



# The St. John's Banner

Mount Rainier, MD

ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF PRAISE AND WORSHIP

October 2009

**Sunday, November 15**

**ON THE CALENDAR**

*The Big Day Arrives...*

## Centennial Gala

*Saturday, October 17, 2009  
Martin's Crosswinds  
7400 Greenway Center Drive  
Greenbelt, Maryland 20770  
from 7:30 p.m.*

### **Third Sunday in October Bishop Chane's Visit**

**One service at 4 PM on  
Sunday, October 18th**

### 22nd Annual **International Day**

**Sunday, October 25th  
One service at 10 AM**

*- A little advance notice -*



**Standard Time returns  
Sunday, November 1st  
Set your clocks  
BACK one hour**

### **St. Vincent Weekend**



**"Vincy Night"  
Friday evening  
November 13**

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**National Day Service**

*Message from the Priest-in-Charge*

**"Road Builders"**

A congregation seeking to be more fully the Body of Christ in its time and place should derive its energy from both its internal resources within the congregation itself and from the external resource called the Holy Spirit.

God carries out His mission and ministry through those who have opened up themselves to his Holy Spirit and have submitted their wills to His will. Sometimes however, the Spirit is difficult to discern in this ugly and brutal world.

Sometimes we seek the Lord in elegant cathedrals, but when one visits these magnificent "sacred" places, we feel hollow and cheap.

Sometimes we find the Lord in inner-city slums with squalor and broken glass everywhere. What I call "Holy in the Ordinary." There the Lord speaks to us.

Often we do not respond to the Spirit's promptings because of doubt or fear that some people might think we are either crazy or drunk (like they said of the Apostles). When we exercise caution and try to analyze the situation, think it over, weigh the pros and cons or try to be pragmatic the crucial moment passes away and the energy of empowerment fades and the opportunity disappears.

All Christians are "Road Builders." We are paving the way of faith for the next generation. The faithfulness of our lives may determine how easy their journey will be as they try to find their way to God.

Lead us Heavenly Father lead us o'er the world's tempestuous seas.

God's peace, love and blessings to you all,

The Reverend Canon Daniel D. Darko  
Priest-in-Charge

## St. John's is On the Web!

It's taken a while, but St. John's has now truly arrived in the Information Age. The URL is:

[www.stjohnsmountrainier.org](http://www.stjohnsmountrainier.org)

The parish's web site had been "out there" in cyberspace for a few months while it was being developed and tested by our webmaster, Shona Bramble. It was officially announced to the congregation on September 20th.

The site is full of interesting information. Visitors can check on upcoming events and see photos of past events. The history of the parish is there, along with pictures of the staff and the Vestry. You can also look up a years' worth of issues of *The Banner*, and there are links to sites with details about the Episcopal Church.

Shona advises that, because the site is brand new, it is still under development. Further updates and enhancements are in the works. Don't fret if it's not "perfect" yet, but if you have any comments or suggestions, Shona asks that you contact her. There is a comment form on the contacts page, or you can e-mail her directly at: [bramsho@aol.com](mailto:bramsho@aol.com).

## Choir Goes On the Road

St. John's choir has recently found itself in demand for events with a connection to the parish, but held at other locations.

Several of the men in the choir are members of the True and

*The St. John's Banner*  
 Brian Roman, Editor  
[brqx45\\_phl@verizon.net](mailto:brqx45_phl@verizon.net)

Accepted Masons, whose Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia had scheduled the Nation's Capital Masonic Day of Prayer on Saturday, October 3rd. St. John's Choir accepted an invitation to participate, and traveled to Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church in Washington to sing at the service beginning at noon. Our choir sang "The Lord Will Be My Shepherd" as the offertory anthem.

The following day, the choir participated in the installation of the Rev. Dr. Julius T. B. Grey-Coker as Honorary Canon of the Cathedral Church of St. George in Freetown, Sierra Leone. The offertory piece at this service was "Praise the Lord with Harp," which the choir had first sung at this year's Choir Festival.

