

# SOUNDS

of

Volume 39 No. 44

November 29, 2009

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*Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, now and for ever. Amen.*

## FROM THE RECTOR

With the permission of Bishop Chane, four members of the parish have been commissioned as Lay Eucharistic Visitors. Bill Dinsmore, Don Harrison, Sue Tull, and Norma Young have now accepted this responsibility. Several months ago, I wrote about their work and this new (to St Francis) labor of love. It seemed a good idea to reiterate the nature and scope of this ministry.

Lay Eucharistic Visitors, as they are designated in this diocese, share in the privilege of carrying the Eucharist to those who are prevented from regular attendance at Sunday worship. The key distinction between what we have done for years and what is new among us the word “lay”, for this is ministry is exercise by laity.

The basic contour follows these lines: At a Sunday morning celebration, bread and wine are set apart for those who have requested a visit. When possible, the recipients of this communion will be remembered by name in the prayers that day. One or two Visitors commissioned for this work will then take the elements (the technical word for bread and wine) to the parishioner. Prayers will be offered and communion received. All of this is under the supervision of a priest on the parish staff, and the service is duly recorded in the service register.

A few distinctions are important to remember. This is not a ministry of convenience, offered to those who simply let their Sunday bounden duty slip by the unmet. It is a way the parish community seeks to be

in communion with those who are prevented from being where we all should be regularly, namely at worship in church. A second point to note is that this is not a discrete celebration of the Holy Eucharist; that is the work of priests and bishops, and is done together with the congregation. This form of communion is an extension of the Sunday celebration, but at a different hour and day. It is not a substitute or “second seating.” One of the important links between the gathered congregation and the recipient of the lay Eucharistic visit is the moment of prayer and commissioning when the gathered community sends out the Eucharistic visitors. The bread and wine become outward and visible signs of the sacramental fellowship which, while somewhat compromised by absence, is not defeated by it.

A final point is a note of clarification. People often confuse a home or hospital communion with “last rites”. There is no connection between the two. Indeed, the Prayer Book option for anointing, which is not part of this ministry, is not confined to moments *in extremis* any more than receiving Holy Communion in this form is intended only for the mortally ill or in a crisis. These visitations are not appropriate at such times.

I am grateful to Bill, Don, Sue, and Norma for their willingness to undertake this work, and we all trust in time this ministry will enrich the pastoral life of this parish.



## SANTA SUIT WANTED:

Does any parishioner have a **St. Nicolas costume** or white beard available to lend? Call Carol Jarvis at 301-299-4296. We need this by the first week in December for the St. Nicholas Storytime. Thank you in advance.

## WOMEN OF ST FRANCIS DECEMBER EVENTS

### 11/29—ADVENT WREATH WORKSHOP FOR ALL

Come and join the Advent Wreath Making Workshop during the Adult Education Hour after the 9:00 am service. This is a great activity to do with your children or grandchildren. It is fairly easy to do and you get to bring home the wreath! A booklet about using the wreath for worship at home with prayers and other information will also be provided. The cost is only \$10 per wreath which covers the cost of the supplies.

**Attendance is limited to 24**, so please call Christine in the office (301-365-2055) as soon as you read this to reserve your space.

### 12/9—ST NICOLAS STORYTIME & POTTERY PAINTING WEDNESDAY, 4:30PM — 6PM ST. FRANCIS HALL

St. Nicolas will come and tell the children about himself. Then the children can paint pottery pieces to give as Christmas gifts to their grandparents, teachers, etc. Choose from ornaments (approx \$5), mugs (approx \$15), tiles (approx \$5), plates (approx \$10), and more.

**RSVP required by December 2<sup>nd</sup>** so there is enough pottery and paint for all. Contact 301-365-2055 or info @stfrancispotomac.org.

In the spirit of St. Nicolas, please bring non-perishable food for a food drive. There is no charge to come see St. Nicolas, but pottery will be charged per piece. (You can pick it up at the church after it has been fired.)

