

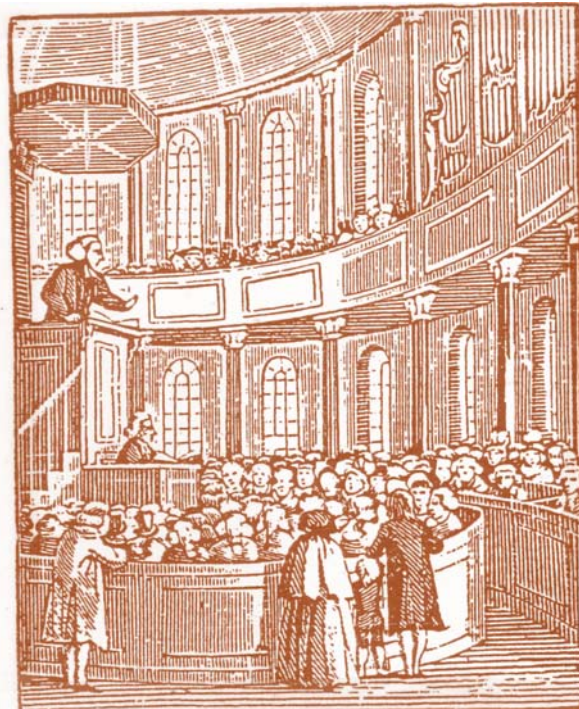
SOUNDS

Of

Volume 40 No. 05

January 31, 2010

S
A
I
N
T
F
R
A
N
C
I
S



ANNUAL MEETING OF POTOMAC PARISH

JANUARY 31, 2010

FOLLOWING THE 9:00 AM SERVICE

THERE WILL BE NO SERVICE AT 11:15 AM

FROM THE RECTOR

Perhaps you heard or read this story last week. A young boy on a US Airways flight between New York City and Louisville caused the pilot to divert the flight to Philadelphia where it landed and was boarded by gun-toting police. The boy's "offense"? He was praying.

The story is not a case of profiling, but of misunderstanding and prudence. This devout youth is Jewish, and the cause of alarm was his use of the tefillin, a prayer shawl with four small boxes in which are placed scriptural verses. Among Orthodox Jews, the use of tefillin during daily prayers is a common sight. To those unfamiliar with this aspect of ritual observance, the tefillin would present a strange, even bizarre – and not to mention alarming – appearance. That is why the flight attendant notified the pilot of a strange situation, and the pilot decided prudently to divert the flight. They landed at Philadelphia where security guards boarded the plane and questioned the boy.

The report indicated that everyone involved took the incident with good grace. Given the anxiety many justly feel in this age of terrorism, it is better to err on the side of caution. According to an account in the next day's *New York Times*, the other passengers were alarmed when they saw the boy strap the tefillin on his head and arm to begin his prayers. They had no idea what he was doing. The *Times* reported the wry observation of the boy's rabbi: "I would suggest, pray on the plane and put the tefillin on later on," he said. "Pray, and fulfill the ritual later."

When I heard the story, I wondered which was really the more unfamiliar sight – the tefillin, or a young man praying on a jetliner. That is not an easy question to answer. The prayer shawl would not have been all that unusual to many eyes in New York City, but neither does one doubt the reasons for alarm on a jetliner. Still, devout practice in a secular age such as

ours raises more than a few eyebrows. The other night I was in a restaurant and watched as a family not only bowed their heads in a table blessing, but went so far as to place their hands in a posture of prayer. I wondered how many other diners found their action quaint, inappropriate in public, or just plain mystifying. Likewise, I was once driving through rural Pennsylvania when I noticed two Amish children, a boy and a girl, making their way home from school. They were attired in traditional dress and riding in a buggy. I was tempted to take their picture, until I realized such would have been a rude act and invasion of their privacy. Nevertheless, their adherence to their religious identity caught my eye in a way other children did not on that school day afternoon.

