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Volume 40 No. 21

May 23, 2010

Exultate, justi

- 12 *Happy is the nation whose God is the LORD! *
happy the people he has chosen to be his own!*
- 13 *The LORD looks down from heaven, *
and beholds all the people in the world.*
- 14 *From where he sits enthroned he turns his gaze *
on all who dwell on the earth.*
- 15 *He fashions all the hearts of them *
and understands all their works.*
- 18 *Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon those who fear
him, *
on those who wait upon his love,*
- 19 *To pluck their lives from death, *
and to feed them in time of famine.*
- 20 *Our soul waits for the LORD; *
he is our help and our shield.*
- 21 *Indeed, our heart rejoices in him, *
for in his holy Name we put our trust.*
- 22 *Let your loving-kindness, O LORD, be upon us, *
as we have put our trust in you.*

Psalm 33:12-15, 18-22 Page 626, BCP

FROM THE RECTOR

Sunday brings the Feast of Pentecost, once commonly called Whitsunday. Pentecost is one of the Church's three main feasts, along with Christmas and Easter. That is a theological and liturgical truth, albeit one not widely acknowledged. One does not see on Pentecost that breed of churchgoer glimpsed like rare birds only on the other two festivals. In any event, it is generally only clerical types who insist, often priggishly, on the co-equal status of Pentecost as one of the *three* major Christian feasts.

The archaic nomenclature of "Whitsunday" derives from the practice in northern European locales of administering baptism on this feast rather than Easter, which was typically a much colder day. Baptismal candidates wore white garments for baptism – thus the term "White Sunday", which evolved into Whitsunday. Red is the liturgical color most often employed for the feast now, and it is not unusual to see lots of red-bedecked parishioners as well.

Pentecost is the older name, appropriated by the Church from Judaism. A Jewish festival known as the Feast of Weeks celebrated a combination of wheat harvests and the giving of the Law. Pentecost means "fifty days", and in the Church's reckoning of time, this festival comes fifty days after the Easter. Regular worshippers will note an immediate change on the fifty-first day, as it were: The acclamation at the start of the Holy Eucharist reverts to the basic Trinitarian formula – "Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit", which has not been used since the end of Epiphany. Eastertide, to use another archaic term, is over.

Many people see Pentecost as "the birthday of the Church". To speak of a birthday is misleading and erroneous. The Church was God's "new creation by water and the word" (cf., Hymn 525). Those who date the Church's creation on Pentecost point to the wonderful lesson from the second chapter of Acts, where St Luke employed the vibrant imagery of tongues of

flame, the sound of a mighty, rushing wind, and the ecstatic, universal proclamation of the Good News. That the Church should have had such an auspicious beginning is certainly one way to look at it. At the same time, there are variant claims for the Church's first Eden. One such claim dates it back to Abraham's time and the covenant established with God. Abraham, given a family and unnumbered promises, was sent out to a new land. Those who point to this view see it as the primordial commissioning of the Church. Yet a third view dates the origin of the Church to that moment of the Crucifixion when Jesus entrusted his Mother and the Beloved Disciple to one another, making a new community or family gathered at the foot of the Cross – a wonderful image for the nature and purpose of the Church, united in and by his love for them and theirs for him: "Made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him."

With something as varied as "that wonderful and sacred mystery", as that splendid collect from the ordination services puts it, it follows that there are many aspects to the origin of the Church. These three views complement one another: The Church without any one of the essential elements is less than the fullness God intends. Imagine a Church without the Holy Spirit, or without a sense of mission, or without the constitutive memory of Christ's death (and resurrection), and it is easy to see what is missing. The Church is all of those and more, and Pentecost is as good a day as any to celebrate the origins of the Church, provided we take the wider, longer view of things.

Note: This year we mark Youth Sunday at 9:00, and at 8:00 and 11:15 we shall observe the Feast of Pentecost with celebrations of the Holy Eucharist. On Trinity Sunday, May 30, we will ease into the summer schedule, with services at 8:00 and 10:00. See you in church.

HALLER MEMORIAL GIFTS

Anne and Herb Haller have donated three boxwood plants to fill gaps in the low hedge that borders the drainage facility adjacent to Counselman Road. Their gift is made in loving memory of Anne's parents, Thomas F. Garey III & Edith C. Garey and her sister and brother, Dixie E. Garey & Thomas F. Garey IV and Herb's parents, Iva Shanabrook Haller and Herbert L. J. Haller.

