

SOUNDS

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Volume 39 No. 21

May 24, 2009

St. Francis Church
Summer Schedule.

Holy Eucharist
Sundays at 8:00 and 10:00 a.m.
Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m.

COMING UP AT ST FRANCIS

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

SUNDAY, MAY 24

(Summer schedule begins)

8:00am Holy Eucharist

10:00am Holy Eucharist

MONDAY, MAY 25

Office Closed for Memorial Day

TUESDAY, MAY 26

5:30 pm St. Nicholas Training Choir

5:30 pm St. Clare Girl Choir

7:00 pm Centering Prayer—Undercroft

WEDNESDAY, MAY 27

10:00 am Holy Eucharist

11:00 am Rector's Bible Study

5:30 pm Jr. High Bible Study

THURSDAY, MAY 28

5:00 pm Sounds Deadline for 6/7

5:30 pm Sr. High Bible Study

7:30 pm St. Francis Choir

7:00 pm Book Club— Youth Room

FRIDAY, MAY 29

7:00 am Men's Bible Study

SATURDAY, MAY 30

8:00 am Loaves and Fishes Prep—Kitchen

SUNDAY, MAY 31

YOUTH SUNDAY

8:00 am Holy Eucharist

9:45am Loaves & Fishes servers leave SFC

10:00 am Morning Prayer

The Scripture appointed for the Day of Pentecost:
Acts 1:15-17, 21-26; Psalm 1; 1 John 5:9-13; John 17:6-19

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FROM THE RECTOR

Memorial Day comes this year on its earliest possible date. It may well be that the cool May we have enjoyed will serve to remind us that Memorial Day is much more than the unofficial beginning of summer or a time for seasonal sales, which to some is all the day represents. It should mean more.

The finest single volume of American history I read in 2008 was *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War*. The author is Drew Gilpin Faust, President of Harvard University. Dr Faust had earned considerable distinction as a historian before her elevation to the prestigious position she now holds, and in this work one sees many reasons why she is held in such esteem.

Her thesis is direct: Americans “embarked on a new relationship with death” as a result of the carnage of the War. Between 1861 and 1865, an estimated 620,000 Americans were war casualties. For comparison, Dr Faust states that a comparable death rate by today’s reckoning would be on the order of six million fatalities. Let me put that in numbers so you can count the zeroes: 6,000,000. That is slightly more than the entire population of Maryland today.

But it is not in numbers that the story is told. Rather, we read of the ways Americans North and South had to confront what it meant to lose so many people, and how death was faced. A personal example touches on this thesis: In the churchyard of Trinity Cathedral, Columbia lies the body of Lt. Oscar LaBorde, a South Carolina Confederate soldier. A childhood friend of my great-grandfather, LaBorde died in the tragic battle of Averasboro, North Carolina in the closing days of the War. While not recounting LaBorde’s story specifically, Dr Faust tells what it took to recover and return

the fallen of both armies to their families, and how important that was. I think of the friendship between Oscar LaBorde and Robert Shand every time I walk by his grave, and appreciate more deeply the significance of that grave to his family.

Drew Faust did not set out to write a work of theology, but to the Christian reader with eyes to see, the theological implications of this volume are considerable. For instance, one story she tells is that of Union private Henry Struble. A veteran of the Battle of Sharpsburg, the War’s bloodiest single day, Struble was erroneously reported as dead in a case of mistaken identity. In a grave lay an unidentified soldier who had indeed died at Antietam, but it was not Henry Struble. From the time he learned of the misidentification Struble sent flowers to “his” grave every Memorial Day. Someone else had died in his stead, as it were, and Henry Struble never forgot that substitution. That is at the heart of the Christian story, if we have eyes to see it. I find Pvt. Struble’s gesture touching beyond words. With such stories and with much careful analysis, Dr Faust invites further consideration of death and patriotism and the importance of memory. That is why I think this book is so important. Reading this fine history fosters a deeper appreciation of the meaning of Memorial Day, and why the memory it encourages is vital to the nation’s health.

NOTICE TO PARENTS OF THE CLASS OF 2009

If your son or daughter is a member of a high school, college, or graduate class of 2009, please let us know. We wish to list those from our parish who will be graduating this spring. The only information we request is name and the school from which they are graduating. We will publish our list in June.

VESTRY CORNER: GROUNDS COMMITTEE

The Grounds Committee began functioning in 2006 with a membership of seven, including **Anne and Herb Haller, Don Harrison, Laurel Bahar, Bill Dinsmore, Mr. Thai, and Jim Baker**. Provision was also made for a member to be appointed to maintain liaison with the school and that tradition has continued with St. Andrew’s Episcopal being represented.

The Committee’s mission is (i) to oversee the performance of the landscape contractor and to communicate with the contractor’s representative on matters requiring attention, and (ii) to oversee the development of long term landscaping plans. We are fortunate to have a lovely campus here at St. Francis, but maintaining that result requires constant attention.

Committee meetings are held monthly and are also attended by the contractor’s representative. He reports on work accomplished in the previous month and makes plans for work to be undertaken. McFall & Berry Landscape Management Inc. started work for St. Francis on the first of March this year and the Committee is very pleased with its performance thus far.

From the outset, the committee recognized the challenge entailed in maintaining a landscape that has developed over a period of more than 50 years. Issues that need to be addressed include (i) renovation of turf in a number of areas, (ii) missing shrubs, shrubs in need of renovation pruning or in some case shrubs in need of removal, (iii) areas in need of replanting with more appropriate plants and (iv) extensive work required by the large mature trees that contain deadwood, need removal of lower branches and also the removal of branches that interfere

JOY AND CONCERN

Congratulations to Sarah Romayko Robart and Christopher Scott Sperry on their marriage in St. Francis Church on May 16, 2009.

with lights, buildings or walkways. The committee will be working with McFall & Berry to develop plans and schedules to address these needs over the coming months and years.

Now, as you walk through our luxuriant grounds, you will know whose hard work to credit for their beauty. Our thanks go to everyone on the Grounds Committee for their dedication and hard work. ✕

OUTREACH - GIFTS THAT KEEP ON GIVING

Looking for new gift ideas for birthdays, holidays, and other celebrations? Make a memorable gift in honor of the occasion and help improve the lives of those in need. Here are few suggestions:

- <http://inspiredgifts.unicefusa.org>; \$35 buys a bike for a health worker to reach remote areas where no health care can be had.
- <http://www.madebysurvivors.com>; buy jewelry made by survivors of sex trafficking which they sell to fund their rehab programs.
- <http://www.womensbeanproject.com>; support homeless women through employment and teaching work and life skills.
- <http://www.caringbridge.org>; hosts web sites for the chronically ill to keep in touch with friends and family.

Stay tuned, we have more great websites and ideas to come!