The now Rev. *Canon* Dr. Grey-Coker served at St. John's following his ordination as a Deacon, and has served at Zion since attaining the Priesthood. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is a denomination in full communion with the Episcopal Church. Bishop Chane was concelebrant of the Eucharist, along with Bishop Julius Lynch of Freetown and a representative of the bishop of the Metropolitan Washington Synod of the Lutheran church.



## Tea Party Looks Back "Through the Years"

In 1993, the Social & Cultural Committee introduced a new tradition at St. John's – a Tea Party. The idea was to serve a classic Afternoon Tea in the English tradition, with the namesake hot beverage accompanied by finger sandwiches and pastries.

Through the years since, the committee has enhanced the Tea Party by giving the event a different theme each year. Last year, it was "A Touch of Pink;" and other themes in recent years have been Angels, Victorian, Caribbean and African. This year's theme, in recognition of the parish Centennial, was "Through the Years." The tables were individually set with coverings and decorations from past years, and meanwhile, a slide show played with pictures of the past decade's events.

At the affair on Saturday afternoon, September 19th, guests enjoyed the usual assortment of teas and accompaniments while listening to nostalgic music played by DJ Alfred.

This year, three people received certificates of recognition for their contributions to the success of the Tea Parties and other functions through the years.

Estelle Miller and her daughter, Margaret Miller, were handed Certificates of Honorary Membership in the Social & Cultural Committee.

*(See photo at left.)*

The awards were

presented by Carol Hazlewood, citing their outstanding generosity to the committee. Then, a plaque was presented to Sandra Bramble, acknowledging her as the Founder Member of the committee and inscribed with the words "your hard work and dedication did not go in vain."

## Ever Heard of an Episcocat?

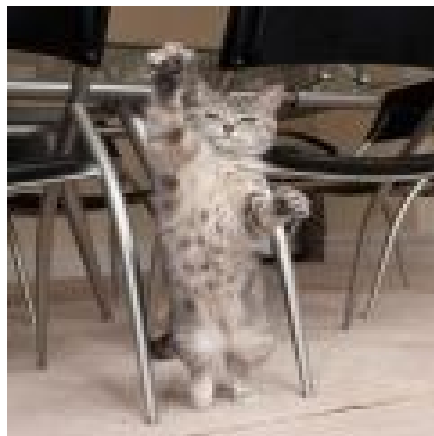
Recently your editor was talking with Parish Administrator Diane Baldwin-Piper about one of her favorite subjects – cats – and related to her that he remembered a feature that had run in a church publication some years back called "The Episcocats." This was a monthly photo of a housecat (or cats) in some appealing pose or humorous situation, in which the photo caption was somehow related to a church theme.

Diane has offered to share some funny pictures of cats that she has come across, but being herself a minister in an Apostolic Church, she suggests we call them the "EpiscoApostolic Cats."

Here are some selections from her collection. Notice that one of them has a caption. Now here's a game for you: can you come up with church-related captions for the others? If so, send them to the *Banner* at St. John's e-mail address or drop them off one Sunday.



Please pick me up - I want to give my pledge



Incidentally, research on the web turns up the fact that the church publication where the Episcocats originally appeared was a newspaper then called *The Episcopalian*, which is now published under the title *Episcopal Life*. Later, collections of Episcocat features were published in a series of books. If you are interested, check out the

web site of the National Episcopal Historians and Archivists:  
[www.episcopalhistorians.org/Publications.aspx](http://www.episcopalhistorians.org/Publications.aspx)

## 「 Vestry Corner 」

### Highlights of the September 13th meeting:

#### Reports and Discussions

##### From the Treasurer's Report

by Fredericka Ortiz: according to the report for August, the parish "is in the red." The problem is worse than just one month, because she discovered that transfers from the savings account for June and July had been erroneously reported as "other income." Fredericka will need to correct columns for prior months to show that we did run a deficit for several months. She cannot transfer any more money from the savings account; some money in savings is earmarked for specific purposes (Mothers' Union, Organ Fund, Sierra Leone and Guyana accounts). Leslie said that groups need to be more accurate in their budgeting – he has observed that groups' expenses in the past tended to be higher than the budgeted amounts.