For many years, Anne and Herb have contributed substantially, through their own work and resources, to the beautification of the gardens and grounds of St. Francis. Their efforts and commitment are gratefully acknowledged.

STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL & SILENT AUCTION

Redeemer, Bethesda will hold its **37th Annual Strawberry Festival and Silent Auction** from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on June 12. Bid on vacations, dinners, tours, outings, works of art, food baskets and more and enjoy fresh strawberries, hamburgers, children's games, books, clothing and gift sales. Visit www.redeemberbethesda.org for more information or call 301/229-3770.

NEWS FROM SAMARITAN MINISTRY

Next Step Experience – Hear from people who are working to change their lives through Samaritan Ministry of Greater Washington's *Next Step* Program at a free, one-hour event on Tuesday, **May 25 at 1:15 pm** at **1516 Hamilton St, NW, D.C. 20011**. For more information, contact Mary Belknap at 202-722-2280 ext. 305 or at mbelknap@samaritanministry.org.

Samaritan Ministry's Next Step Program changes lives. Here's Ron and Jessica's story.*

Ron, 21, and Jessica, 19, fell in love, and she soon became pregnant. A wedding followed. Life has not been easy for them, but with a one-year-old daughter to care for, the young couple is determined to get it right. They discovered Samaritan Ministry while staying in an Alexandria shelter for the homeless.

Christmas was two weeks away and it looked like there would be no gifts for their young

JOY AND CONCERN

Please join in prayer for Laura Reap Reed, grandmother of Gary Widrick who died.

This issue of *Sounds* brings a note of great sadness: Deanne Tardy died May 13th. For the past several years she had been a faithful member of the production crew for this newsletter, coming each week to prepare the mailing without which it would not be possible to put *Sounds* in the hands of the Postal Service. Her dedication was matched only by her unflinching cheerfulness, and we shall miss her very much. We give thanks that now she has entered the rest promised to her by her Lord, in whom she trusted in fullest measure. - WMS

daughter. As active participants in Samaritan Ministry's *Next Step* Program, they attended the family Christmas party. They were thrilled to find gifts appropriate for their one-year-old, which came from generous donors. They chose a Tickle Me Elmo, much to the delight of their little girl.

After the holidays the family hoped to move into a new family shelter and apply for jobs and benefits. With help from their case-worker, they applied for and received a housing grant for rental assistance and help obtaining food.

After struggling to maintain stability in employment, both Ron and Jessica now have jobs. Ron works as a restaurant server and Jessica as a certified nursing assistant. But best of all, for the first time in their lives together, the young family has a place to call their own, a small 2 room apartment in D.C.

The couple continues to work with Samaritan Ministry to maintain stability in housing, employment and personal finances. They want to be sure their daughter has a loving home and enough food to eat. With the support and help setting goals that they receive at Samaritan Ministry, Ron and Jessica are well on their way.

Our parish is a Samaritan Ministry partner parish. To find out more about how you can help in this ministry, visit www.samaritanministry.org.

COMING UP AT SAINT FRANCIS CHURCH

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

SUNDAY, MAY 23

YOUTH SUNDAY

8:00 am Holy Eucharist
9:00 am Morning Prayer - Youth Service
Sunday School and Adult Education Hour
11:15 am Holy Eucharist

TUESDAY, MAY 25

7:00 pm Centering Prayer—Undercroft

WEDNESDAY, MAY 26

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

THURSDAY, MAY 27

5:00 pm *Sounds* Deadline for 6/6/10
5:30 pm Sr. High Bible Study
7:30 pm Book Club - Youth Rm

FRIDAY, MAY 28

7:00 am Men's Bible Study

SATURDAY, MAY 29

8:00 am Loaves & Fishes Preparation - Kitchen

SUNDAY, MAY 30

LOAVES & FISHES DELIVERY

8:00 am Holy Eucharist
10:00 am Holy Eucharist

The Scripture appointed for Pentecost

Acts 2:1-21; Psalm 104:25-35, 37; Romans 8:14-17; John 14:8-17,

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