



The St. John's Banner



Mount Rainier, MD

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF PRAISE AND WORSHIP

May 2009

ON THE CALENDAR

Ascension Day

Thursday, May 21st

Holy Eucharist at 7 PM
(no Bible Study this evening)

Guyana Sunday



May 24th

Memorial Sunday

May 31st

Youth Sunday

June 7th

**Youth between the ages of 14
and 18 should remain in the
Church after service**

Third Sunday in June

One service at 9 AM on
Sunday, June 21st

Guest preacher:
Rev. Julius Grey-Coker

Monthly Birthday &
Anniversary Celebration
following

CHOIR SUNDAY

August 2, 2009

**Featuring selections from
Handel's
*Judas Maccabaeus***

Message from the Priest-in-Charge

Forty days after the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, he ascended into heaven. While Jesus was in this world, He exemplified the cycles of life. His resurrection proved therefore that for Christians there is life after death.

If Christ is in Heaven, then for the believer heaven is home. So, what are we doing here? We are here to labor in the Lord's vineyard to further his kingdom until we are called home.

In order to please God, we must look at the life of Christ, who came into this world to do His Father's will. The way Jesus lived his life, fully and authentically, was the way to please God. Jesus entered into the world in a very humble way. He was born in a stable, not in a palace. Sometimes God manifests his power through simple and ordinary things.

Again Jesus was tempted, just as we are, but he did not sin. Sin is an impediment to spiritual growth and prevents us from becoming what God intends for us to be.

Finally, Jesus never acted unilaterally. He always worked in concert with God. To be able to please God, all our actions, words and thoughts must be God-centered. Those who walk and work faithfully with God will always reach their destination.

May we open up ourselves God's Holy Spirit, so that God can mold us to become what he intends for us to be.

In God's Peace and Love,

The Rev. Canon Daniel D. Darko

Priest-in-Charge

April's 3rd Sunday Features Rev. Clinton Esonu

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Continuing the series of visits by priests who had served at St. John's in past years, April 19th saw the return of one of the few priests who had served with the formal position of Assistant Rector. On that morning, we welcomed the Rev. Canon Clinton C. Esonu back to our pulpit.

Fr. Esonu came to St. John's in late 2000 at the time that the Igbo-language ministry was incorporated into our parish, as that is his own heritage. He was the primary celebrant at the Igbo service on Sunday afternoons, but also assisted the Rector, Fr. Larry Donathan, at the English-language services. Shortly after Fr. Donathan left in early 2003, Fr. Esonu accepted a call to be Rector of St. Michael and All Angels, where he is currently serving. Because of his special relationship with the Igbo Anglican community, however, Bishop Chane appointed him to continue as the priest in charge of that ministry. He thus remained a familiar face at St. John's until the Diocese transferred that program to a new location two years ago. Since then Fr. Esonu has continued to serve in that capacity as well.

The St. John's Banner

Brian Roman, *Editor*

Parishioners Display their Colors at Events

On Sunday, April 26th, St. John's tried something new – celebrating the National Days of two of our countries of origin on the same day. The 26th is Tanzania's national day; Sierra Leone's falls the very next day. We had promised during this Centennial year to note the days of all such countries, even if only one member hails from there. As it happens, this is the case for Tanzania.

In the past, Sierra Leone's sizeable contingent has celebrated on the last Sunday in April; this just happened to be the *actual* national day for Tanzania this year – hence, the joint celebration. Several other Tanzanians were in attendance along with St. John's lone representative, Ndi Asaboro.

Sierra Leone's flag is a tricolor of green, white and blue.



If you were there at St. John's on April 26th you might have noticed many

people wearing either mostly-green crew-neck pullovers or blue-and-white striped polo shirts. If you looked closely, you would have noticed all these shirts displayed the national crest emblazoned with the number 5. The shirts were created by Sierra Leone designer Alusine Yansaneh.

It happens that those three colors also appear in Tanzania's flag, in addition to gold and black. For the best look at Tanzania's colors, though, one needed to drift over to the dessert table, where a lovely cake awaited one's eyes (and taste buds).



Although the event was festive, as national days at St. John's typically are, the experiment of celebrating two nations on one day was not without problems, and we do not plan to make it a tradition.

If you came back two weeks later, once again you might have noticed a particular color predominating. Sunday, May 10th was Mothers' Day and was observed at St. John's as Women's Sunday. It seems the women's' groups conspired together so that many of them came to church dressed in various

shades of purple! The theme was carried through at the reception in the Father Brown Room where purple or violet was the dominant color in the table coverings, napkins and balloon centerpieces.



Quite regal looking, we'd say.

Vestry Corner

Highlights of the May 17th meeting:

Project updates: Work had begun on re-paving the front walk and steps. The contractor needs four consecutive days when no rain is expected in order to finish the work. (It may be completed by the time you read this issue.)

