



Parish Guide

Newsletter of the Church of the Epiphany

November 2009

Wardens' Corner

Tanya Washington, Senior Warden

At the end of November my term as Senior Warden and my service on the vestry comes to an end. I was originally elected as a vestry member in 2006 for a three-year term to end this year. I subsequently was elected as Junior and Senior Warden. I am very grateful for the wonderful gifts of all the vestry members who have served this parish with faithfulness and hard work over the last three years. Their dedication has helped to keep this parish the unique place of worship and service that brings us back week after week. As Warden I also have worked very closely with our rector and Teresa Hobgood, former Senior Warden, and Jennifer Cate, the current Junior Warden. I am very incredibly grateful for their partnership and support.



I thought I would use my last Wardens' Corner column to talk about two key insights I have learned from my experience on the vestry:

God provides for our needs. Over the years I have come to truly appreciate how true this is, not only in my personal life, but especially for this parish. Over the last three years this parish has faced budget deficits in the five figures. Each time the entire vestry was concerned about how we were going to close out the year. Each time God came through for us, and we ended the year with a balanced budget. In fact, I learned the week I am writing this in October that Epiphany has eliminated the budget deficit we had been running for the last few months. This has happened in the midst of an economic recession, where we have seen parishioners lose their jobs, and others tighten up their expenses. Nonetheless, God has moved our members, friends of Epiphany and other sources such as foundations to provide the resources necessary to continue our ministries.

Epiphany is rich in resources. I do not mean that Epiphany is a rich parish in terms of money, with a large number of affluent members. I'm talking about a more

authentic and longer lasting richness. I'm referring to the gifts and creativity of our parishioners, or as Randolph likes to put it, our members' time, talents and treasure. In addition to our worship, this parish is rich in ministries that serve so many people every week in a variety of ways and that rely heavily on volunteers. These ministries include the Welcome Table and Street Church, various pastoral ministries such as the OPALs, 20's/ 30's, and Come and See, ministry teams such as Environmental Stewardship, Capital Campaign, Financial Stewardship, and annual fundraisers such as the Book Sale. This parish is not flush in cash compared to some other parishes in this diocese. However, none of these ministries would happen if not for the dedication and creativity of our parishioners. Even when money is short, they find a way to continue to serve God's people on G Street. We are incredibly blessed by these riches.

With these thoughts I end my turn at the Wardens' Corner column. I want to give many thanks to all the great vestry members past and present with whom I have served. I am also very thankful to be a part of this rich congregation, and hope to be able to serve in another capacity in the future.

Parish Meeting and Pot Luck Lunch Sunday, November 8, 2009



Begin our annual parish meeting with a shared meal

Please bring a dish to share
Main dish, side dish, salad or desert

Drinks will be provided

Note: The deadline for submitting articles to the December *Parish Guide* newsletter is Wednesday, November 25. Send them to swalker@epiphanydc.org.

Parishoner News

We celebrate these new beginnings and accomplishments

“Let us give thanks to God for all God’s gifts so freely bestowed upon us.”

Sandi Ingram is serving overseas in Bangladesh and is featured in the Department of State website: www.state.gov/careers. From “Careers” click on “Foreign Service”, “Meet our People” and look at “View More Videos” until you find Sandi’s story.

We welcome these persons into the life of our parish

Lois Nembhard, Jamal McKnight, Patty Smith, Bre Reed, and John Agbaje.

We remember those who have died

Charles Hines, Tate Chamber’s father-in-law, who died Oct 20

We remember these persons in our prayers

For the members and family members of Epiphany who serve in troubled areas of the world, especially
Jim Dobson and Floyd Tappin;

For all who seek healing, especially Calvin Braithwaite;

For Mike Dougherty, David Ebitz, Ebba Friberg, Bruce Hall, Robert Hall, Joyce Hiller, Junior Jones, Velma Martin, Lloyd Minor, Jessica Pettrey, Jesus Ramirez, Jenny Robison, Pete and Evelyn Scrimger, Ed Somers, Bob Sexton, Anne Trousdale, Laura Walker, Rachel Waxman, Dana White, Bill and Helen, and for those who suffer in these hard economic times