Closer to home, David Hirsch tells the story of a parent new to our parish who asked David, "What have you done to my son? He is reading the Bible!" In its own way, such behavior struck this father as curious as the tefillin does to those who had not seen one before. Is it "odd" behavior for a teenager to read the Bible? It should not be, but in fact, it is remarkable, and it is a testament (no pun intended) to seriousness about one's faith that is as touching and encouraging as the Jewish boy's attention to his prayer life even on a flight from New York to Kentucky. Standing apart from the crowd is seldom easy, especially in one's teen years. The issue is hardly the care taken by the US Airway crew, nor are they to be faulted for not recognizing tefillin. As the boy's rabbi said, "You can't expect the whole world to know what this ritual is about." But here was a prime opportunity to learn something of value. I would like to think those who were on the flight (and even readers of the *New York Times*) had reason to think about their own commitment to faith, and perhaps to learn an important lesson from their fellow passenger.

LISTEN UP!

I love the seasons, all four of them. Each can invoke strong images, emotions, and provide context for a flood of memories. Who can resist the lure of spring as flowers freshly sprung redress the austerity of old man winter? One of my sweetest spring memories is foraging the front yard of our home in Tulsa for four-leaf clovers. I still have one residing at Psalm 100 in the Bible I received at confirmation over forty years ago.

High summer brings leisure to many with holiday excursions, welcome warm breezes and a slower pace hearkening us back to gentler days. What could be better than to grab the inner tube, throw on some flip-flops, and head down to the nearest swimmin' hole?

With its snap in the air and dazzling color to the eye, autumn quickens awareness and pulls at the heart-strings with a sort of exquisite melancholy. I suppose almost all of us relate it to returning to school as children, a not altogether unpleasant prospect at Elliot Elementary School just a block away from that clover-laden front yard of ours.

And I remember well the excitement at winter's first snowfall, especially those rare ones of my boyhood homes in the Southwest. Maybe even no school would come of it – quick, grab the sled and head to the steepest hill!

Now before this picture gets too rosy, let's balance it with the reality that winter brings flu bugs, black ice, heating bills, and certain depression for many. Spring, despite its beauty, gives the allergy-prone cause for pure misery and taunts those of us confined to indoor work. Bee stings, sunburns, and suspicious church supper Jello salads can spoil any pleasant summer somnolence. Likewise, fall schedule crunches, deadlines, and more blessings for allergy sufferers can blanket autumn with a scratchy cover of tribulations.

The seasons, in all their guises, are described and used as powerful simile and metaphor throughout the scriptures. I have come to appreciate our marking the Incarnation during the season reminiscent of our own unwilling wintry hearts, even if the birth of Jesus did not occur in the bleak mid-

winter. In turn, Easter in the springtime, that queen of seasons, bright! aids our dull and stubborn minds by giving vivid visual and visceral glimpses, if only dimly, of just how great a gift our Lord's resurrection is.

The most popular music portrayal of the four seasons is by Blessed Francis's fellow countryman and cleric, Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741). His musical depiction of the seasons was written in 1723 in the form of four concerti for violin and string orchestra. The violin part is terribly virtuosic, perhaps tailored to Vivaldi's own prowess as a violinist. The works are archetypes of the baroque concerto, each in three movements (fast-slow-fast) pitting a solo player, or small group, against the fuller accompanying ensemble. In the baroque era, orchestral works always included a 'continuo,' comprised of an instrument capable of filling in harmony, such as a harpsichord or the lute-like theorbo, and a gamba or 'cello, which plays the foundational bass line. Composers did not write out the continuo part except for the bass line with a series of shorthand numbers indicating the desired harmony at any given point. As a result, the inventiveness of the player can often put the distinctive stamp on a performance.... for better or for worse.

