



St. James' Episcopal Church Indian Head, Maryland



January/February 2012



Rector's Ramblings

The time is flying by. I thought I would have so much time after the new year began to get ready for my sabbatical or as I should be use to calling it now, my renewal time, but that does not feel like the case. It feels like there is so much to do and so little time left to do it. I just made our appointments for our shots to travel to Haiti and still haven't gotten our flights done yet. I am waiting for my friend Joseph, an Episcopal priest who is from Haiti and now lives in the US and works at Virginia Theological Seminary, to call me with the details of the trip so I know when to book not only for me but Doug. Then I still am not sure what the curriculum is going to be for the classes I am taking because the Dean of the seminary hasn't gotten back to me on that. Depending on when I am needed at the seminary will determine when Doug will join me for our trip to the Haiti Micah project and to meet our children (all 10 we hope). But, no matter what, we have our appointment to get our shots. And get our malaria pills. And get our mosquito netting.

The rest of the time is pretty much ready. I have my reservation at Holy Cross Monastery for Holy Week, I am all set to spent time with my family (I wrote it on my parent's calendar when we were there after Christmas) and nearly everything (actually by print time everything) is booked for our time in Europe. And I mean everything – all our flights, cars, hotels, ferries, retreats – all booked. This whole thing has been a lesson in patience and persistence.

I have found that most of the world it seems operates on a slower pace than we do. E-mails take days to get a response. This is all fine except when one person's response is needed to move on to the next thing. For instance, my geography of Ireland is not great so thanks to a wonderful map for Christmas from friends (who travel to Ireland several times a year) I realized I had us going from one end of the country to the other rather than doing one side, then traveling on to the other. Fortunately I had only booked one hotel that week when I realized my error. Unfortunately it is the one on the island of Inishmore which books up pretty fast. So I have to wait to see if I can move those dates to the latter half of the week before I can book the first half or book the ferry. So I wait. And I hope, no pray all will fall into place. It has so far.

Things here are also falling into place. We have a wonderful Renewal Team: Sheila Gray, Bertha Gordon, Tom Peterson, Sue Denison, Sharyn Gantt and Adah Morgan. Along with the rest of the vestry, they have divided up ministries and responsibilities that need to be taken care of while I am away. They will be looking to all of you to help out a bit to and I know that you will jump in where ever you can. It is this knowledge that is allowing me to leave with a clear mind, focused on my journey. I know you all will be fine without me and our work in Christ will continue and thrive while I am away.

I will miss each and every one of you and will carry you all in my heart while I am away. I am going to try to do a blog- once I figure out what a blog is – so you can keep up with me. And as I do every day, I will continue to give thanks for you and pray for you until we are together again on June 17th. Peace to you, Denise



Thank you

Please accept my heartfelt gratitude for your generous Christmas gift. Your thoughtfulness and generosity never ceases to amaze me. I give thanks to God for you each and every day in my prayers.

Denise+



Special "**Thank You**" to the following people/families for lighting the Advent Candles.

Thomas and Shelia Gray
Jack and Nadine Rogers
Ron, Michelle and Erica Prasser
Jaime Wright
Matthew Gray Family

Sharyn and Alan Gantt
Duncan Creelman Family
Tom and Brenda Peterson
Bonnie Richardson

Have a blessed New Year!
Karen



NETS

(Neighbors Eager to Serve)

Thanks to all for your donations for Thanksgiving and Christmas. We did 219 baskets at Thanksgiving and 240 at Christmas. Our parish alone provided 30 turkeys and over \$500 in monetary donations for Thanksgiving. What a generous parish we have!



Nets Sweetheart Dinner is on February 11 from 3-6 PM and will be held at St. James' Episcopal Church.

Thank you,

Barbara Prasser

Renewal Committee

Hopefully, you are aware that the Lily Endowment Fund has awarded Reverend Denise a grant to pursue a time of renewal. The program allows St James' to send her for an extended time of renewal and reflection. Reverend Denise can step back from her busy life and gain the fresh perspective and renewed energy that a carefully considered season of travel, study, rest and prayer can provide. This time of renewal will last from February 26, 2012 thru June 15, 2012.