We celebrate these November birthdays

Judy Lokerson, November 2; Cora Fosdick, Dean Venable, Kathrine Ebert, November 3;
Alex Whitehead, November 5; Linda Mascall, November 8; Gloria Minor, November 9; John McDermott and Marge McI aughton, November 10; Melanie Eversley, November 12; Jeff Matheny and Jyl Woolfolk, November 16 Anne Schmidt and Mimi Tangum. November 20; Jessica Beels and Sarah Papazoglakis, November 21; Jarroda Kelsaw, November 22; and Toni Schmidt, November 25.

The monthly “Parishoner News” acknowledges the transitions in life, accomplishments of our members, and the times of celebration. Please tell us your news by phoning the parish office or emailing us at: swalker@epiphanydc.org.

An Advent Media Fast

Rachel Barham, Environmental Stewardship Ministry Team

Advent is my favorite season of the liturgical year. I find, though, that this historically penitential season of hope and expectation has been crowded out by parties and concerts and the unrelenting commerciality of retailers desperate – now more than ever – to make us part with our money. An unsettling example was a sign in an upscale department store window reading “All is bright.” Talk about missing the point. I won’t set foot in certain businesses after about mid-October because they are already playing secular holiday music on the radio, sandwiched between ads not-so-subtly suggesting that we are worth nothing if we are not spending tanker trucks full of money on gifts for our loved ones. Some people love it, even calling the radio station to beam about how the music gets them in a holiday mood. Great. But for me, nothing makes me feel “in this world but not of this world” like an Advent media fast.

We’re all familiar with the concept of Lenten fasting, to whatever extent we choose to observe it. A few Decembers ago, fed up with television commercials blasting obnoxious newly-worded carols to sell the latest thing, I decided to try something extreme: exercising my choice *not* to turn the television on. I tried it one night, and the next, and the next, and later I came to the realization that this was a form of fasting. I disconnected myself from the commercial world in order to spend more time with myself, my thoughts, my family, and God. And it worked so well that I have done it every year since, beginning on Advent I. I also find that in January I’m not eager to turn the thing back on.

There is no way to get away from all commercialism, and of course a lot of people make their livings at advertising or retail. It’s not all bad. Last year, adding to my usual television fast, I decided that every time I saw a holiday-themed decoration or ad, I would try to use that to remind myself to pray. I prayed for members of our armed forces who are celebrating holidays away from family; for people who were experiencing their first holiday season without a loved one or beloved pet; for people who do not have a place to live; for those who feel utterly alone. I use this kind of prayer as a reminder of the blessings in my own life and as a time to evaluate how I could do more to help other people. A win-win endeavor.

The Challenge of Naming God

Christian M. Clough, Director of Music Ministries

Radicals and Reactionaries both, take note: your pleas have been heard! That does not mean, however, that a universally satisfactory conclusion will be reached in the foreseeable future...



When I began my studies at the Yale Institute of Sacred Music, I suffered culture shock on campus at Yale Divinity School (YDS), where my program was based. YDS was the most liberal community I had ever experienced, and one of the challenges I faced was adjusting to the near obsession with using inclusive language in worship. Intellectually, I agreed with the intent, but it also seemed that we contorted ourselves linguistically to avoid the mortal sin of referring to God with masculine terms. I was also disturbed by the willingness to rewrite someone else's text without the creator's permission. What happened, I wondered, to respect for the artist's creation? During the several years I was at YDS, the community's respect for inclusivity in liturgical language remained relatively constant, and I became more comfortable in seeking ways to name God and the people of God that were more reflective of the community and its sensitivities.

While we would agree that our God is *not* a man, we must also agree that our tradition, more often than not, ascribes masculine terms to God, even if we understand God to have no gender, or to embody both genders. We can find biblical texts to support all viewpoints. In Genesis 1.27, we read,

“So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.”

The being of God, therefore, must at minimum include the male and female expressions of gender. At the same time, the pronoun attributed to God is “he”. I think that it is fair to say that, for lack of a better pronoun in English and several other languages, and by linguistic tradition, “he” is our default pronoun, and does not necessarily make God a man.