There are many wonderful recordings of *The Four Seasons*, but I'm going to recommend one because of the continuo playing. Originally issued in 1970 on the Argo label, it's available now as an MP3 download at Amazon.com. The violinist is Alan Loveday, whose elegant brilliant playing is enough reason to buy this recording. The continuo player is Simon Preston, then organist of Christ Church, Oxford, and former chorister and organ scholar at King's College Chapel, Cambridge. His ability to provide harmonic 'realization' and rhythmic drive while adding telling tucks and turns is nothing short of thrilling. While the sound quality is not up to par with more recent digital issues, the performance is unbeatably delicious! Sir Neville Marriner deftly directs the incomparable Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields, which he founded in 1959. By all means, get a copy and Listen Up!

Gary Davison, O-C



SUNDAY SCHOOL LENTEN PROJECT TO HELP HAITI

Because the need is so great in Haiti, we are starting the 2010 Lenten Project before Lent this year. We will give each Sunday School family their Mite Box and information on Jan. 31st. During Lent we will learn more about Haiti, the poorest nation in the western hemisphere. We are once again donating through Food For the Poor, Inc and their Operation Starfish program.

Food For The Poor, (FFTP) the largest international relief and development organization in the United States, does much more than feed millions of hungry poor in 17 countries of the Caribbean and Latin America. This interdenominational Christian agency provides emergency relief assistance, clean water, medicines, educational materials, homes, support for orphans and the aged, skills training and micro-enterprise development assistance, with more than 96 percent of all donations going directly to programs that help the poor.

Since FFTP is already “feet on the ground” in Haiti, they are uniquely positioned to help. Before the earthquake, FFTP had 222 projects underway in Haiti and they had completed 464 others since 1996. The Rt. Rev’d. Leopold Frade, Bishop of the Diocese of Southeast Florida who has visited St. Francis, is on the Board of Directors.



We will have extra materials for parishioners who would like to join in our efforts.

ANNUAL MEETING

The annual meeting of Potomac Parish will be held Sunday following the 9:00 service. Nominees for election include Steve Wilson (Junior Warden), Gary Bachman, Bob Jannotta, Lee Anne Jillings, and George Maroulis for the vestry, and Susan Dolan as delegate to diocesan convention. In addition to reports on the health of the parish, there will be an opportunity for discussion of some long-term priorities for the future.

Sunday school classes will last for the duration of the meeting. There is no 11:15 service this week.

OUTREACH CORNER

Opportunities to do good and dine out abound in January and February.

Help support **Habitat for Humanity** in Montgomery County. Potomac Pizza is sponsoring Community Night for Habitat on January 25 in the Kentlands in Gaithersburg and on February 22 in Potomac from 4-9 pm. Bring the family, neighbors, sports team, or scout troop along to eat well and support Habitat.

If pizza or Italian food do not entice you, there are many more restaurants participating in *Thanksgiving in February*. On February 23rd, more than 50 participating restaurants will help **feed the hungry** by donating a portion of their proceeds to food banks in Montgomery County. All you have to do is force yourself to choose only one of the many participating eateries from Potomac to Poolesville and Bethesda to Burtonsville. Copies of the flyer listing the participating restaurants will be on the bulletin board outside St Francis Hall shortly. If you are cannot dine out that day, but would still like to help, you can send a contribution to *Thanksgiving in February*, c/o Interfaith Works, 114 W. Montgomery Ave., Rockville Md. 20850.

BECOME A PUBLISHED AUTHOR

Contribute to the Holiday Supplement of the St. Francis Cookbook! We are looking for favorite family recipes enjoyed on special occasions, especially entrees, vegetables, and one pot meals. Please put your contribution in the Women of St. Francis mailbox or e-mail them to info@stfrancispotomac.org with "Holiday Recipes" in the subject line.

FEBRUARY'S SENIOR LUNCHEON TOPIC

Global Climate Change: Past, Present, and What the Future May Bring

It is time for another Pot Luck Luncheon! Our first pot luck was so successful that we want to do it again! It resulted in many delectable dishes and very few left-overs! We also uncovered some talented cooks, as well as some handy sources for take-out.

