

SOUNDS

of

Volume 40 No. 12

March 21, 2010

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Lent Fifth Sunday in

O Almighty God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men: Grant unto thy people that they may love the thing which thou commandest, and desire that which thou dost promise; that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

FROM THE RECTOR

Some of us live our Christian lives set to music. From the exultant Song of Miriam, (Exodus 15:20-21) possibly the most ancient text in the Bible, through St Paul's exhortation that with gratitude we "sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God" (Colossians 3:16), the praise of God resounds with music. Those who bequeath to the Church the legacy of song enrich our worship beyond measure. If St John and St Paul, Cranmer and Luther (among many), have been formative influences, so have Bach and Handel, and authors such as Isaac Watts, Charles Wesley, and James Montgomery. The words of our music help shape our theological understanding, and allow our thoughts to find expression.

It is no exaggeration to count in that blessed company of our spiritual guides Francis Bland Tucker (1895-1984). A faithful priest of the Episcopal Church, Dr. Tucker's gracious touch enriched both the 1940 and 1982 editions of the Episcopal hymnal. In the current book, he is listed as the author or translator of twenty-four texts, and that does not begin to reckon the influence his scholarship and grace brought to the language and thinking of the commission which produced the book.

Bland Tucker was a Virginia Gentleman of the old school, the 13th child in a clergy family that included missionary priests and bishops. He studied at "The" university in Charlottesville and "The" seminary in Alexandria, and then served parishes in Virginia, the District, and Georgia. For twenty years he was the Rector of St John's, Georgetown, and then for twenty-two years served as Rector of Christ Church, Savannah, where one of his predecessors was John Wesley. It was my privilege to do my field education at St John's, and it was not uncommon to see Dr. Tucker either in the

pews there or on campus in Alexandria, and thus I got to know him pleasantly. He signed my 1940 hymnal, but did so laughing that he guessed Watts and Wesley were not available.

To study all of his texts would be a productive and edifying course. Hymnals are excellent sources of theology (although not all hymnals are equal, to be sure). For the present, given the time of the Christian year we are approaching, I want to commend only one of his texts, that of Hymn 477, "All praise to thee, for thou, O King divine." It is a metrical setting of Philippians 2:5-11. Scholars believe St Paul is citing an even earlier Christian hymn, the *Carmen Christi*, so in Dr. Tucker's text we have a setting of Scripture which itself quotes an ancient hymn – a full circle indeed. That portion of Philippians is appointed for use on Palm Sunday, and we would sing the hymn that day but for one problem: The refrain to Charles Villiers Stanford's grand tune includes "Alleluia", the use of which we have given over during Lent. (See Hymn 122 also when you do this Lenten study.)

Dr. Tucker's eloquent text captures both the meaning and the majestic poetry of the ancient theological insight of the self-emptying love our Lord poured out on the Cross. He to whom all glory was by right given did not grasp that status, but rather did the work of a servant – the Suffering Servant of whom Isaiah wrote (52:13-53:12) – and has been vindicated by his Father as no one else in all of creation's history. The soaring poetry of this text, alleluias notwithstanding, is just the right thing to have in mind as we prepare to welcome the Son of David and walk with him through these holy days to come.

MUSIC AT EVENTIDE

LENTEN VESPERS FOLLOW-UP

The first order of business is to offer thanks for the opportunity to gather in the beauty of holiness. We have been blessed abundantly at St Francis Church and it is meet and right (and our bounden duty) to give thanks for the same. Our March 7th Vespers service gave us that opportunity once again and it was good to have so many in the congregation to join in that corporate act of worship.

The Choir is to be thanked, as well, for leading us in that liturgy. The dedication and efforts of our choristers continue to impress; despite the disadvantage of our “dry” acoustics, they bring much great choral music to life to the aid and benefit of our gatherings.

Two people to whom special thanks should be extended are Francoise Williams and Susan Dolan for their planning and execution of the elegant reception following. We dare not take those who work behind the scenes for granted even though it is easy to do, especially when things go as smoothly as they do under the guidance of Francoise and Susan. Others contribute to these efforts and we are grateful to you, as well. However, this time it was F and S who were the last two standing!