In contrast, God is described like a (perhaps mother) eagle in this familiar passage from Deuteronomy:

“As an eagle stirs up its nest, and hovers over its young; as it spreads its wings, takes them up, and bears them aloft on its pinions...” (32.11, *1st Revised Standard Version*)

And more clearly in this pericope from 2 Esdras, in the Apocrypha:

“I gathered you as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings. But now, what shall I do to you? I will cast you out from my presence.” (1.30, *1st RSV*)

This fall, on at least two occasions, I have altered some very

masculine language in anthem texts sung by the Epiphany Choir. My approach was studiously inconsistent, reflecting the impossibility of resolving the problem completely. There was no perfect way to balance tradition, fidelity to the original text, sensitivity to various contemporary viewpoints, and poetic integrity (*e.g.*, the sounds and repetition of words), so I chose an imperfect middle way. I was pleased when a few choir members confronted me about my decision, sharing their diverse opinions. My response to them was: there is no perfect solution; I have chosen one imperfect approach, and I am not going to talk about it any more!

On this issue, as on many others, the people of Epiphany hold a wide spectrum of views (hence the radicals and reactionaries addressed in the first line, above). While we may find another's approach to the language of God to be admirable or challenging to our own sensibilities, I find it refreshing to worship with a congregation that speaks of God in so many different ways. I, for one, am unprepared to wipe away all the traditional names for God simply because they imply masculinity, but at the same time, I embrace the effort to expand our ways of naming God. “Expansive language” has replaced “inclusive language”, moving beyond gender to the many different manifestations of God.

There are many interesting articles on the World Wide Web, published by churches that are grappling with the issue of language in worship and community dialogue. One that I found particularly helpful is from the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ: < http://www.macucc.org/leadership/inclusive_language.htm >. It offers guidelines not just for the naming of God, but for addressing and talking about God's people, too.

To close, here is a hymn from Brian Wren that “brings many names” for God. May it inspire you to think of God in expansive ways!

Bring many names, beautiful and good,
celebrate, in parable and story,
holiness in glory, living, loving God.

Hail and hosanna! Bring many names!

Strong mother God, working night and day,
planning all the wonders of creation,
setting each equation, genius at play:
Hail and hosanna, strong mother God!

Warm father God, hugging every child,
feeling all the strains of human living,
caring and forgiving till we're reconciled:
Hail and hosanna, warm father God!

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Old, aching God, grey with endless care,
calmly piercing evil's new disguises,
glad of good surprises, wiser than despair:
Hail and hosanna, old aching God!

Young, growing God, eager, on the move,
saying no to falsehood and unkindness,
crying out for justice, giving all you have:
Hail and hosanna, young, growing God!

Great, living God, never fully known,
joyful darkness far beyond our seeing,
closer yet than breathing, everlasting home:
Hail and hosanna, great, living God!

Words: Brian Wren

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Saints in Our Midst

By Tripp Jones, Parish Archivist

As your parish archivist, I spend a lot of time studying Epiphany saints of days gone by. With All Saints Day this month, I am reminded once again that there are saints in our midst today. The Book of Common Prayer defines the communion of saints as “the whole family of God, the living and the dead, those whom we love and those whom we hurt, bound together in Christ by sacrament, prayer, and praise.”

Who are these living saints I've noticed at Epiphany? I know there are many that fit the bill and I run a risk in mentioning some and not others and maybe I should just stick to stating facts, and keep my opinions to myself. With those disclaimers aside, let me lift up the following individuals - Pat Pickering, Beatrice Moulton, and Susan Weinbeck.

Pat is the coordinator of Epiphany's Coffee Hour, a role she has had off and on, probably since the day she first walked into Epiphany. The description once used for Elsa Maxwell fits Pat quite well - “the hostess with the mostest.” Prior to Pat's most recent assumption of the job, Epiphany's Coffee Hour was floundering. Pat knew the value of the ministry and stepped up to the plate. I owe through Pat's efforts, parishioners and visitors can enjoy light refreshment as they socialize after church.

