

SOUNDS

of

Volume 40 No. 25

June 20, 2010

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O Lord, we beseech thee, make us to have a perpetual fear and love of thy holy Name, for thou never failest to help and govern those whom thou hast set upon the sure foundation of thy loving kindness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

FROM THE RECTOR

Last week's topic the topic concerned the broad matter of church hospitality. This topic arose in response to bulletins from two churches which described themselves as "welcoming" and "open-minded." One trembles to think of the counter-factual.

As a practical illustration of the importance of hospitality the example was cited of a young family engaged in "church shopping". While some find the term "church shopping" offensive, the fact remains that in our culture, people will often do this very thing: go from church to church, even denomination to denomination, looking for a congregation that meets their needs and wishes. It is foolish and sanctimonious to assert that "church shopping" is not part of the order of the day, but whether it should be this way is a topic for another time.

In bringing up the example of a young family church shopping, I was disingenuous in the way broadcasters are when they use a "teaser": Teasers are short bits of longer reports designed to keep the viewer tuned in through the commercial interludes to follow. Often the teaser will point to a report not scheduled next, but ten or fifteen minutes into the show, and the content of the teaser is frequently not as thrilling as the headline attached to the story itself. In any case, this recollection concerns not just a single family but several.

In churches such as ours, there are plenty of stories of the "ones who got away", of folks who came only a short time and then moved on to some other parish, or none at all. One always regrets such outcomes, but they happen. Sometimes the story points to a failing of the church, as in the case of a family who told me they would not be joining St Francis because someone told them children were not

welcomed at the 8:00 service. (That prospect at 8:00 strains credulity, but it is simply an error to say children "would not be welcomed". That was miscommunication at best, misinformation at worst.)

On the other hand, a family once showed up and asked about Sunday school (obviously later in the day than 8:00am). They happened to encounter someone whose own children had once been in the Sunday school here but had grown up. This parishioner took the visitors down to the spot one always finds Carol Mitchell on Sundays, and from there the welcome took the more predictable, productive route of introductions, directions to classrooms, and eventual enrollment. In the summer months, when the Sunday school does not meet, there are two additional important steps. The first is getting names and addresses in order to send information when it is available; the second is to take the visitor to the table in the Lobby where information on the most recent programs can be found.

In neither of these case was "open-mindedness" at issue. Hospitality clearly extended or not clearly extended made the difference. While churches cannot be all things to all people, nor should they try, if we are serious about church growth (as measured numerically), it will take more than telling people we are "open-minded" to make a difference. No better technique for church growth has been perfected than the approach offered by Jesus to Philip, who spoke to his friend, Nathanael. Read their story in John 1:43-51, and then figure out how we can put that model to effective and faithful use at St Francis.



HOUSE TOUR 2010 PATRONS & FRIENDS

The 2010 House Tour letter has been sent. Look for some exciting changes this year!

We hope you will contribute to this Women of St. Francis Outreach project by becoming a Patron or Friend of the House Tour. If you have not received your letter by this time, please contact the church office at 301-365-2055.

Thank you for being a part of the 55th Potomac Country House Tour!

PULITZER LECTURE AND BOOK SIGNING TO BENEFIT THE CHURCH OF THE EPIPHANY 1317 G ST. N.W., WASHINGTON DC

He was a Hungarian immigrant who became a leading American journalist, crusading against big business and corruption in the late 19th Century. He is best known today for the prizes in journalism that bear his name. In 19th Century industrial America, while Carnegie provided the steel, Rockefeller the oil, Morgan the money, and Vanderbilt the railroads, **Joseph Pulitzer** invented the modern mass media.

Harper Collins has just published an insightful new biography of Pulitzer by **author James McGrath Morris** – *Pulitzer: A Life in Politics, Print, and Power*. Included in the book is the fact that Pulitzer was married at the Church of the Epiphany in 1878 and his first son was baptized there.

Please join us for a presentation on Pulitzer by Mr. Morris on Sunday, **June 27 at 12:45pm**. Afterwards, the author will be available to sign his new book. Mr. Morris has graciously arranged for a significant portion of each book sale to be directed towards the renovation of the Church of the Epiphany.

JOY AND CONCERN

Congratulations to Kim and Greg Cook on the birth of their son, Noah Asher, born on June 7. The proud grandparents are Fan & Merv Oleson.

Your prayers are asked for Eleanor Cleary, mother of Sharon Cleary, who has died.

INFORMATION ON THE BISHOP SEARCH

The Search/Nominating Committee for the 9th Bishop of Washington invites your participation in the Search Process.

Focus sessions have been scheduled during the period of June 21st thru June 29th. These sessions are open for all to attend. Their purpose is to gather input as to the strengths and challenges of the diocese, and skills and qualities sought in our next bishop. The sessions have been designed to be as convenient as possible, covering each of our regions, but anyone can attend any session.

- Atonement, DC (Region 5) Monday, 6/21, 7-9pm
- St. Paul's, Piney, MD (Region 6) Tuesday, 6/22, 7-9pm
- Trinity, DC (Region 4) Wednesday, 6/23, 7-9pm
- Ascension, Gaithersburg (Region 3) Thursday, 6/24, 7-9pm
- St. Matthews/St. Mateo's Friday, July 25, 7-9pm (Session will be in Spanish)
- St. Columba's, DC (Region 2) Sunday, 6/27, 1-3pm
- St. Mark's, Capitol Hill (Region 1) Sunday, 6/27, 3:30-5:30pm
- St. Barnabas', Leeland (Region 6) Monday, 6/28, 7-9pm
- All Saints, Chevy Chase, MD (Region 3) Monday 6/28, 7:30-9:30pm

COMING UP AT SAINT FRANCIS CHURCH

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

SUNDAY, JUNE 20

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

TUESDAY, JUNE 22

6:30 pm Youth Bible Study
7:00 pm Centering Prayer—Undercroft

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 23

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

THURSDAY, JUNE 24

5:00 pm *Sounds* Deadline for 7/04/10
7:30 pm WSF Book Club Planning Meeting

FRIDAY, JUNE 25

7:00 am Men's Bible Study

SUNDAY, JUNE 27

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

The Scripture appointed for the Fourth Sunday after Pentecost
1 Kings 19:1-4, (5-7), 8-15a, Psalm 42 and 43 or Isaiah 65:1-9,
Psalm 22:18-27, Galatians 3:23-29, Luke 8:26-39

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 and
Helen Stupar.

Periodical postage paid at Rockville, MD 20850.

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