There was a discussion about the table in the weekly service bulletin that compares the expected weekly income to the actual receipts. It was decided that the table should be based on expected annual income through regular collections – not including special collections or receipts – and it is now being reported that way.

#### Father Darko's report:

(1) He is still finding roaches in his office, which he attributes to people eating in the conference room, and urges that we prevent children and others from doing so.



(2) To save costs, he will now have the Sunday service bulletin printed in black & white, except for special occasions.

(3) He urged all Vestry members to work with the Stewardship Committee, stating that the leadership of the parish, beginning with the priest, sets the tithe as the minimum standard of stewardship – cannot ask members to do so if the leadership does not.

*From the reports of the Wardens:* Kojo Dixon had obtained prices for installation of a commercial garbage disposal to fix the drain stoppage problem in the kitchen, but they came to *thousands* of dollars. He was able to locate and install a device to do the job – for only \$2! – although the item will need to be replaced from time to time. Meanwhile, he is continuing to get estimates for replacing the flooring in the lounge and the chair lift. Leslie Rogers-Wright noted that funds raised during Sierra Leone Sundays are dedicated to assisting the elderly.

Leslie observed that we can make the financial report look good technically, but the money is not there. Money in special accounts can no longer be used for regular expenses; it must be

kept for the purposes it was designated for. We are not presently repaying money to investments that we had borrowed from and agreed we would pay back. He suggested that in the future, we develop a budget based on what it would cost to have a full-time priest.

*Other business:* Kojo noted that Bridget Benjamin and Florian Knights are the only people taking care of the food pantry. There was a discussion about using the second collection on the first or third Sunday to supply the food pantry.

Bridget Benjamin asked about prospects for remodeling bathrooms – a project for which the Guyanese community has earmarked funds – but Kojo responded that this too will be very expensive and we are not in a position to undertake construction projects at this time.

**Motions approved**

Based on the matters raised in the reports and discussions, the Vestry approved the following motions:

- Effective immediately, there shall be no eating or drinking outside the Father Brown Room – including no eating in the Music and Treasurer's Offices.

- That in the Sunday bulletin, the report of amounts expected and collected be based on the (budgeted) Total Contributions (line 12 in the Treasurer's Report).

- That we curtail spending as best as possible; the wardens will look at purchases to see if they are needed; anything non-operational or not budgeted for is to be reviewed by the Executive Committee.

- That the second collection on the First Sunday be dedicated to the Food Pantry outreach.

*A draft copy of the complete minutes of the meeting is now posted on the Vestry Corner bulletin board.*

## Baptisms

The following individuals received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism at St. John's on Sunday, September 20th:

***Mohamed Bangura***  
***Zenrah Esther Marie Bangura***  
***Salma Dove-Edwin***



**October Birthdays**

- 1 - Matilda George
- 1 - Samuel Kaloko
- 1 - Eleanor McDaniel
- 1 - Laila Wilson
- 3 - Victor Cole
- 3 - Yvonne Subryan
- 4 - Carrol Sloan

- 6 - Valerie Cole
- 8 - Dora Junisa
- 10 - Angelyn Mammah
- 13 - Winston Brown
- 13 - Erick Gabbidon
- 13 - Edna Remmie
- 14 - Carol Hazelwood
- 15 - Shana Brown
- 21 - Annyssa Dozier
- 22 - Samuel Thomas
- 23 - Katie Godwin-Cole

- 23 - Alfred Mammah
- 28 - Dajaun Devonish
- 29 - Donald Williams
- 30 - Michael Remy Seasay



**October Anniversaries**

- 11 - Frances & Bruce Bernstein

## A Look Back in *The Banner* A "double feature" of reprints from previous issues

Given that there are 12 months in a year but we only publish 11 *Banners* in a year (with a combined midsummer issue for July & August), we're "catching up" by running two of our past articles this month.

