace God's love, God's forgiving grace, and God's justice took precedence. In fact, we believe Jesus is the only person to have fully lived a Kingdom life. From the beginning of his ministry through his resurrection, his will and God's will were the same. Through his life and ministry, Jesus showed us what the Kingdom looks like, and he asks those who follow him to continue the work of making God's Kingdom a reality in this world.

This means that every time we love without strings attached, every time we forgive someone who has wronged us, every time we stand up for justice when we are confronted with injustice – we make the Kingdom more real, we bring its completion closer. In the same way, every time we turn our backs on the legitimate needs of others, every time we make the purely selfish choice, every time we are confronted with injustice and ignore it – we diminish the Kingdom, we push it farther away, we make it less real.

As we make our way through Lent, remember that we are supposed to be people of the resurrection, people who know that there is a new and a better life on the other side of the cross. To that end, we are supposed to be Kingdom people. As we approach Easter, ask yourself – Do I help to build the Kingdom? Do I live out the good news of the empty tomb in my life? There are so many forces in our world, knowingly or unknowingly, working to shrink the Kingdom's presence. These forces of hatred, greed, and fear have no one to stand against them except people like you and me. We don't have to be saints or martyrs to be keepers of the Kingdom. Thankfully, those are roles only a few are called to fill. We only have to be Christ's willing followers, doing what we can to put our best selves out into the world each and every day, building the kingdom one brick at a time.

Blessings,



Mark Whitmire, Director of Music
 Virginia Whitmire, Organist and Choir Director

“O sing unto God with the voice of melody.”

- Psalm 47:1

MARCH 11 AT 7:00 P.M.: “STATIONS OF THE CROSS”

BY MARCEL DUPRÉ



Stations of the Cross refers to a series of images depicting Jesus on the day of the crucifixion and also to a set of traditional prayers Christians say when contemplating those

images. Often a series of 14 images will be arranged around a church or along a path, and the faithful travel from image to image, stopping at each station to say the prayers and reflections. *Le chemin de la Croix* (“The Stations of the Cross”) was improvised by the virtuoso French organist Marcel Dupré as meditations on poems by the important French poet Paul Claudel. Dupré was so pleased that he later wrote his improvisations down and they have since become an important part of the organ repertoire. We are honored to have virtuoso organist Stephen Hamilton, who has played *Le chemin de la Croix* all over the world. This will be both a profoundly spiritual evening as well as a rich music offering.

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER
 The spiritual journey from Palm Sunday through Holy Week to Easter Day traverses an incredible range of thoughts and emotions and the music of the season follows this far-ranging path. Music can act as a lens through which we see and experience Jesus’ life and our own lives, focusing and magnifying the intensity of our experiences. On Palm Sunday many of us will take part in the great procession from church to church, singing “All glory, laud, and honor” (Hymnal 155). The



text of this hymn, which is based on Matthew 21:6-11, is attributed to Theodulph, Bishop of Orleans (d. 821). In 818 Theodulph was imprisoned for complicity in a plot to overthrow King Louis I. The story is told that on Palm Sunday of 821 King Louis the Pious took part in a procession which

passed the place where Theodulph was imprisoned. As the king passed, Theodulph stood at the open window of his cell and sang this hymn, which he had recently composed. The king was so taken by the hymn that he ordered that Theodulph be released and decreed that “All glory, laud, and honor” should always be sung on Palm Sunday. On Maundy Thursday the Parish Choir will sing *Ubi caritas*, in a musical



setting by the twentieth-century French composer Maurice Duruflé. The text is medieval Latin, probably written by Paulinus, Patriarch of Aquileia in Italy, in the latter part of the 8th century. It has long been associated with the foot-washing ceremonies of Maundy Thursday. The music of the anthem is based on a plainsong chant of the Gallican rite – the style of chant used in the churches of Gall before Gregorian chant was mandated during the time of Charlemagne.

