

SOUNDS

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Volume 39 No. 23

June 7, 2009

COMING UP AT ST FRANCIS

SUNDAY, JUNE 7

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

TUESDAY, JUNE 9

10:30 am—Grounds Cmte—Workroom
5:30 Youth Bible Study
7:00 pm Centering Prayer—Undercroft

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10

10:00 am Holy Eucharist
11:00 am Rector's Bible Study

THURSDAY, JUNE 11

8:30 am Parish Life Committee
5:00 pm *Sounds* Deadline for 6/21

FRIDAY, JUNE 12

7:00 am Men's Bible Study

SUNDAY, JUNE 14

HUNGER SUNDAY

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

The Scripture appointed for Trinity Sunday:

Isaiah 6:1-8; Psalm 29 or Canticle 2 or 13; Romans 8:12-17; John 3:1-17

Periodical postage paid
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Trinity Sunday

Almighty and everlasting God, who hast given unto us thy servants grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of the Divine Majesty to worship the Unity: We beseech thee that thou wouldest keep us steadfast in this faith and worship, and bring us at last to see thee in thy one and eternal glory, O Father; who with the Son and the Holy Spirit livest and reignest, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

FROM THE RECTOR

Here is a story worth considering. Once upon a time, there was a bright, erudite star of promise in the English literary firmament. His name is A. N. Wilson, and he was the darling of the London literary crowd. Educated at Rugby and New College, Oxford, he rose in the writing establishment by dint of his skills as a critic and author.

Among his achievements were a score of novels, numerous essays and volumes of literary criticism, and biographies of John Milton, Leo Tolstoy, C. S. Lewis, and Jesus. Over the course of his career, controversy had not been unknown to him, but none more pertinent to consideration here than those which arose in theological disputes.

At one point in his life, he prepared for Holy Orders in a theological house of studies in Oxford. In those days he was on the "High Church" Anglo-Catholic end of the spectrum. Then something happened, and his faith began to erode. In a recent essay in London's *Daily Mail*, he described that transformation: "Like most educated people in Britain and Northern Europe (I was born in 1950) I have grown up in a culture that is overwhelmingly secular and anti-religious. The universities, broadcasters, and media are not merely non-religious, they are positively anti." He goes on. "For ten or 15 of my middle years, I, too, was one of the mockers..." Developments in his personal and professional life seemed to contribute to that erosion of faith.

It was during the phase when he was "one of the mockers" that he published his biography of C. S. Lewis. The extent to which his spiritual disposition colored his judgments of Lewis remains a source of speculation. The work on Lewis was surely flawed, less than it could have been in the hands of one with the talents Wilson has shown.

When he turned his hostile skepticism on Jesus (as a subject), he met his match. A scholar who is an exact contemporary of Wilson's, who also had Oxford in his background, stepped to the fore: N. T. Wright, then Chaplain and Tutor at Worcester College, Oxford but now Bishop of Durham, and

without question the leading Anglican scholar in the episcopal order, began to engage in a series of public debates in writing. Their debate produced, among other things, the short but rich study from Bishop Wright's pen, *Who was Jesus?*, a work which holds up well these years hence.

But to return to A. N. Wilson, now he is in a different place. In that essay he wrote for the *Daily Mail* (April 11, 2009), Wilson took issue with the those whom he called "the chattering class". "As time passed, I found myself going back to church, although at first only as a fellow traveler with the believers, not as one who shared the faith... My [eventual return to faith] has come about in large measure because of the lives and examples of people I have known – not the famous, not the saints, but friends and relations who have lived, and faced death, in the light of the Resurrection story, or in the quiet acceptance that they have a future after they die."

There is surely more to A. N. Wilson's story than just the brief account of it in the newspaper, and perhaps he will favor (favour?) us with his reflections in some future time. I hope so, even as I hope he will revise his Lewis biography in light of what he knows now that he could not see in 1992. But for us, here is the point: We are not among the famous or the saints, but those friends and relations who have lived in the light of the Resurrection story. It was not the logic even of Bishop Wright that invited Wilson back into the fold, but that is nothing new: Read I Corinthians 1:18-25 to discover that this story had been published long before A. N. Wilson put pen to paper.