I bet you might have a question or two about all this. So let me just fill you in on some plans the Renewal Committee has put together. First of all, the Renewal Committee members are Sharyn Gantt, Adah Morgan, Sue Denison, Bertha Gordon, Sheila Gray, and Tom Peterson. Each of us has taken responsibility for ensuring that everything runs smoothly during Denise's absence. I'm just going to list out who's responsible for what as follows:

- Tom - Checking and responding to telephone messages and forwarding to Reverend Clay as needed
- Tom - Checking and responding to mail and forwarding to Reverend Clay as needed
- Tom - Checking and responding to e-mails and forwarding to Reverend Clay as needed
- Tom - Ensuring the March and May newsletters are done
- Tom - Ordering office supplies and reporting copier usage
- Bertha - Providing bulletin announcements and printing them
- Bertha - Printing the Bulletin and Prayer List
- Bertha - Announcing and coordinating the Community Dinners in March and May
- Adah - Coordinating food for the Community Dinners in March and May
- Adah - Continuing the work of the Finance, Buildings & Grounds, and Missions Committees as well as the Knitting Group
- Adah - Providing an Evening Prayer service during Lent
- Sharyn - Visiting our homebound parishioners - Gladys Marshall & Phyllis Wheeler and bringing them Communion
- Sharyn - Planning and coordinating the leaving brunch and returning picnic
- Sue - Visiting and or making calls to any sick or hospitalized parishioners
- Sue - Coordinating the retreats for the congregation's renewal time
- Sheila - Creating Vestry agendas and conducting Vestry meetings
- Sheila - Keeping up with the Renewal Team's and Congregation's work
- Sheila - Providing support to Reverend Clay
- Sheila - Ensuring there is a supply priest for 4/15 & 4/29 or providing Morning Prayer
- Sheila - Securing people to conduct the retreats spelled out in the grant
- Sheila - Coordinating with clergy that will preach and celebrate in March and May on Haiti and on Celtic Spirituality

The Reverend Thomas Clay has graciously agreed to perform the role of Priest-in-Charge during this time of renewal. He will Preach and celebrate at the three Sunday worship services, conduct any funerals, be available for any pastoral emergencies, meet with people who ask to meet with a clergy person, return telephone calls or e-mails to anyone who needs to talk with a clergy person, provide Holy Week and Easter services, and provide a noon Lenten service on Wednesday afternoons.

What are the chances that I just answered all of your questions? Hmmmm! Feel free to approach anyone one of us with additional questions and concerns.

Golly day, I almost forgot to say that we're going to need some help! So, if you would be willing to help out in any area listed above, please let us know. Ok? And thanks so much for just reading this!!



Parish Hall Rental

We are trying to promote the rental of the parish hall as it is a great source of church income. The rates are as follows:

Parishioners of St. James

Asked to make a donation of \$100.00

Non-parishioners

\$350.00/first 4 hours - Limited use of the kitchen

\$50.00 each additional hour

\$400.00/first 4 hours - Full use of the kitchen

\$50.00 each additional hour

A signed contract is included for the use of the hall.

If you know of anyone that needs to use a hall for a wedding reception, dinner, birthday party, etc., or if you have any questions please have them contact **Karen Burroughs**.



St James' Memorial Walkway Fundraiser

The Vestry was given the idea to build a memorial walkway in front of the church, encompassing the new St. Francis statue. The walkway will be made of bricks donated by members of our parish. Bricks will have the names and special information about those we would like to honor. The cost of each brick is \$100 and will forever be a part of St. James' landscaping. The funds raised will be used for badly needed repairs to our aging rectory. If you have any questions please ask a vestry member. We need to establish the amount of interest in this project for *feasibility*. We therefore ask each interested member to kindly sign up on the information sheet located in the main hallway. This is a great way to memorialize your Loved ones and to assist our church maintain its facilities!

Free Community Spaghetti Dinner



Donations of \$231 were received at the free community spaghetti dinner held on November 28th. This money will be given to Denise to use where it is most needed in Haiti next spring.

The next spaghetti dinner will be held on **Monday, January 30th**. We could use some extra sauce.

Dear Friends: Since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 1 John 4.11



FELLOWSHIP

A great time was had by all at Karaoke Saturday, Jan. 14. Many people attended and some amazing songs, ie. Kira's song to her mom and Denise's song to the congregation, were sung.

Come join us for Super Bowl Party and Game Night on January 5th in the parish hall at 1 o'clock – until. Please bring a snack to share. Drinks will be provided.

As always, if you have any ideas, please let me know!

Love in Christ,

Adah



St James' Episcopal Church Women (ECW)

The next meeting will be held on February 12th in the Costain Meeting Room. All women of the church are invited to attend. Please submit all agenda to Karen by February 7th.

In Christ's love and peace,
Bonnie Richardson, ECW President



Lent



Feb.21 - Tuesday - Pancake Supper

Feb. 22 - Ash Wednesday will be noon and 7:00 February 22nd.

Every Tue. In Lent at 7 PM - Evening Service – Adah Morgan/Kathleen O'Day

Every Wed. in Lent at Noon – Eucharist – Thomas Clay

Holy week and Easter schedule will be in the Sunday bulletins.