On Good Friday we will sing “O sacred heard sore wounded” (Hymnal 168), a translation of the German words of Paul Gerhardt (1607-1676). Many of Gerhardt’s words reflect the horrors of the Thirty Year’s War which had raged during Gerhardt’s childhood and during which he had seen his home burned by soldiers. Ironically, the music, which is considered by many to be the most inherently sacred of all hymn tunes, first appeared as secular love-song. In the early 17th century it was adapted for use in the church and attached to the funeral text “Herzlich tut mich verlangen,” from which the tune takes its name. J.S. Bach harmonized the tune and used it five times in his *St. Matthew’s Passion*.

On Easter Sunday, the congregation, led by choir, organ, trumpets, and timpani, will begin our celebration of Jesus’ Resurrection singing “Welcome, happy morning.” This hymn and our closing hymn, “Hail thee, festival day” (Hymnal 175), are settings of words by Venantius Honorius Fortunatus (540-600). Fortunatus, one of the greatest poets of his day, became a priest in 599 and was made Bishop of Poitiers. Inspired by a relic of the Holy Cross that was given to the abbey at Poitiers, he wrote many hymns concerning the cross.

Ministry



*The Rev. Hilary Streever,
Associate Rector*

Can I ask that?

If you want to get a young priest riled up, just tell them, “It’s so important to support the children / youth / young adult ministries. They’re the future of the Church!”

It’s not that the sentiment is wrong or misplaced; on the contrary, church leaders love that adults value young people and their ministries. What gets us itchy is the notion that children, youth, and young adults are not yet full members of the Church that can lead to ministries that separate those groups unduly from full participation.

So I’m always quick to respond, “Oh, they’re not the future of the Church – they are the Church.” Because we are.

Fortunately, our parish is good at supporting our young peoples’ ministries, in worship, in mission, and in the Sunday School classroom. For young and old alike, it’s so important for the local parish to make manifest in its daily life the teaching that by virtue of baptism alone – not confirmation, not communion classes, not the ability to understand the sermon – we become full members of the Body of Christ. This means that infants who have been baptized are full members! Children who have been baptized – full members! Youth – full members! Young adults – well, you get the idea.

On a deep spiritual level, we need all different kinds of people to be physically present to enrich our conception of what God’s Realm looks like. Children

learn from adults – and adults also learn from children. The look of joy and awe and love in children’s eyes as they run up to the altar rail and hold up their hands to receive the bread that is Jesus meeting them where they are – it’s utterly inspiring! It’s a look and attitude towards Christ that I hope I have too. This is why your ministers for adult education, youth and young adults, and children work together to create intergenerational opportunities for faith and spiritual growth in our parish. The elephant in the room we have to talk about, though, is Questions. You know what I mean. When a young person asks a difficult question (“Who is God?” “Where is heaven?” “Why did Jesus die on the cross?”), adults might feel unprepared to answer the question. (“Couldn’t they ask me a question about something easier, like, ‘Where do babies come from?’ !”)

We adults don’t like to feel like we don’t have all the answers, but the solution is simply relationship. It’s not necessary to know the answer; the important thing is to wrestle with the question together.

Children ask the hardest and best theological questions. The ones grown-ups have forgotten how to ask, or worse, are afraid to ask. Struggling with these questions together not only helps the children learn, it helps the adults learn too. When we humbly set aside our expectations for ourselves to know The Answer, something incredible happens:

we meet our young people where they are and they meet us where we are – just like how Christ meets us at the altar rail.

I encourage you to come to the short course “Can I Ask That?” led by Mary Beth Abplanalp on Sundays, April 3 and 10, at 10:15 a.m. in Valentine Hall. April 3 is the Sunday after Easter, so rather than rolling over and going back to sleep (“We had SO MUCH CHURCH last Sunday!”), get a cup of coffee and say, “I’m so glad it’s April 3 – I get to learn how to talk about difficult God-related questions from the most awesome and hilarious Mary Beth!”

Can you ask that? I know: let’s ask... together.