N.B. The very day I finished this essay, an article on this subject appeared in *The Wall Street Journal* and was posted on-line. It made some of the same points I had tried to make, but was sufficiently dissimilar to mine – and was never a source for my work – that I proceeded to publish this anyway. So far as I know, the *Journal* article did not rely on mine, either. - wms

OUTREACH CORNER

SOME 40TH ANNIVERSARY INAUGURAL CONCERT

(A Women of St. Francis Outreach agency)

Please join SOME (So Others Might Eat) as it commemorates 40 years of service to the homeless and poor in Washington, DC, with a special benefit concert at the Crypt Church of the Basilica of the National Shrine on Wednesday, July 1 at 7:30 p.m. The renowned Georgetown Chorale will lead a choir of 100 voices in a performance of Henry Mollicone's moving Beatitude Mass (for the homeless) and selections from Les Misérables.

By weaving interviews with homeless women and men into pieces of the Mass, the moving words and music of the Beatitude Mass convey the struggles and hopes of the homeless that inspired composer Henry Mollicone's dramatic piece. Mr. Mollicone apprenticed under Leonard Bernstein and has been lauded by the Washington Post as "one of the most distinctive American opera composers."

Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for children and students and are available at www.georgetownchorale.org.

Concert proceeds will help SOME to continue to feed, clothe and serve the most vulnerable members of our community in these most difficult economic times. You can learn more at www.some.org.

BOOK CLUB'S LAST GATHERING ERE SUMMER COMES

The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows will be the choice for our next gathering on **June 25 at 7:30**. Please note the change of time! As the book jacket says, "the book is about the Isle of Guernsey during the German Occupation, and of a society as extraordinary as its name."

We will not meet during the summer, but for those eager to begin on Summer Reading, we have chosen Alice by Stacy A. Cordery. This 'entertaining and educational' book is about Alice Roosevelt Longworth, from White House Princess to Washington Power Broker.

—Mardy O'Neil

SUNDAY SCHOOL KUDOS

Congratulations to the following students who have completed their learning assignments since the last article.

GRADE TWO

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Katelyn Harral	Elizabeth Hough
Skylar Rubin	Caroline Schmalz
William Tenpas	Madison Yoest

GRADE FOUR

THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE - New Testament
Penelope Hough

GRADE SIX

PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS
Christopher Boinis Brenna Lofgren

SENIOR'S CANAL CRUISE

On **Thursday, June 18th**, we will meet at Great Falls Historic Tavern to end our season with an **11 am cruise** on the C & O canal aboard the Charles Mercer. This new barge is handicapped accessible will allow everyone to enjoy themselves comfortably.

You can reach The Tavern by driving to the end of Falls Road (at McArthur Blvd.) and taking a right into the park. After our boat trip, those who wish to will drive down McArthur Blvd. to Old Angler's Inn for lunch.

Please call Christine at 301-365-2055 to **make your reservation by June 15th** for the boat trip and for lunch.

C'MON DOWN FOR FAMILY FUN

Who's Invited: All Sunday School students, families and friends

What's On Tap: A Cookout, Moon Bounce, Face Painting, Back Yard Games, and more....

When: Friday, June 19th, 4 pm

Where: The Schneider's
12117 Drews Court, Potomac

Why: To celebrate a successful year of Sunday School

We will supply the burgers, dogs, & buns and something to wash them down. Our guests are asked to bring a side dish, a salad, or dessert to fill out the menu.

Come and have fun with friends and family. The kids will love the Moon Bounce and other activities and the adults can enjoy time relaxing and joining some of those backyard games.

Please RSVP to Christine at the office (301-365-2055) with the number of adults and children in your family, and some idea of what you'd like to add to the menu.

We look forward to seeing you there.

— Sponsored by the Women of St Francis

NOTICE TO PARENTS OF THE CLASS OF 2009

If your son or daughter is a member a 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 the name and the school from which they are graduating. We will publish our list in June.

VESTRY CORNER — FINANCE

Overseeing a church's finances requires more patience and faith than business acumen. Indeed, too much business experience might be a hindrance, since conservative business principles can only guide you so far in the area of church finances since we have a different set of priorities and goals.