Needed

Readers for Tuesday Evening Service during Lent

It's not very hard and I could use your help. I will have a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board, so if you plan to attend Evening Prayer on any of the dates and would like to be a reader contact me Adah Morgan / Kathleen O'Day or just sign up.

Thanks to all and God bless
Adah



Shrove Tuesday – February 21 from 5-7PM

Adults - \$8.00

Children 5-12 - \$5.00

Children under 5 – Free

Pancakes with butter, syrup, strawberries, and whipped cream
Also includes sausage, eggs, and applesauce

HAM, CORNED BEEF, AND CABBAGE DINNER!



Saturday, March 17th from 3:00- 6:00

Adults - age 13 - \$15.00

Children - age 12-5 - \$7.50

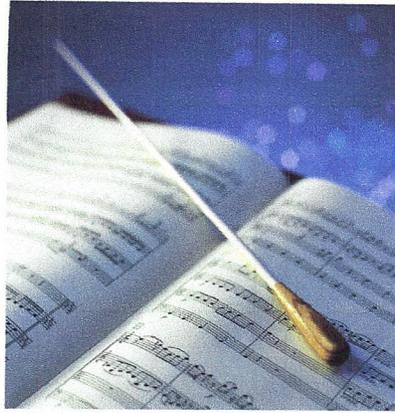
Children under 5 - FREE

Dessert is included in the price

Additional Desserts Available for \$2.00

Prep day: Saturday - March 17th 9:00 - Noon

Please sign up to help and/or bring a dessert. Sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board.



Homily given by Denise in loving memory of our Music Director, Jonathan

John, Jonathan, son, brother, friend, it doesn't matter what you called him or what your relationship was to him we are all here today to, as his friend Ken said on his facebook page, celebrate Jonathan's life. And just as important as that, we are also here to give thanks to God, for life, for Jonathan, for love and friendship and for Jesus Christ who showed us that death is not the end but that life eternal awaits us in the Kingdom of God.

For all of us here today and for the others who knew and loved Jonathan but couldn't be here, his death was a shock, it still is. Nearly everyone I spoke with said the same things, "it can't be true, I can't believe it, I can't get my head around this" and other expressions of shock and grief. And as the days have passed and Jonathan's absence has become a little more real to us people started talking about him and what he meant to them. These comments and stories and memories all had a common theme, they all were words that described a good, kind, patient, gentle, generous man. People talked about his love for St. James' and his choir. People talked about his love for St. James and his choir. Now we have a wonderful choir, dedicated, faithful, and with varying degrees of musical knowledge. Some folks read music some don't, some joined because they love to sing some because they wanted to support someone else, some catch on easily to new pieces of music some don't. Jonathan brought out the best in them all. He encouraged people to try new things, being the cantor, doing a solo, whatever. He was always patient, he wanted everyone to participate. One of our members doesn't drive any longer and lost his wife last year. Jonathan picked him up each week not only for rehearsals but for church each Sunday and made sure he got where ever the choir was performing whether it be the town pavilion, another church or the Cathedral. Jonathan was what we call in church lingo, Anglo-Catholic, high church, sometimes referred to as the smells and bells churches, incense and Sanctus bells and chanting. You may have caught on that this does not describe St. James. But none the less, Jonathan came to love us. Although he planned ahead, (he has music chosen for Sundays up to the next millennium,) he was flexible, open to trying new things, never complained when I asked him to change something or forgot to tell him we had a baptism coming up or threw him some other curve ball, he would just say, "that's okay, we'll just ..." and adjusted to whatever it was. He included the children whenever possible and came and rehearsed with the

Christmas pageant for weeks encouraging our young musicians and singers. He was generous with his time and his gifts. I had a call from the Lutheran Pastor who served with Jonathan in Germany. He told me that for two years