Beatrice is Epiphany's Altar Guild coordinator. With



services every day in addition to the occasional wedding and funeral, the job is constant and detail oriented. Entering the sacristy, one almost has to learn a new language with words like flagon, paten, and ciborium, but preparing the table for the Lord's Supper is holy work indeed. What a privilege it is to handle those sacred vessels. Beatrice lovingly cares for them all.

Susan is Epiphany's Welcome Table coordinator. When is the last time you invited 150 guests to your home for a meal? Susan does it every Sunday morning with ease. Susan's leadership goes far beyond the weekly breakfast. She recently coordinated Epiphany's Help the Homeless Walk in support of Samaritan Ministry.

These ladies certainly fulfill their work in conjunction with many dedicated helpers, but for me they exemplify ministry. They go about their tasks quietly, with purpose, and in a spirit of joy. They are ever widening the circle for others to join. Who are the saints in your life? What are the characteristics that make them saintly? During this season, take a moment and acknowledge the saints around you. More importantly, pay them the ultimate compliment by following their example.

(In all the ministries mentioned as well as many others here at Epiphany, help is always needed! In this season of stewardship, consider giving the gift of your time. Who knows, you might end up working beside a saint!)

The Upcoming Centennial Celebration

Tripp Jones, Parish Archivist

Epiphany, are you ready to celebrate? Next year will mark the 100th anniversary of our Parish House and we are going to party all year long! Well, maybe “party” is a little extreme. I can guarantee we will learn about the mission and ministry of our parish house in fun and interesting ways. A series of events will be woven into next year's calendar which will tell the story of the gift, the planning, and the construction of Epiphany's Parish House. With that foundation laid, we'll then learn about how the PH has been used over the past century, reflect on how it's used today, and envision how it will be used in the future as we prepare for its renovation. We've got a lot of ground to cover. Being a former teacher, let's begin with a pre-test. Take a look at the following questions that pertain to our parish house. How many can you answer? Not too many? I expect you to be paying attention next year!

- What was the source of wealth of parish house donors Margaret Buckingham and Isabel Freeman? Where did the sisters live?
- What is the value of the 1910 gift in today's dollars?
- How were rector Randolph McKim and parish house

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architect Frederick Brooke related? What else is Brooke responsible for in Washington?

- What connection is there between my alma mater, the University of Richmond, and our parish house?
- What's the story on the fireplace in Christian's office?
- Is there a connection between our Willard Room and the Willard Hotel?
- What do an admiral, a colonel, and a Secretary of the Navy all have in common?
- What gift did parish house committee member John Taylor Arms give to the church in 1910?
- How do presidents James Buchanan and Theodore Roosevelt fit into the story of our parish house?
- What function did the longest serving vestry member (Nathaniel Wilson) perform at the parish house dedication?
- Why was our parish hall full of military personnel during the World Wars?
- What was the original purpose of the parish hall?

Making Room for God, Making Room for Each Other....An Attainable Goal

By Larry Ellis

A warm fall day, cars arriving from all over the Virginia diocese, kids spilling out, running, shouting, the joy of being alive. Moving into quarters, unpacking, signing in, standing in line for the dinner of barbeque beef on a bun, coleslaw, ice tea...greeting old and new friends in our designated spot....it can only be Shrine Mont.

Ann Gordon, Karen Rowe, Olivia Gray, and Susan Walker were the instigators of this fabulous weekend retreat in the Virginia mountains. Our first session was led off by Karen on the piano (who believes in grand finales). Needless to say, our voices were lusty and our hearts full. Our sessions were not teacher-student, preacher-congregation, but narrative-participation. The group was in a circle, each person could see the rest of the group, and narrative-conversation flowed.

The social hour was a high point of the day, a time to know each other and relax with good friends. The social hour was at Portlock House (named after the family that had lived there). With two huge living spaces and a large dining room and kitchen, it was perfect for our gathering.



After the second session on Saturday morning, we had lunch and then free time until dinner. That evening we trekked into an open space to enjoy a bonfire and gooey marshmallows and s'mores. Then, it was back to Portlock for a "banquet" and more libations, all provided by Ann Gordon - More laughter and great fun.