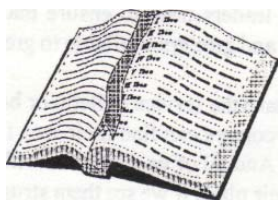
### Number 9 In our Centennial Series of reprints of past articles

## TRY THIS ONE!

There are 16 books of the Bible hidden in the following story. Spacing of letters, words and punctuation are not to be considered. Can you find all 16 books?

*(Note- This puzzle appeared in the March 1999 issue. Here's an example of what to look for. In the sentence, "As they passed the cups, alms were collected for the poor," you can see that the name of the Book of **Psalms** is buried in that sentence. Try your hand at the story – and let us know how you do!)*

I once made a remark about the hidden books of the BIBLE. It was a lulu, kept people looking so hard for the facts and for others it was a revelation. Some were in a jam, especially since the names of the books were not capitalized, but the truth finally struck home to numbers of readers. To others, it was a real job. We want it to be a most fascinating few moments for you. Yes, there will be some really easy ones to spot. Others may require judges to help them. I will quickly admit it usually takes a minister to find one of them, and there will be loud lamentations when it is found. A little lady says she brews a cup of tea, so she can concentrate better. See how well you can compete. Relax now for there are really sixteen names of books of the BIBLE in this story.



### Number 10 In our Centennial Series of reprints of past articles

*From the  
"NUTS 'N' BOLTS"  
column in*



### September 1985 Issue

*by Sonny Meier, Senior Warden at that time*

When Sunday school let out this past June, it was like reverting back to my earlier years at St. John's. The thought went through my head that now is the time to get off the Merry-Go-Round I have been on for the past couple of years, meetings, decisions and other demands on my time and energy. This summer has been a deliberate slower pace for me and I have been able to think about why I am doing the things I do.

The Episcopal Church is something that I have come to love and know. The diversity of the people who make up this church and their views on issues cover the spectrum from one end to the other. The people who work for the diocese, and continue to work for us even when greater work loads are placed on them is marvelous. Bishop Walker, who any time I meet him has an infectious smile and a "How are you." The people I meet at wardens' dinners and conferences offer a wide array of thoughts and views, also that we at St. John's are not much different from other parishes around us.

The people of St. John's, we are a warm body of people who make up this congregation. When visitors come here I see many people in conversation with new comers - the volunteers who help with events to- better St. John's - the bazaar has become an item that transcends cur parish boundaries. The people with differing views are heard and decisions are rendered - some that agree and some not. We have changed from 75 years ago, and I am sure we will continue to change in the future. We change because this congregation demands these changes, the people who serve on the vestries will hear what the people are saying and we will move on.

Why do I do the things I do for this church? Why do I pass two Episcopal churches on my way to St. John's? Humm - I have to think about that some more.

# A Stewardship Minute

OCTOBER 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.**

One day, a wise old grandfather clock, feeling weary, began to consider just how many times it was ticking annually. It figured it ticked two times a second, 120 times a minute, 7200 times an hour, 172,800 times a day, 63,072,000 times a year. Imagine that ... over 63 million ticks a year! Exasperated at how hard the clock had to work, it wanted to quit ticking: "I'll sit down and quit. That's too much ticking for me."

Sometimes life feels that way for many of us. If we over-think the time and energy we spend on every little thing ... it can be overwhelming. We need to learn to expend our efforts wisely, taking one step at a time. Moving forward with steady determination, we can accomplish a great amount.

In our service to and worship of God we must steadfastly continue, or else Christianity would wither away. An article in this month's *Stewardship* suggests that we exercise our stewardship steadily ... a bit at a time ... week by week, year by year. Faithfully and steadily.

Jesus talked about a woman taking a bit of yeast then mixing it in flour. It took awhile, but in time the risen dough was ready to bake. A little expanded into a lot. (Luke 13-20-21) Just so, our daily stewardship in time builds a refuge for orphan children, aid for a missionary in Africa or Asia, medical help for those dying of malaria or Aids, or a wonderful church, such as we have ourselves. Bit by bit, our stewardship, with God's help, will always work miracles.

**Prayer:** Do not, O Lord, allow us to grow weary in well-doing. Stir us up to exercise our total stewardship, that our efforts may always please you. **Amen**

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