Grace and peace,

Hilary



*The Rev. Carmen Germino,
Associate Rector*

Death and Resurrection in Cuba

“Dos, tres, cuatro, cinco, seis...”

He kept forgetting to start with “Uno” but he was three years old, so we clapped exuberantly all the same when he finished counting. He had chubby cheeks, droopy drawers, and mischievous eyes. He immediately charmed all the members of our group of eight as we hung out in the sliver of shade next to the empty lot that had become a neighborhood trash pile. He ran all around the lot, while a couple of sweet older boys kept an eye on him.

His name was Lazaro – in English, Lazarus – but we didn’t realize the symbolic importance of his name right away. We were too busy enjoying how delightful it was to have an adorable little boy to entertain us while we waited for our instructions. Lazaro’s father’s cousin was one of the workers helping to prepare and pour concrete for that day’s work project. In theory, we were there to help do some of the work, but most of the work that morning required actual skilled laborers. So we Americans spent a lot of time chatting, taking photos, exploring the neighborhood, picking up trash, and cheerfully watching Lazaro toddle around. Ah, the hardships of mission!

The lot on which we stood was the site of the former Iglesia San Pedro, Santiago de Cuba. St. Peter’s Church had been built long ago, but a hurricane damaged it badly in the 1960s, and eventually it collapsed. With nothing



left of the original structure, it has been a neighborhood dumping ground for decades. Now, thanks to the vision and energy of our friend the Rev. Halbert Pons, an Episcopal priest in Santiago, we found ourselves also standing on the site of the future Iglesia San Pedro, Santiago de Cuba. Halbert already has four or five other congregations to pastor, but that doesn’t stop him from wanting to see St. Peter’s Church come alive again. He’s got plans drawn up, he’s got a collection of salvaged building materials to use, and he’s even got most of the trash cleared from the lot. At this point, he just needs partners to help fund and rebuild the church. That’s where we come in. That’s what our missions program can make possible.

We didn’t get too much done that day. But I believe we’ll be back. As we left the worksite that day, just before climbing back on our bus, I turned around to look at the lot. And I could see it. Halbert’s vision. In my mind, I could see a church there. A church where good news will be preached to people who

for many years were unable to safely or easily worship. A church where the Body of Christ will be shared and nourished. There used to be a church there, but it died. Yet, God willing, there will be a church there again someday. After all, Lazaro was there! We know that in the Bible, the story of Lazarus is a story of Jesus offering life after death, with the community coming together to help move the stone in front of the tomb and remove Lazarus’s bindings so he could live abundantly once again. My prayer is that Jesus will offer new life to St. Peter’s Church in Santiago de Cuba, and that St. James’s will be part of the community that helps remove the barriers, making abundant life possible there once again.

Faithfully,

Carmen

Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, “Father, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.” When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.”

John 11:38-39, 41-44



Mary Beth Abplanalp,
Director of Youth and
Young Adult Ministry

How do we Grow in our Faith?

In my work with young people, I often wrestle with, **“What does a person need in order to grow in their faith?”** Laura and Robert Keeley researched this exact topic in “Building Blocks of Faith” (Lifelong Faith Journal, Fall 2014). They found four common themes, or building blocks, of faith development at every stage of life, regardless of age. All people need them in order to grow in their faith.

I Belong – Knowing we belong to God is important, as is knowing other people in the Body of Christ. Baptism is a wonderful sign of belonging to God and every time we renew our baptismal vows we reinforce our belonging. It’s not just enough to be told we belong. We need to feel it.

2016 Youth Retreats

PYM Shrine Mont Retreats

Parish Youth Ministries or “PYM” is a committee of high school students from around our diocese who plan and lead retreat weekends for their peers at Shrine Mont. Over 150 youth attend these fun-filled weekends! Our Youth Leaders are excited to take youth from St. James’s to Shrine Mont this Spring. Check the youth website for details and registration information.