We are fortunate to have, and are ably served by, a church finance staff of Margaret Riddle and Lourdes Gonzales. I also can rely upon a wealth of experience and judgment from the members of the Finance Committee, Norm Barker, Prentis Feagles, Bill Tull, Bill Wyatt and Steve Harper. I asked Steve Harper to participate since, as vestry member in charge of Stewardship, without his good work we would not have as much to do.

As you can imagine, we face our share of financial challenges. The Vestry adopted a very lean budget this year with substantial cuts from last year. We are still projecting a balanced operating budget and our pledge income has met budget projections (although I would like to be able to say they are exceeding expectations!) and expenses are tracking well. But, any surprise can knock us out of balance quite easily.

In addition to our operating budget, we also need to fund capital repairs and improvements and these are not covered by our operating budget. Such items are funded out of our reserve accounts, an unsustainable practice unless we replenish those accounts. I'm sure I will have more to say on this topic in the future, but for now let me thank you for your faithful Stewardship and ask that you remember the financial challenges we face.

— Gary Bachman

LISTEN UP!

The concluding Sunday Adult Education Forum for this past term gave me the opportunity to address briefly what it means to call certain church music "Anglican." I played some choral examples and gave pointers on how to listen more actively (an art somewhat diminished in our day, I'm afraid, but one I'm determined to help recapture).

Now, it's easy enough to say anything written for church by an English composer qualifies as Anglican. However, it's more accurate to look at stylistic considerations. Where choral music is concerned that means clarity: one note per word or syllable, for the most part. That's easy enough to hear and it's a style that served as the basic precept for composers as a result of the Reformation in the mid-16th century, a practice not much changed to this day. What has changed, as revealed in the examples I played, is the amazing expansion of the harmonic palette over time, and especially that of the last century. No doubt, many will say "not for the better." At first glance, that may be true unless you are predisposed to the richer, sometimes dissonant, harmonies of the modern age. However, those tenets set forth in the Reformation continue to shine through and will help us identify -- and appreciate -- a style still peculiarly Anglican.

For those who attended my forum presentation, you may recall I hinted at a series that Mr Shand and I plan to offer next year addressing in depth the history and relationship of Anglican liturgy and music. It's a large and complicated topic worth our attention. Within the exploration we will find politics, social issues, blurred lines between church and state, the changing tastes of each era, and alliances of various sorts, all influences on what clergy and musicians will -- or can -- and will not -- or can not -- do. To add to the mix, because of the scope of the once far-flung British Empire, cultures outside the borders

of that fair island have shaped and changed the Anglican sacred "landscape," especially in the past century as Africa and America have become prominent members in the worldwide Anglican Communion. Mainland Europe certainly contributed to our rich heritage and none more so than Germany and Italy as the Reformation of the 16th century unfolded. It's the stuff of epic movie making: greed and betrayal, loyalty and compassion, lust and violence, noble conquest, puerile corruption, and vivid characters great and terrible in every nook and cranny. Our hope is that we will all gain a fuller understanding of how we got to where we are now, and how this understanding can help make better sense of an uncertain future, especially where it impacts our *raison-d'être*, divine worship.

To that end where music is concerned, I handed out a list for summer listening. That list is now available on the desk in the lobby and I invite you to pick up a copy and begin listening with an ear to things Anglican. (Remember the dreaded "summer reading list" from school days? For most of us, we discovered and were reminded that it's just not possible to read ten novels in the span of two or three days just prior to the start of fall term, no matter how hard you try -- I suspect Cliffs Notes still turns a good profit in the third quarter!)

As a continuing prelude to our projected series, I will help explore certain pieces and composers during the summer months that played pivotal roles in defining our Anglican musical identity. We will begin with the birth of the Reformation and work our way to the current day. Please don't put off exploring the pieces I will suggest for listening. There are no Cliffs Notes when it comes to music! And you will find the cumulative understanding helpful as we discover, or rediscover, that there remain some things Anglican even in the midst of dramatic change. That's not all bad.

- Gary Davison, O-C