Contractors have been consulted to develop architectural drawings for new bathrooms. The Guyanese community has adopted this project; cost is estimated at 10 to 15 thousand dollars.

The television in the downstairs classroom has been mounted to the wall, choir pews have been repaired, and ceiling tiles for

the lounge will be obtained during the coming week.

Treasurer's report: Fredericka noted that the parish is now in the black year-to-date. The Budget & Finance Committee will meet Saturday, May 23rd at 11 AM to address some recent higher-than-normal expenses (such as increase in water bills). All Vestry members are invited to attend.

Fr. Darko's report: We received a letter of thanks from Episcopal Relief & Development thanking St. John's for our 1st Sunday in Lent contribution towards relief of health issues overseas. The amount collected was \$256.25.

Fr. Darko has been attending continuing education courses offered by the Diocese, and Sandra Bramble suggested he use some of the subject matter as a basis for discussion at a future Vestry retreat. He also expressed concern about misuse of the conference room. He observed trash left in the room and that food had attracted roaches, and relayed a report from Eugene Wright who had found the windows left open overnight. The room needs to be kept closed and locked when not being used and it should not be a gathering place for children unless they are being supervised.

He will take vacation in August, but will be present for the Third Sunday.

He observed that the experience of holding a joint national day celebration for both Sierra Leone and Tanzania (April 26th) had not worked out well and will not be repeated.

Motions approved:

1. The Vestry will not hold a monthly meeting in August this year.

2. Kojo Dixon has recommended the parish purchase an ice machine for the kitchen. Leslie Rogers-Wright felt this would not be needed if we plan better for our needs before events; the Vestry approved his motion to defer purchase of an ice machine.

3. An ad-hoc committee will be organized to review the parish's needs for audio/visual equipment; Simeon Asaboro will chair this committee.

Report on the 2009

Stewardship Conference

held at the Washington Cathedral on Saturday, May 9th, 2009.

*by Eugene N. Wright,
Chairman, Stewardship,
Evangelism and Outreach
Committee*

The Conference started at 9:30 am with introduction of the facilitators and the topics they would be covering. After an opening prayer by the coordinator it was time for the different workshops.

There were 4 workshops going on at the same time. Since I was the only one from St Johns in attendance I chose the one led by Cheryl Meyer. Her topic was "Fundraising beyond the annual appeal" — funding for special projects and events and how to raise funds and increase community awareness for events and programs.

In line with the theme of the conference: "Navigating the

great recession: Financial leadership in communities of faith" a lot of emphasis was placed on running functions that attracted contributions from outside the Parish. For example, networking businesses in the neighborhood, developing a clothes closet, building a foster grandparent program, organizing a "zero K" run and a "no bake-bake sale" Other methods of raising funds are: scratch cards, reusable shopping bags, movies for youths, free homework help plus dinner. The premise being that if you are seen involved with the community, when you ask them for help, especially monetary help, you can be sure that they would respond favorably.

All of these ideas have been used by the presenter and have raised substantial amounts of money for different organizations. However one major caveat was that members of the congregation should be committed to raising money outside the parish. We cannot keep dipping into the same pockets every time in addition to the annual pledge. Emphasis was stressed on the outreach aspect of interacting with the people outside the parish. It was no surprise when I mentioned one of the attempts we are making at attracting people outside the Parish with our birthday and anniversary celebrations, that people were excited about that and wanted explanation on the process. I believe some Parishes will be celebrating B & A shortly.

Another workshop was led by Laura Bachmann and her emphasis was on "Christian Formation in a new world economy": Making Faith the

foundation, knowing who we are as a faith community and making Christ central to our formation programs. She stated that we have a unique opportunity now to meet people in their need to fill the spiritual hole they can no longer plug with material things---- how do we encourage people to become more intentional about their faith journeys so they can discern what God is calling them to do and perhaps find the enriched, fulfilling life they were looking to buy. The third workshop was moderated by Canon Cooney and this was for Rectors and wardens who were led in a discussion about the state of the Diocese and what each Parish needed.

The keynote address was given by Nathan Dungan. His emphasis was "Financial Leadership in Communities of Faith."

Since everyone agrees that we are living in uncharted economic waters, now more than ever it's critical that faith communities convene multi-generational conversations to help alleviate fear and anxiety and also inspire and motivate youth and adults in the choices they make with money. His central theme was that if as a congregation of faith we can help people develop practical and beneficial ways to use and manage their money, then it would be a no-brainer for them to give to the church. Nathan is the founder of SHARE SAVE SPEND and he teaches churches how to take the lead in charting a course for the "new normal," offering hope and guidance for those among us who are living through or are soon to face some very trying times.