6th & 7th Grade PYM Weekend:
April 15 - 17, 2016

8th Grade PYM Weekend
May 13 - 15, 2016

I Understand/Know – The relationships that matter most to us (parent/child, spouse, or close friend) are all based on knowing the other person. Without knowing the stories of God and his people, our faith is incomplete and often based on emotions and behavior. Faith isn’t merely a warm feeling that God loves us (which he does) or thinking that God wants us to live good lives (which he does). We need a robust knowledge of scripture to know who we are and who God is, whom we love and serve.

I Have Hope – Today’s culture defines hope as something we desire but for which we have no real assurance. Christian hope is an expectation that is strong and confident, found in the person of Jesus Christ. Christ shows us that, when life is hard or tragic, helping each other is God’s work. Our hope gives our lives meaning knowing that God has enlisted us to be his agents, or helpers, in the world.

I Am Called and Equipped – God has placed each of us in a particular place at a particular time with particular gifts for a purpose. Having been raised in the royal family with an extensive understanding of Egypt and the Pharaoh, Moses was uniquely equipped when God called him to lead His people out of Egypt. Discerning God’s call for each of us as individuals is a process. When our hearts and minds are open to this unique call, it can even come through the voice of others or through doors that have been closed to us. Faith is mysterious and only God gives

us faith. Understanding and living that gift is a lifelong process shaped by things we see, do, hear, and by important people in our lives. The church cannot give us faith, but it is a place that nurtures faith growth. As we journey through the season of Lent, I pray each of us is mindful and responsive to our own faith’s building blocks so we can grow in faith and in hope of the resurrection.

Love ya! Mean it!

Mary Beth

Stations of the Cross Hike March 26, 11:00 a.m.



Parishioners, families, and furry friends are invited to participate in the 2nd annual Stations of the Cross Hike at Belle Isle hosted by the Young Adult Ministry on Holy Saturday, March 26 at 11:00 a.m. BYO-Picnic to follow.



Becky Page
Director of Children's Ministries

The Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:3-9)

“**A**nd he told them many things in parables, saying: “Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!”

The Parable of the Sower is familiar passage to many of us. In February this parable was shared as a *Godly Play* story with most of the children in our Sunday school classes. An important part of the *Godly Play* stories is wondering. This occurs after the story has been told and is a time when the storyteller poses questions to the children about the story. The storyteller listens to the answers, repeats them back, and accepts them.

A few years ago, I attended a *Godly Play* training session where the trainer

shared an experience she had as she was getting ready to introduce this parable to a class that had heard it before. A little boy shot up his hand and said, “We don’t need to hear that one. Someone already told me all the answers. I can tell you who the sower is, what the seeds are, what the harvest is. I know. So let’s not hear that story again.” It took a long time but that *Godly Play* storyteller was able to help that young boy see that there is wondering to be done and not just knowing the answers.

It makes me think about my own study of the Bible. Sometimes I think I know the answers and then I will see something different in the story or will hear another perspective that I had not thought of before. Just like in the *Godly Play* story there is something new to discover every time you read a passage or hear a Bible story, whether you are a child or an adult. I invite you to take a moment to contemplate this story (or another Bible passage) through the lens of wonder. Here are some questions you might consider:

I wonder if the sower had a name?

I wonder who the sower could really be?

I wonder if the sower was happy when the birds came and ate the seeds?

I wonder if the birds were happy when they saw the sower?

I wonder if the birds have names?

I wonder what the sower was doing when the little seeds could not get their roots among the stones?

I wonder what the sower was doing when the little seeds were choked by the thorns?

I wonder what the sower was doing when the little seeds were growing in the good earth?

I wonder what the harvest could really be?

I wonder if the sower was surprised at the harvest?

I wonder what surprised the sower the most?

Do you wonder?

Blessings,

Becky



Save the date! St. James's Vacation Bible School will be June 20-24! More information and registration coming soon.

**St. James's
Sunday School
children are
collecting Box
Tops for Anna**



Julia Cooper School. Help us get to our goal of 5,000 Box Tops before June 1. The collection box is located on the 2nd floor of the Michaux House.