Sunday morning breakfast was of pancakes, sausage, baked apples, cold cereals, juice, and coffee. Our third session was similar to those before: a passage of scripture was read and it was our task to place ourselves in the scene and respond to Jesus as the event was taking place. Then, we reflected on how we experienced to the story. It was a very revealing and exhilarating experience which seemed to affect all of us.



We joined with an Episcopal church from Falls Church, Virginia, for Eucharist at the Shrine. This was one of the churches in Virginia that has split and these were the members who had remained in the diocese. It was a lively event with a small "band" of a tuba, piano, clarinet, harp and horn. We sang spirited hymns, listened to the message, and celebrated Eucharist together. It was a lovely time together and our group was so appreciative that Falls Church parish welcomed us into their midst. Lunch was our final meal together. We hugged and wished each other a safe trip home.

The fall retreat is always a special time that allows us to rest, relax, and reflect away from the hustle and bustle of the city. If you are curious about the retreat, come next year and experience a marvelous, relaxing sense of community and spiritual nurturing. You will be glad you did.

Epiphany Welcomes
these New and
Returning Members



Lois Nembhard with
Junior Warden Jennifer Cate



Jamal McKnight



Bre Reed



Patty Smith



Esther Agbaje



John Agbaje

Thanks for making the Fannie Mae Help the Homeless Mini Walk a huge success. Despite the chill, about 70 of us walked to the White House where we sang and offered prayers. To those who sponsored walkers, helped with sign in and breakfast, or walked with us, you made a difference. If you missed the mini walk, but would like to support Samaritan Ministry, plan to attend the BIG walk on Saturday, November 21st. Check the Fannie Mae Help the Homeless web page or that of Samaritan Ministry.