On February 18th, we are very pleased to have one of our own, Dr. George Stosur, as our guest speaker. George recently retired from the U. S. Government Service, having directed research related to global energy resources and global climate change. This promises to be a fascinating and timely subject. More details will be provided as the day grows nearer.

JAZZ VESPERS AT CHRIST, ROCKVILLE

At 5 p.m. Jan. 31, the Rev. John McDuffie and the Jim Levy Trio will play jazz standards to accompany the liturgy of evening prayer.

A free-will offering will be received to support Episcopal Relief and Development's work in Haiti.

For further information visit www.christchurchrockville.org or call 301/762-2191.

ST. FRANCIS WEEK AT CBS -

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14 - SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20

The Community Based Shelter (CBS) provides short term housing for 30 homeless women working to move into permanent housing. **The Parish Outreach Committee invites you to join us in February!** Your commitment is vital and flexible and you can choose the activities which work for you.

Volunteers are needed to:

- **Pre-shop** for the supplies and paper goods for the week: **2-3 hours.**
- **Provide dinner** for 30 at CBS - **2 hours;**
- **Prepare daily bag lunches** for 30- **less than 1hour/day.**

More details, sign-up sheets, menu suggestions, & directions are posted on the bulletin board adjacent to St. Francis Hall. Please contact Susan Dolan at 301-279-9129 or (sldolan@comcast.net) or Andy Jordan at 301-299-3162 (marionaj@aol.com) with questions.

Please form a team with some friends and join us!

LINENS AND TOILETRIES COLLECTION

We are also collecting supplies used by the residents in collection boxes by the kiosk outside the church office for your convenience. Most particularly needed are:

- **Twin/bunk-sized** bed linens
- Towels & wash cloths,
- Deodorant & bath soap
- Feminine hygiene supplies,
- Safety razors & Shaving cream
- Laundry detergent (powder preferred)
- Flashlights w/ batteries for power outages
- Dental care items (note: oral rinses must be alcohol free, e.g. Crest Pro Health)
- Other toiletries (Full-size & travel sizes are both gratefully accepted)

COMING UP AT SAINT FRANCIS CHURCH

For more information, please visit our website at www.stfrancispotomac.org

SUNDAY, JANUARY 31

Loaves & Fishes Food Delivery
8:00am Holy Eucharist
9:00am Holy Eucharist
St Francis Church Annual Meeting
No 11:15 am Service

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2

5:30 pm St. Nicholas Training Choir
5:30 pm St. Clare Girl Choir
7:00 pm Centering Prayer—Undercroft

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3

10:00 am Holy Eucharist
11:00 am Rector's Bible Study
5:30 pm Jr. High Bible Study

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4

5:00 pm *Sounds* Deadline for 2/14/10
5:30 pm Sr. High Bible Study
7:30 pm St Francis Choir

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 5

7:00 am Men's Bible Study

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7

8:00 am Holy Eucharist
9:00 am Holy Eucharist
Sunday School and Adult Education Hour
11:15 am Holy Eucharist



The Scripture appointed for the Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany
Jeremiah 1:4-10, Psalm 71:1-6, 1 Corinthians 13:1-13, Luke 4:21-30

Periodical postage paid
At Rockville, MD 20850

SOUNDS OF ST. FRANCIS (USPS 561-890)
is published weekly (except the last week in
December) and biweekly in July and August by
St. Francis Episcopal Church, 10033 River Road,
Potomac, MD 20854; telephone (301) 365-2055.

WEB ADDRESS: www.stfrancispotomac.org.

PUBLISHER: William M. Shand, III; Staff: Anne
Haller, Herb Haller, Liz McLean McCordic, Helen
Stupar, and Aradine Tardy
Periodical postage paid at Rockville, MD 20850.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Sounds of
St. Francis, 10033 River Rd, Potomac, MD 20854