Seasons of Celebration,



Christmas pageant
Cherub Choir



Two dozen volunteers and 56 youth joined Chef Rob Loker for a cooking class that produced over \$1000 worth of goods for Taste of St. James's.



Co-chairs Erin Jewett and Louise Bald and a host of bakers turned out delicious fare to be sold at Taste of St. James's, raising money for the ECW community food ministry.



Advent Fair included this year's Giving Tree and a chance for everyone to make Advent decorations for their homes.



The Norfolk State University adult choirs made joyful songs under the direction of Drs. C.



Eight St. Jamesers travelled on an exploratory mission to Cuba that included worship and work in Havana and San Pedro.



The Peter Paul Development Center Christmas party is an annual youth and young adult ministry that caps our Giving Tree program.



Mission and Good Taste



...gentry was on display as the Children's and ...s and a cast of youth retold the nativity story.



Great music and our food drive were on display at Thanksgiving.



... Concert Choir and St. James's youth and ...g in memory of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., ... Carl Haywood and Mark Whitmire.



Singing and Santa Claus enlivened the Children's Center Christmas.



Caroline Parkinson guided a retreat to begin Advent.



Deacon-in-Training Sally Gunn bid farewell to our staff as she took her new assignment.



...ual effort of ...gram.



Our McGuire Veterans Ministry team delivered gifts in December.

Service



Nancy Warman,
Director of Servant Ministry

CARITAS Shelter Week, April 9-16

Three young children down on the floor playing with blocks; two girls sitting in the corner playing a card game; a high energy 2 year old racing a big plastic dump truck across the floor; a baby asleep in the port-a-crib; a 12 year old boy stretched across his cot



reading a book; children, moms, and dads excitedly sitting around the tables, ready to yell BINGO when they get the winning combination of numbers...

These portraits represent a close up look on any given night of CARITAS shelter week.



Our 25 or so guests, mostly single moms and children but some dads, too, are just like us and like all the other parents and children we know, except for one thing – they have no home! They sleep on cots each night and change



up documents with specific roles. Please mark your calendar now and watch for the details. We would love to have you be part of this ministry extraordinaire!

Nancy Warman

shelter congregations every week. CARITAS and the congregations that make up this shelter agency provide a “home away from home” until families can find the stability they need to move to their own place.

Shelter week requires great effort on the part of many volunteers, and most especially it requires compassionate hearts! Please consider joining our “doer” team for this year’s shelter week, April 9-16. It takes many of us to transform our church space into a fun, child-friendly, secure, loving “home,” complete with 3 meals a day, laundry service, shower provisions, recreation, crafts, and visits from those with special expertise like doctors and dentists. Lay leaders Meg Stott and Amanda Roberts will soon provide sign-



Let Us Keep the Feast, Alleluia

In our liturgy on Sunday mornings we often call Jesus our Passover, or Paschal Lamb, or Paschal sacrifice. Have you ever wondered where that language came from? The word for Passover in Hebrew is "Pesah." In Greek, it is translated as "Pascha." The event remembered by Jewish folks at Passover is the escape of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt around the year 1240 B.C. From the perspective of the people of Israel as they looked back on that exodus, they were utterly convinced that God's action had brought about their forebear's liberation from the oppression of slavery. In one of the ten plagues which takes place as a part of the story, the Hebrew people were directed to sacrifice a lamb and place its blood on the doorposts so that when the angel of death came to destroy the first-born it would pass over the homes of the Israelites (hence the name Passover). The celebration of Passover for Jews is a profound remembering of these events of the salvation of God.