Jonathan served as organist and choir director for three of the Pastor's congregations without pay. Here, he jumped in to help out not only with music but with things like taking pictures of people with Santa at our church bazaar, helping at dinners, making soup when we hosted the shelter for people who are homeless, setting us up on facebook and managing our page and so many other ways over the past years. Jonathan was a lot of things, kind, talented, generous, patient, loving and he was also two other things. One, he was too young to die. When the loss of a young, healthy man happens people want to know why, why did this happen? Some people will say, it was God's will, or it was his time. I guess they find comfort in believing that God is in control of things. But that is not what I believe. I don't believe that God wills something like this to happen, I couldn't believe in a God that could be so arbitrary. God gave us free will and that means that God doesn't control our lives. We live in a broken world where sometimes unexplainable things happen and where our bodies are subject to illness, damage and decay. And we sometimes die too young. So then, where is God in all this? As I told my congregation on Sunday as we gathered here in the church after getting the news, God is in whatever good, whatever comfort, whatever love is being shown to you. God was in the strength and courage that Ken and Ramiro had as they did what needed to be done for Jonathan on Sunday. God was in all of Jonathan's friends that have helped his mom and sister, Cindy and Brandy over these past few days. God is in each of you and others who have jumped in to help plan this day, the service, the reception, people who said, "what can I do?" and then did it. People who share stories about Jonathan and celebrate his life and who he was, God is in each of them, each of you. And God will be with us in the days, months, years to come, anytime we grieve the loss of Jonathan and someone is there to listen. God is in whatever comfort, grace, love we experience in the midst of our pain and grief because as Jesus showed us through his ministry, God uses us to answer prayer, to heal, and to show his grace. The second thing that Jonathan was, was a Christian. He still had the prayer beads he carried with him every day when he was deployed. He loved God and he loved the Church and his hope rested in Christ. The other day I read a quote about hope that went something like: "Hope and optimism are not the same things. Optimism believes that things will turn out well. Hope believes that no matter how things turn out, it will be alright." Jonathan had hope, he trusted that somehow God would get us through whatever we are facing and that even when death is how things turn out, that too will be alright. Our reading from Wisdom today assures us that death is not the end. In our reading from Romans, we are told that nothing or no one can separate us from the love of God - not hardships or distress or persecution, or peril - not even death. Not only does Paul tell us that but Jesus himself tells us he will lose no one that the Father has given him. On Sunday, as many of us were finding ourselves unable to leave the church, Barbara Prasser was quietly cleaning up the altar from the Eucharist and she stopped by the organ and found a piece of paper that Jonathan had written on. It was a quote from a homily given by one of our parishioners, Tom Peterson on New Year's Day in which he quoted something our Bishop had written about a friend who was dying. On the paper Jonathan had written, "I'm going to live and die as if everything we say we believe is true." Everything we as

Christians say we believe is true. I think Jonathan lived that way. I know he is now experiencing the joys of life lived in the presence of Christ. Yes, Jonathan lives on for as the prayer we will pray at the Eucharist tells us that for God's faithful people in death life has changed not ended.

He now lives on in God's Kingdom, where the Book of Revelation tells us there is no hunger or thirst or suffering of any kind. It is hard to make sense of the loss of young man with his whole life before him. I don't have all the answers as to why this happened. I can only share with you that the God that I believe in, the God I find in the Gospel of Jesus Christ is a God of love, compassion, mercy and kindness, not one who randomly takes us from our loved ones. The God I believe in comes in to our lives and tries to make them better, especially in times like this. And, when our mortal bodies come to the end of their time on this earth, God awaits us in the next life. In the Gospel of John chapter 14, Jesus speaking to his disciples about his own death tells them that he has prepared a place for them when their time comes. Imagine, a place ready and waiting just for us. A home in God's kingdom, designed just for Jonathan. I imagine it has a grand organ in it and enough music to last through eternity. By the time we meet up with him again, he'll have quite a concert ready for us; although you all better be ready to sing along with him. Amen.



The Choir got together and talked about a fitting memorial to Jonathan, something musical that will last for years. The Choir decided that a set of handbells would be wonderful. Many local Churches have handbell choirs and our children would also benefit from this selection. There will be more information about this in the future as we narrow down our selection of a particular set of hand bells.



Our mission statement:

We generously share our blessings in the name of Christ with the hope of showing God's love to others.

FEBRUARY 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30  SPAGHETTI DINNER 5:00 PM Community Spaghetti Dinner	31	1  7:00 PM Knitting Group 8:00 PM AA Meeting	2 7:00 PM Choir Practice 8:00 PM NA Meeting	3	4
5  9:00 AM Annual Meeting - One Service at 9	6	7	8 8:00 PM AA Meeting	9 7:00 PM Choir Practice 8:00 PM NA Meeting	10  WINTER RETREAT 5:00 PM Vestry Retreat	11  3:00 PM N E T S Valentine's Sweetheart Dinner
12	13	14	15 7:00 PM Finance Committee 8:00 PM AA Meeting	16 7:00 PM Choir Practice 8:00 PM NA Meeting	17	18
19	20 6:30 PM Vestry Meeting	21  Shrove Tuesday 5:00 PM Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper	22  Ash Wednesday 7:00 PM Ash Wednesday Service 8:00 PM AA Meeting	23 7:00 PM Choir Practice 8:00 PM NA Meeting	24	25
26  10:30 AM Reverend Denise's Renewal Send Off Celebration	27	28	29 12:00 PM Noon Service during Lent 8:00 PM AA Meeting	1 7:00 PM Choir Practice 8:00 PM NA Meeting	2	3



St. James' Episcopal Church
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