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Church of the Epiphany						
November 2009						
1 All Saints' Day 7:00 NA/Gospel Art! 7:00 Welcome Table Bible Study 7:30 Welcome Table Choir 8:00 Welcome Table Eucharist 8:45 The Welcome Table 9:10 Welcome Table Choir 10:00 Epiphany Choir 10:45 Liturgical Leaders 11:00 All Saints' Festival Eucharist 12:15 All Saints' Feast	2 12:00 AA/SLAA 12:10 Contemplative Eucharist 1:15 Muslim Prayers 6:00 Franciscan Spirituality Group	3 11:00 Ford's Theatre 12:00 Al-Anon 12:10 Tuesday Concert 1:00 Street Church Liturgy 1:15 Muslim Prayers 2:00 Street Sense Vendors 6:00 Worship Ministry Team	4 9:30 Committee of 100 11:00 Ford's Theatre 10:00 Labyrinth/Staff mtg. 12:00 AA/ Al-Anon 12:10 Healing Eucharist 1:15 Muslim Prayers 2:30 SS Writers 6:00 Evening of Prayer	5 11:00 Ford's Theatre 12:00 SLAA 12:10 Holy Eucharist 1:15 Muslim Prayers 2:00 Street Sense Vendors 6:00 Street Sense Volunteers 7:15 Choir	6 11:00 Ford's Theatre 12:00 AA 12:10 Holy Eucharist 1:15 Islamic Prayer Service 6:00 Epiphany Course	7 9:00 Ford's Theatre 9:00 Epiphany Course
8 The 23rd Sunday after Pentecost 7:00 NA/Gospel Art! 7:00 Welcome Table Bible Study 7:30 Welcome Table Choir 8:00 Welcome Table Eucharist 8:45 The Welcome Table 9:00 Ford's Theatre 9:10 Welcome Table Choir 10:00 Epiphany Choir 10:45 Liturgical Leaders 11:00 Holy Eucharist/Godly Play 12:15 Annual Parish Meeting and Lunch 2:00 Street Sense	9 12:00 AA/SLAA 12:10 Contemplative Eucharist 12:30 Weekday Ministry Team 1:15 Muslim Prayers 5:00 Congressional Chorus rehearsal	10 9:30 Committee of 100 12:00 Al-Anon 12:10 Tuesday Concert 1:00 Street Church 1:15 Muslim Prayers 2:00 Street Sense Vendors 6:00 New Vestry Orientation	11 Church and Parish Office Closed for Veterans Day	12 7:30 Faith, Work, and Vocation St John's, McLean 12:00 SLAA 12:10 Holy Eucharist 1:15 Muslim Prayers 2:00 Street Sense Vendors 7:15 Choir	13 12:00 AA 12:10 Holy Eucharist 1:15 Islamic Prayer Service 5:00 Congressional Chorus Concert	14 8:00 Congressional Chorus Concert
15 The 24th Sunday after Pentecost 7:00 NA/Gospel Art! 7:00 Welcome Table Bible Study 7:30 Welcome Table Choir 8:00 Welcome Table Eucharist 8:45 The Welcome Table 9:10 Welcome Table Choir 10:00 Epiphany Choir/Listening Group 10:45 Liturgical Leaders 11:00 Holy Eucharist 12:15 Coffee Hour 12:45 Q of Faith: What Shall I Give to God?	16 12:00 AA/SLAA 12:10 Contemplative Eucharist 1:15 Muslim Prayers	17 12:00 Al-Anon 12:10 Tuesday Concert 1:00 Street Church 1:15 Muslim Prayers 2:00 Street Sense Vendors	18 10:00 Labyrinth/Staff mtg. 12:00 AA/ Al-Anon 12:10 Healing Eucharist 1:15 Muslim Prayers 2:30 SS Writers	19 12:00 SLAA 12:10 Holy Eucharist 1:15 Muslim Prayers 2:00 Street Sense Vendors 7:15 Choir	20 10:00 Street Sense Vendors 12:00 AA 12:10 Holy Eucharist 1:15 Islamic Prayer Service 6:00 YSOP	21 7:00 YSOP - Penn State University 9:00 Epiphany Choir Rehearsal & Lunch 4:30 YSOP - Penn State University
22 The Last Sunday after Pentecost 7:00 NA/Gospel Art! 7:00 Welcome Table Bible Study 7:30 Welcome Table Choir 8:00 Holy Eucharist 8:45 The Welcome Table 9:10 Welcome Table Choir 10:00 Epiphany Choir/Listening Group 10:45 Liturgical Leaders 11:00 Holy Eucharist/Godly Play 12:15 Celebration of Parish Ministries 4:00 YSOP-Penn State University	23 12:00 AA/SLAA 12:10 Contemplative Eucharist 12:30 YSOP-Penn State U 1:15 Muslim Prayers 6:00 Vestry	24 12:00 Al-Anon 12:10 Tuesday Concert 12:30 YSOP-Penn State U 1:00 Street Church 1:15 Muslim Prayers 2:00 Street Sense Vendors	25 10:00 Labyrinth/Staff mtg. 12:00 AA/ Al-Anon 12:10 Healing Eucharist 1:15 Muslim Prayers 2:30 SS Writers 5:30 Welcome Table Thanksgiving	26 Church and Parish Office Closed in Observance of Thanksgiving Day	27 Church and Parish Office Closed for Thanksgiving Holiday	28
29 The 1st Sunday of Advent 7:00 NA/Gospel Art! 7:00 Welcome Table Bible Study 7:30 Welcome Table Choir 8:00 Holy Eucharist 8:45 The Welcome Table 9:10 Welcome Table Choir/Listening Group 10:00 Epiphany Choir 10:45 Liturgical Leaders 11:00 Holy Eucharist/Godly Play 12:15 Coffee Hour	30 St. Andrew, Apostle 12:00 AA 12:10 Contemplative Eucharist 1:15 Muslim Prayers 6:00 Come and See Ministry Team					



November's Eco-Tip



If you haven't already approached the subject with your friends and family, be the courageous one who says, "*Could we limit our gift-giving this Christmas?*" You might find that everyone is thinking the same thing: we'd rather spend time with each other than rushing around buying gifts and then opening them in a frenzy. Of course, donating to the church or to a charity in someone's name can bring on that warm holiday glow like nothing you can package up in wrapping paper. Try reducing your Christmas carbon footprint this year.

The Rev. Randolph Charles, Rector

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