At Easter time Christians also celebrate the "Paschal Feast" but we see our liberation as more far-reaching than the original Passover. For Christians, Easter, the Pasch, symbolizes our victory over sin and death and our being reconciled to God through Christ. For us, there is a profound drama which is played out every year in the observance of Holy Week and Easter. On Palm Sunday we recall to our minds the triumphal entry of Jesus into the holy city of Jerusalem with excited crowds ready to make him king and shouting, "Hosanna to the

son of David." Maundy Thursday finds Jesus in the upper room with his disciples celebrating the Passover and transforming that meal into what we now call "The Lord's Supper" or "Holy Communion." Good Friday brings to mind the harsh emotions around the arrest, trial and crucifixion of Jesus. Holy Saturday is fraught with the sense of grief and loneliness as we keep vigil at the tomb. Finally, Easter morning arrives and the celebration is at hand. We light the Paschal Candle signifying that Jesus has been raised from the dead. Loud "Alleluias" echo throughout the church in all the world. Easter is the symbol of hope in places of despair.

All of these re-memberings are of one piece of cloth. They all come together to make the story. One cannot celebrate well the resurrection of Easter morning if we have not been equally serious about the aspects of the drama which lead up to it. Let us be observant during Holy Week so we can celebrate Easter as the Paschal drama unfolds. Then the words we say at Eucharist will have special meaning for us – "Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast."

Bob Friend

PERSECUTION *continued from cover*

are marked with symbols or words to indicate the religion of the individuals; ancient churches, synagogues, mosques and monasteries are destroyed; and even owning a Bible or wearing a religious symbol could cost one's life. Male members of minority religious groups in Iraq are given the choice to convert, to pay a tax, leave or to be executed, while young girls and women are taken as sex slaves. Huge number of refugees flee these countries to Europe and beyond, but in the continuing media coverage of the refugee crisis, there is little note of religious persecution. I learned from my ministry and contacts in the USSR, China, and Cuba that statistics always have faces and names and stories and suffering beyond our imagining.

Last year during Lent, many Coptic Christian churches in Egypt were burned and clergy executed. I felt committed to make the sign of the Cross in the manner of the Orthodox Christians (from right to left) so that every time I make the sign of the Cross I remember those who are persecuted because of their faith. May they take comfort and we may be strengthened in our prayers for them during this

season of Lent. May they take comfort and we may be strengthened by the witness of brave men and women, such as Member of the British Parliament William Wilberforce, German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Pastor and Preacher Martin Luther King, Jr., Divinity student Jonathan Daniel, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and Iraqi RC Sister Diana Momeka, all of whom like Jesus spoke out for the disenfranchised and abused, those who have no voice and no one to advocate for them.

The cross brought Jesus fully into the suffering of this world, and as long as suffering lasts our mission as disciples is to respond with compassion – to stand as advocates with those who are victims and to walk together in the face of suffering – empowered by the presence and Body of Christ.

Faithfully,





Growing

by Debbie Lickey

Executive Director, St. James's Children's Center

As of this writing there is still snow on the ground, slowly melting from our big snowstorm this winter. I am, however, very aware of the potential flowers and foliage that are sleeping right under the ground, waiting for the spring thaw that will soon arrive. Spring is a time to be reminded of re-growth, whether it be a re-birth of beauty from now barren ground, or a renewal of ourselves as part of a recovery process from wounds in the past. Spring serves as a reminder that each of us holds a potential for growth.

At the Children's Center, there is an ongoing process of new beginnings and opportunities to share in the growth of the children and families we serve. This opportunity has become a spiritual path for me; for the teachers who care for our children daily; for the administrative team that cares for the running of the Center; for the volunteers who share their talents, time and attention; and for the Board members who ensure the continued growth of this mission that was created 30 years ago.

In contrast to this sense of expectations and renewal, today's climate in education creates certain contradictions that are not easily resolved. On the one hand, experts confirm the need for quality early childhood programs, with smaller class size and an emphasis on both academic skills and a strong foundation for social/emotional development which is an especially important component for the appropriate growth of young children at risk. However, as a whole, young children who are at risk

are experiencing just the opposite in the form of sub-standard care which pushes young children too far and too fast, with poorly qualified staff in overcrowded classrooms.