It is a special blessing when we have a gathering that appreciates the adornment afforded us in the refined choral tradition of the Anglican Church. We dare not take this for granted either nor should we allow ourselves any assumption that this tradition will remain in use without our care and continuance. Of particular importance is the education of young ears to absorb this genre and appreciate its profound beauty and understand its edifying depths. I ask and encourage you to continue doing your part toward that end.

In the spirit of transparency – a current buzzword of some seeming importance – I do want to inform you of one aspect of our evening liturgies that needs attention. It is the matter of the offering, which is “free will.” Typically, an alms basin is placed at the entry into the nave; the plate is not passed for these occasions, so it is easy to miss it. We estimate attendance to have been at least 150, which is a good turnout. The offering for this service totaled \$344. Of that amount there were four checks, which totaled \$250. That means the remaining cash came to just \$94. For the sake of the point, I’ll subtract 10 to represent those families, and divide the \$94 by 140. That comes to 67¢ per person, which is not such a good turnout. In general, this collection is used to supplement support for our *Music at Eventide* series and, on occasion, given to special outreach projects. In this case, the supplemental cost to mount Vespers was \$500. The remainder (e.g. section leaders, choral scholars, printing, and sheet music) was covered by our normal operating budget, a not insignificant amount for which I am grateful to this parish.

I do hope this is useful information and that it will serve in a positive way to encourage a more generous hand. If worship is our true *raison d’être*, then we should be hard at work to ensure its most worthy delivery. There simply is no other option. Please be assured you have a staff most grateful for the generosity already shown and who take care to spend wisely. We look forward to seeing you in church again and I hope you will continue to invite others in to our loving and lively parish family.

Gary Davison, O-C

THE THRIFT SALE IS UPON US!

The Thrift Sale will be held on:

**Friday, 3/26, 8 am to 4pm and
Saturday, 3/27, 8 am to 1 pm**

Items for the sale can be brought to the church hall at the following times:

Sunday, 3/21 11:15 am—2 pm
after Christian & Adult Education;
Monday, 3/22 9 am—4 pm;
Tuesday, 3/23 7 am—4 pm;
Wednesday, 3/24 9 am—8 pm;
Thursday, 3/25 9 am—12 Noon.

There are early morning hours on Tuesday and late hours on Wednesday to accommodate the schedules of working people. Nothing will be accepted after Thursday noon in order to allow volunteers to sort and price the merchandise.

We take all sorts of items: clothing, jewelry, toys, books, household items, small furniture, and art work are a few. **No stuffed animals or electronic equipment please.** When donating clothing, please remember that the items should be clean, in good condition, and something you would wear yourself.

We still need volunteers to help sort and price the items during the hours above. If you have an hour or more to volunteer to this great cause, it will be appreciated. Lunch will be provided for volunteers. Please sign up outside the Hall or call Beth Higgins (301-294-3344) or Mary Ashworth (301-251-9255). This is a perfect opportunity for teenagers to get community service hours



Helping Children in Haiti

Please return your Mite Box.

THIS Sunday—March 21st.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR—IT'S BACK!

The very popular All-Parish Dinner & Golf Tournament has been re-scheduled for April 23rd. The Golfers' shotgun start is at 1 pm; drinks before dinner around 5:30 pm, and dinner starts at 6:00 pm.

Watch this space for more details.

THIRD THURSDAY VESPERS

Have you wondered what it would be like to worship on a Thursday evening with high school students from our Saint Francis Student Ministries? You needn't wonder anymore. Come **Thursday, March 18th, to Third Thursday Vespers at 6:30 pm** in Saint Francis Church.

This is not a service of Holy Communion; it is a candlelight service of Vespers that takes what the *Book of Common Prayer* calls "An Order of Worship for the Evening" and tunes it with music from the repertory of our Youth Ministry. The worship begins at 6:30 pm and ends at about 7:15 pm. Use the chapel entrance. **Parents and the public are invited and welcomed**, so bring a friend. And mark the following dates on your calendar: March 18th, April 15th, and May 20th.

EASTER MORNING EGG HUNT



Between the 9 am and 11:15 services, we will have an Easter Egg hunt for the pre-school and elementary school children on the field behind Glenolden. It's BYOB (Bring Your Own Basket) and family and friends (especially little ones) are welcome.