During the discussion the group was asked if anyone was doing any programs along those lines and when I remarked that we were doing the Friday Family Night seminars, our Parish became the main focus and were exhorted to keep it going, develop it to not only attract the outside community but more especially the youths and young people of the Parish as well. Our mission should be to help families develop a financial decision making process that honors each persons values and set clear financial goals that include saving and sharing. It's even more imperative to discover new ways to communicate about money and values with children, youths and adults. Additional information can be obtained from the website; www.sharesavespend.com. This was an excellent conference and the discussions were very insightful and informative. A by-product also was that Cheryl Meyer, one of the facilitators, who is the Executive Director of Buffalo Executives Association has volunteered to come down to St John's and help us with any fund raising project that we might have

Saturday, May 16th. They were presented to the Rt. Rev. Michael W. Creighton, retired Bishop of Pennsylvania, by Fr. Darko and confirmation instructor Desirée Sloane. At the 10 o'clock service the next day, Fr. Darko presented each of the confirmands with their certificates and a personal copy of the Book of Common Prayer. The newly-confirmed are:

Kanecia Bentick
Erick Gabbidon
Ollyne Gabbidon
Kimberly Palmer
Julius O. Sesay

Baptisms

The following individuals received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism at St. John's on Sunday, April 19th:

Thomas Doane-Swanson
Jabrie Ralph Dove
Samuel K. Kaloko

Confirmations

A class of five individuals from St. John's was presented for Confirmation at the Cathedral on



May Birthdays

- 3 - Marilyn Sheriff
- 4 - Victor Gooding
- 4 - Julius Uweh
- 6 - Howard Knights
- 8 - Reginald Waldron
- 9 - Fatima Bangura
- 9 - Stephfin Jackson
- 10 - Joseph Nzelibé
- 10 - Sarah Sowah
- 11 - Dwight Frazier
- 12 - Charles Green
- 13 - Rev. Canon Daniel Darko
- 14 - Edward Heroe
- 14 - Rosemourine Nwabueze
- 14 - William Weekes
- 15 - Brimsley Duncan
- 16 - Leila Knights
- 20 - Mirna Abadi
- 20 - Sandra Caesar
- 20 - Rev. Larry Donathan
- 22 - Gottlieb Bright
- 25 - Dudley Edwards
- 25 - Richard Gabbidon
- 30 - Kiscott Ganu
- 30 - Destiny Nwabueze
- 30 - Naomi Scott

A Look Back in *The Banner*

Fifth in our Centennial Series
of reprints of past articles

*An article about
The Daughters of the King
submitted for*

The St. John's Banner

September/October 1983 issue

*by Dorothy Lee (1917-2001), who
was president of the group at that
time*

The Daughters of the King, unlike other organizations, is a spiritual Order for laywomen of the Episcopal Church. Its primary purpose is evangelism. Members of the Order undertake a personal "Rule of Life," incorporating the two requirements for admission – the Rule of Prayer and the Rule of Service. By this reaffirmation of the promises made at Confirmation under the "bounden duty," a Daughter pledges herself to a life long program of prayer, service and personal evangelism, dedicated to the spread of Christ's Kingdom – especially among women and girls – and to the strengthening of the spiritual life of her parish.

We are an Order that is dedicated to Prayer and Service, making assigned personal calls to the sick (sometimes we do this on our own and sort of behind the scenes).

We each have our own way of performing many services. Members of the Order are forbidden, as such, to raise money in the name of the Order, but do contribute annually to two funds by freewill offerings: the Self-Denial Offering at Epiphanytide, which is used for the salary and living costs of women missionaries; and the Master's Fund, a Thank Offering at Whitsuntide, which is used for scholarships to train women for Church careers.

If this group appeals to you, please contact the current president, Sandra Bramble. The Naomi Chapter, as the group at St. John's is formally known, celebrates a Corporate Communion on the third Sunday of each month.

A Stewardship Minute

MAY 2009

“A Stewardship Minute” is a brief reflection on one of the articles appearing in the *Stewardship* newsletter, distributed monthly by Parish Publishing, LLC. Copies of the newsletter are available in the tract rack at the front door of the church.

In the early days of our country, grist mills ground grain for various foods. Many mills were powered by water wheels until gasoline engines replaced them. The water-powered mill could not work during the dry season when the flowing water was not powerful enough to turn the wheel. The gasoline-powered mill, however, worked steadily, supplying ground grain consistently.

As followers of Christ, we can only fulfill the mission of the church if we are consistent and faithful in doing the work of the Lord. The work of the Lord is dependent upon us being reliable in the use of our talents, time, energy, and financial resources. The church can only be as fruitful as we Christians enable it to be, therefore our dependability is as important as it is with the grist mill.

An article in the May issue *Stewardship* describes these two grist mills. The author makes the point that the mill powered by gasoline was more dependable than the one which relied on water-power because of the varying levels of the water in the river; therefore, the gasoline-powered mill consistently met its goals!

St. Paul wrote the following words to the Christians at Corinth: “Therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.” (I Corinthians 15:58) “Excelling in the work of the Lord” should be our goal and mission!

Prayer: Lord of all, make us restless until we are steadfast in serving you rightly. In Christ's name. **Amen.**

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