In the book Bridges out of Poverty (2001), Ruby Payne addresses the need to provide models, experiences and tools to those who have been challenged with generational poverty so that they are afforded the same opportunities as their more affluent peers. At St. James's Children's Center this is accomplished through parent education, a diversity of peers in the classroom, trips outside of the Center to experience all our community has to offer, and caring adults who listen, talk and read with our children to increase vocabulary skills (a known factor for kindergarten success).

St. James's Children's Center is one of those few quality programs that provides children the experiences, safety, and nurturing to awaken and bloom into who

they can truly be. St. James's holds the honor and distinction of being a church congregation that has supported one of the most stable, long-running and influential programs in this city. As an

educator of many years in many types of settings, I am so very aware of what this kind of freedom of quality means to families on their way out of poverty.

As the Children's Center celebrates 30 years of service to Richmond's most deserving young learners, this is a special year for the Children's Center and the St. James's Doers. I hope that you will all join us on April 17 for Children's Center Sunday as we tell the story of how this Center came to be and celebrate 30 years of passion, spirit and growth.

Always in Partnership,

Debbie



Sign Up Now for a Summer Supper Club

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”

Acts of the Apostles 2:42

They’re back! This has quickly become a favorite parish fellowship opportunity – it is a great way to build new friendships within our large church family. If you’re interested, sign up by April 15. You can sign up online at doers.org or call Carmen Germino at (804) 355-1779 x319. Shortly after the April 15 deadline, all who have signed up will be divided into groups of 8-10 people and you will receive an email introducing your Supper Club members. Together, your group will come up with two mutually agreeable dates in June, July, and August to get together for a potluck meal. Check our website for details.



Sacred Spaces

by Richard Rumble

Gibson Hall Choir Room

Drive down West Franklin Street past St. James’s on Wednesday or Thursday night. You’ll see lights burning brightly on the 2nd floor of Gibson Hall – the choir room. From the street you’ll hear the sound of voices – sometimes broken into parts, sometimes combined in glorious harmony, but always finding a way to give God a glorious round of praise.

The choir room is a special place where souls gather for good cheer, fellowship, and hard work. There is deep satisfaction that comes from making



something beautiful, something you could not do alone. You are so grateful to be part of the experience. There’s a seat up there with your name on it. Sure, it’s a long climb. But for the glimpse of heaven you’ll hear, it is so worth it.

Earthly Matters

by Laura Chessin
Assoc. Professor of Graphic Design, VCU

Befriending the Woods

Last fall I was awarded a sabbatical to assume the role of “Artist in Residence” at VCU’s Rice River Center, the environmental research field station along the James River in Charles City County. As an artist joining the ranks of the Rice researchers, my options were wide open. I started with the intention to identify a space in the woods to observe change over time, to document, to befriend.

I explored with my camera potential study sites. One area I returned to revealed miscellaneous decay: an upended tree trunk, a small squirrel skull. Some deer vertebra. I continued to collect hundreds of images, documenting as an effort to suspend change. While editing a short film of a walk through the labyrinth at Shrine Mont, I began to hatch a plan to construct a labyrinth in the woods at Rice.

As plans unfolded, I decided against introducing additional materials onto my site. On the pragmatic level, to use only materials on the site was my effort to cause minimal impact to the site. On another level I questioned the urge to “make an impact,” “to leave my mark.” What if nothing I constructed was permanent? What if the project was less the thing itself that I constructed, and more entirely just a set of short films documenting my exploration of the site, the changing of light, and the impact of time and weather on a space?

One unplanned reward of my sabbatical was a return to a spiritual practice, including a silent retreat at SSJE after almost a 15-year hiatus, coinciding with my assuming my current academic position. It is exactly this pause, this break, this unplanned gift of unstructured time that I am hoping to recreate with my work at Rice. The space and time are gifts that ask nothing in return.

Stewardship



*Suzanne Hall
Director of Stewardship and
Development*

Your gifts enable us to live our faith.