*Continued in next column*

## JOY AND CONCERN

Please join us in prayer for John Willey, who is ill, and for Scott Doyle who died.

*Continue from previous column*

### 12/13—HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS OPEN HOUSE SUNDAY AFTERNOON FROM 3PM TO 6 PM

Trina and Gary Bachman will host this event at their home. There will be two “exchanges” - one for your favorite family recipes and the other for Homemade Cookies. Just bring your cookies or recipes if you’d like to swap.

Wine and appetizers will be served and a suggested donation of \$5 per person would be greatly appreciated.

Come and enjoy the company during this Christmas season.

### CD SALE—JUST IN TIME FOR CHRISTMAS

Our four compact disc recordings are now only \$15 each and make a wonderful gift or stocking stuffer. Your purchase also supports our music ministry and the *Music at Eventide* series. Copies are available in the parish office during weekday business hours and on Sunday mornings in Saint Francis Hall.

#### *Matins*

for the Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi

#### *When Mirth for Music Longs*

Hymns from Potomac Parish

#### *Jubilate Agno!*

A Jubilee Choral Celebration

#### *Evensong*

for the Feast of Saint Clare of Assisi

Happy listening!



## LISTEN UP!

Recently, two unrelated comments have fouled my mood and conspired to put me on the defensive. In keeping with my original promise not to whine in this column, I shall take the opportunity to consider these utterances with you instead. (Lucky you!) Like a good scherzo I'll try to be deft and not without a nice seasoning of witty sarcasm.

*The first comment:* In it, I officially have been dubbed "truly old-fashioned." I suppose in my heart of hearts I knew it was true all along. After all, I still hold doors for others, especially women and the elderly, I try and use *thank you* and *please* liberally, the Golden Rule actually means something to me, I believe that an honest day's work is of great merit no matter what you do, I don't think "dumbing down" is an option, I strive to be a helpful but unobtrusive neighbor, and I hold fast to the tradition that for Christians Sunday morning is time for church and nothing else – any other choice, and I emphasize *choice*, sends the unmistakable message that church is of secondary importance to you. My well-honed sense of cynicism leads me to wonder if those who choose otherwise will be surprised if the favor eventually is returned.

Now please understand this is not an exercise in self-righteousness nor is it really about me *per se*. Rather it is about the discipline and values instilled in me by others who set their sights on a better life for me and for the world in which I am taking part. God bless their old-fashioned souls, every one of them!

So, here's the context of this first comment, naturally with the customary changing of names to protect the ignorant ... er ... innocent. It involves a commission from a

church in another state for a choral anthem celebrating an anniversary year. I was asked to submit examples of my work along with the usual jumping through the hoops before being commissioned. I got the green light. Excellent! Next step, choice of text. I decided on none other than Christopher Smart (1722 -1771), one of the most creative Christian minds of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. You can read this text for yourself at #386 (vss. 1, 3-4) in our Hymnal 1982. It struck me as quite modern in its style, festive in its content, general enough to use more than once (a practical consideration, I thought), and very ripe with possibilities for a strong and exciting musical setting. Well, much to my chagrin this proposed text was greeted with a chorus of concerned comments from their committee members, including my favorite that read, "This choice of text is why I had [him] at the bottom of my choices [as composer] – truly old fashioned. And that's something, coming from a dinosaur like me." Ouch! Another observed, "I noted that there is some gender-specific language, and in 2009 I don't see how we can endorse that." Uh, rrrright. And yet another offered, "It's all about 'We sing of God' rather than 'We sing of church', or community, or faith, or something more church related." Huh? Seriously? More church related than God? Alrighty then.... Note to self: Never compose for a committee ever, ever again. EVER.

It may amuse you to know that under a colorful *nom de plume* I simply penned a text myself sure to tickle their modern and reconciling sensibilities. If Smart weren't good enough for them, certainly others to whom I would turn would suffer the same or worse condemnation. Thus, armed with fuzzy buzzwords and a PC pen, I took the plunge to produce a lesser but more acceptable text. Forgive me, Christopher....