Please r.s.v.p. by Wednesday, 3/31, so we have some idea of how many eggs we will need to stuff! Anyone with empty eggs or who would like to join the egg stuffing, call Karen Schneider at 301-963-3585.

Rain Date: April 11th.

UPCOMING BAPTISMAL DATE

Easter Eve, April 3, is the next date for the administration of Holy Baptism. Those with candidates to present are encouraged to contact the Rector as soon as possible to arrange preparation for this baptismal date.



ESM CHANGES ITS NAME

Episcopal Senior Ministries has changed its name to Seabury Resources for Aging. The name change and new visual identity are intended to reflect the organization's growth over the past decade and ensure all feel welcomed to its homes and services. The new name alludes to Samuel Seabury, the first U.S. Episcopal Bishop, while reflecting the mission to serve all persons regardless of religious affiliation.

The agency is not changing staff or services, just its name, logo and Web site. ESM Cares Geriatric Care Management Service is now known as Seabury Care Management. Annie Shaw is the Director of Congregational Resources (formerly Parish Volunteer Services) and will continue to work with parishes. You may contact her at (202)414-6313 or AShaw@seaburyresources.org with any questions or visit the new Web site at seaburyresources.org.

A THEATER EXPERIENCE FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

Every year, the Potomac Theater Company does a springtime show which is especially appealing to the younger crowd and St. Francis families band together to purchase discounted tickets as a group. This year the play is Snow White & the Several Sillies - Book, Music & Lyrics by Marilyn Shockey. Join other St. Francis families for a production of

Snow White & The Several Sillies
March 20th at 3pm — Bullis School Arts Center

Tickets are \$12 at the door. For discount advance tickets, send an e-mail to Karen.schneider5@verizon.net. We hope you'll join us!



JOY AND CONCERN

Please hold in your prayers H.B. Yin who died March 9th.

WHY JOIN A BOOK CLUB?

A Book Club is one of the best entertainment deals available currently. No dues, no fees, no one taking attendance: the only expense is the cost of the book - unless you get it from the library- and that small investment pays off twice! Once, when you read these varied selections: some challenging, some purely entertaining, and then again when you get to explore them more deeply with an interesting group, each member of which brings a uniquely different perspective.

At this week's **meeting on Thursday, 3/25, at 7:30 pm** we will be discussing *A Reliable Wife* by Robert Goolrick. A few reviewers' comments follow.

"... my must-read recommendation... This engrossing and addictive novel will leave you both chilled and satisfied." —Chris Livingston, Summer's Best reads on NPR's *Morning Edition*

"A thrilling, juicy read . . . The writing is beautiful and the story is captivating. It's a real page-turner." *The Today Show*

COMING UP AT SAINT FRANCIS CHURCH

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

SUNDAY, MARCH 21

8:00 am Holy Eucharist
9:00 am Morning Prayer
Sunday School and Adult Education Hour
Thrift Sale Donations Drop-off after Forum
11:15 am Holy Eucharist

MONDAY MARCH 22

9 am-4 pm Thrift Sale Preparation

TUESDAY, MARCH 23

7 am-4 pm Thrift Sale Preparation
5:30 pm St. Nicholas Training Choir
5:30 pm St. Clare Girl Choir
7:00 pm Centering Prayer—Undercroft

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24

9 am-8 pm Thrift Sale Preparation
10:00 am Holy Eucharist
11:00 am Rector's Bible Study
5:30 pm Jr. High Bible Study

THURSDAY, MARCH 25

9 am-4 pm Thrift Sale Preparation
5:00 pm *Sounds* Deadline for 4/4/10
5:30 pm Sr. High Bible Study
7:30 pm St. Francis Choir
7:30 pm WSF Book Club—Hall

FRIDAY, MARCH 26

7:00 am Men's Bible Study
8 am—4 pm Thrift Sale

SATURDAY, MARCH 27

8 am—12 noon Thrift Sale

SUNDAY, MARCH 28

PALM SUNDAY

8:00 am Holy Eucharist
9:00 am Holy Eucharist
Sunday School and Adult Education Hour
11:15 am Holy Eucharist
5:00 pm Parents' Seminar—Library
5:00 pm Sanctuary—Glenolden House

The Scripture appointed for the Fifth Sunday in Lent

Isaiah 43:16-21, Psalm 126, Philippians 3:4b-14, John 12:1-8

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