Ours is a church of sacred worship, sometimes in unusual ways and places this season. At Thanksgiving we thanked God for our many blessings by contributing a record of over 4,200 pounds of food to FeedMore. We welcomed, cheered, and blessed thousands of international cycling teams and visitors to Richmond. St. Catherine's gym became our sanctuary when our church was surrounded by the bike race, and that same Sunday, we prepared food for 20,000 people in Zambia.

Last summer, our youth were doers of the word in Montana and the potato fields of Virginia's Eastern shore. Mission groups worked and worshiped in Haiti and Cuba, united in love with our brothers and sisters, worlds away from

Richmond. Some of our faithful worship on their computers, as our magnificent liturgy and music stream live each Sunday.

On Palm Sunday we will witness our faith with palm fronds and song in the annual Stuart Circle Parish procession along Monument Avenue. Later during Holy Week, we will walk the Stations of the Cross on Belle Isle, alongside the magnificent James River, to relive Christ's path to his crucifixion in that wild and natural setting.

These are the times when our faith springs clearly into focus; the occasions that we and our children will remember for a lifetime. These are some of the many reasons we love our church, which inspires us to clarify our relationship

with Jesus Christ.

This is why we contribute freely and generously, to assure we have innovative clergy, inspirational worship, sacred and delightful music, and beautiful, lovingly-maintained facilities to welcome all who seek God's grace. Thank you for your gifts to this year's annual fund, by naming St. James's Endowment in your will, and for joyfully sharing some of the many gifts that God has given you. It is only through the gifts of all parishioners that we can continue to grow and serve.

Suzanne

The Interview

The Video Squad has been in service since 2010 and the Chimes sat down with the current chair, Jonathan Sumrell, to learn more about their work.

Chimes: Tell us about the purpose and background of our web streaming broadcast ministry.

JS: The ministry replaced St. James's previous use of radio to broadcast services. In addition to hearing the broadcast, which was only half an hour of the hour-long service, the use of the internet allows us to reach many more people with full services that include pictures as well as sound. Our goal is to give those who cannot physically attend a service the ability to take part through their internet connection.

Chimes: How many people does it take to produce a broadcast? What skills are needed?

JS: The production for each service only takes one person, though we have a great and extensive technical support team should we run into any problems. The ability to multitask and comfortably use a computer are probably the most important skills in the production. We have equipment that represents "state of the art" in streaming production, plus a camera controller that allows the producer to give the best view of the service action.



Video Squad chair Jonathan Sumrell sitting at the production suite in the vesting room.

Chimes: What do you think are the benefits of participating in this ministry?

JS: Not only do you get to broadcast our services to the world, you also get to play with some pretty cool technology while doing it.

Chimes: What, if anything, do you hear from our congregation or viewers about the ministry?

JS: We have received positive feedback from members of our congregation who are able to catch a service even though they are traveling, sick or otherwise homebound. We have also heard from family members of our parishioners who live out of town but are able to watch baptisms or confirmations. We have even heard from people all over the country who are unable to attend their

home church and tune in virtually to services at St. James's. To our surprise, some of these viewers have become contributors to the church's financial resources.

Chimes: Have you any memorable experiences from your activity in this ministry?

JS: Nothing too memorable yet – but we will keep the cameras rolling just in case!

Join the Video Squad!



The Video Squad is looking for more volunteers. The job comes with training and the scheduling requires you be in the production suite less than once a month, on average. Some services have special times, such as Evensong, but most broadcasts are at 9:00 and 11:15 a.m. on Sundays, or 10:00 a.m. in the summer. Contact Jonathan Sumrell (jmsumrell@gmail.com).

Welcome to our New Vestry Members



Louise Bald



Ralph Cummins



Kathe Hetzer



Erin Jewett



Dave Johnson



Beth Skidmore



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REMINDER: Please make sure the church office has your updated e-mail address and other pertinent information. Contact Gina Young in the church office (gyoung@doers.org/355-1779) and the lay leaders of your ministry teams.

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