## Listen Up

*Continued from previous page*

So what's my point here? It's simply this: How very fortunate Potomac Parish is to have the courageous leadership of a Rector and bold support from a congregation who understand and embrace the breadth and richness of the English language and what it can convey so eloquently in the hands of a brilliant Christian mind. We would not have The Book of Common Prayer if it were not so. Nor would we have the hymns of John and Charles Wesley who railed at the reviled revisionists of their day intent on changing words to suit their political and commercial needs. Obviously, the list goes on and on well beyond these few. As Mr Shand is wont to say, "Our brand of inclusiveness includes the 16<sup>th</sup> century." Thanks be to God for those in this and every generation who have been given grace to lift us to the nearer presence of God and offer us a fuller understanding of our faith as Christians through the power and expressive beauty of language.

Old-fashioned, indeed!

*The second comment:* Oh, it's a doozy. We'll take it for a spin next issue.

Stay tuned.... Gary Davison, O-C

## AN IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT END-OF-YEAR CONTRIBUTIONS

Please remember that all contributions to St. Francis which you wish to be included in your 2009 Tax Deductible Charitable Contributions Statement **must be received at the church office no later than 12:00 noon on December 31, 2009.** The office will close early that day for the New Year's holiday.

In compliance with IRS regulations, contributions and gifts received after noon on December 31 will be on the 2010 reports, even if they are credited to 2009 pledges.

## CHRISTMAS FLORAL MEMORIALS



You are invited again to remember your loved ones this Christmas by making a donation for the Christmas flowers and greens. All of the beautiful decorations in and around the church during the holidays depend on this one source of income, and what better way to honor those you love at this joyous season?

If you would like to make a contribution, please fill out one of the forms available on the table outside the office and return it with your check to Christine in the office.

**Donations must be received no later than December 15th** so we can ensure that your acknowledgements are made correctly. Please note on your check that it is for **Christmas Flowers**. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

## ADVENT FESTIVAL OF LESSONS AND MUSIC

On **Sunday, December 6th at 5:30** we will celebrate the Advent Festival of Lessons and Music, a long-established service here at Saint Francis Church. Come hear again the readings from Holy Scripture that tell the story of the fall of sinful man in the garden of Eden and God's ensuing promise of redemption through the birth, life, death, and resurrection of his Son, Jesus. The music offered by the choirs and the congregational hymns are chosen to reflect on these passages and to help anchor us more securely in heart and mind as we wait with joyful expectation for the coming of our Lord and Savior.

This year's service will feature music by Ord, Vaughan Williams, Walmisley, Manz, and Wood. A reception follows in Saint Francis Hall to which all cordially are invited (no reservations necessary).

**COMING UP AT ST FRANCIS**

For more information, please visit our website at [www.stfrancispotomac.org](http://www.stfrancispotomac.org)

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29**

**LOAVES & FISHES**

8:00am Holy Eucharist

9:00am Holy Eucharist

Advent Wreath Making in the

Adult Education Hour

11:15 am Holy Eucharist

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1**

5:30 pm St. Nicholas Training Choir

5:30 pm St. Clare Girl Choir

7:00 pm Centering Prayer—Undercroft

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2**

10:00 am Holy Eucharist

11:00 am Rector's Bible Study

5:30 pm Jr. High Bible Study

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3**

5:00 pm *Sounds* Deadline for 12/13

5:30 pm Sr. High Bible Study

7:30 pm St Francis Choir

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4**

7:00 am Men's Bible Study

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5**

8:00 am Holy Eucharist

9:00 am Holy Eucharist

Adult Education Hour

11:15 am Holy Eucharist

5:30 pm Advent Festival of Lessons

followed by a reception in the Hall.



The Scripture appointed for the First Sunday of Advent:

2 Samuel 23:1-7, Psalm 132:1-13, (14-19) or Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14, Psalm 93 ;

Revelation 1:4b-8, John 18:33-37

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](http://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