

# VISION

NEWSLETTER OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF SAINTS ANDREW AND MATTHEW

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2006

## Christmas Comes but Twice a Year

by Rev. Rod Welles

The “holidays” have come and gone, or have they? The season of shopping, card writing, food preparation, and partying is over. We have celebrated the birth of Christ in various ways, both in and out of Church. We have “rung in” a new year. But, on January 6, we also begin a new season—*Epiphany*.

The Feast of the Epiphany actually has a longer history in the Church than the observance of Christmas. Today, in some parts of the world, including parts of the United States, January 6 is known as Old Christmas. The tradition of gift giving seems to have originated from this observance rather than from that of Christmas itself. Thus, the Three Wise Men were the original gift givers in the Christian tradition rather than St. Nicholas, bishop of Myra, who was later “drafted” to become Santa Claus.

Therefore, if we feel let down following the hectic round of Christmas activities, we have another

chance. The Feast of the Epiphany commemorates the showing forth of Christ to the non-Jewish world, represented by the Three Wise Men. The season of Epiphany is a quiet, leisurely time that takes us all the way to Ash Wednesday.

The season of Epiphany simply calls us to “follow the star,” seeking Christ in the world and sharing Christ with others in the world. Epiphany can be a time when we are free to focus clearly and calmly on our own spiritual journeys through the “fields and fountains, moors and mountains” of our individual lives without the pressure of having to do a thousand different things to be “ready.”

The “holiday” season of preparation is complete, and the gifts have been exchanged. We are now free to spend our energy on seeking and sharing Christ in a calm and measured manner.

We can make “Old Christmas” our *new Christmas!*

A BLESSED



EPIPHANY

## It's Time to Invest in Our Youth!

by Linda Jackson

There's something new and exciting going on here at SsAM. SsAM is starting a teen youth group. This is something for our youth, 12 through 19, and for them only. I'd like to tell you about the teen program and making investments.

SsAM experienced a preview of what a teen ministry could and should look like. Earlier this year, a full complement of young people met once a week for eight weeks to prepare and satisfy the requirements for confirmation. The bishop confirmed them and they became full members of this faith

community. This experience was an opportunity for our youth to mature spiritually and have a fun at the same time. God blessed this very special group during this very special time and a commitment was made by all of us to continue this special youth ministry.

The time to continue the teen ministry is now.

I recently spoke with Michelle Hastie, a parent of two of our teens, Jordan and Tyler. We discussed investments we make on behalf of our children.

First, there's the investment we make towards their academic growth. There's the right school, the right curriculum, the purchase of school supplies, computers,

*continued on page 3*



# Happy New Year!

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

This comes to you with my prayers and best wishes for a New Year filled with peace and joy. As I write this, I am mindful that every year during this time, these or similar words open or close my letters and correspondence. For that matter, most Christmas and New Year's cards carry the same

message. Besides, all over this world these days, on the streets, in homes, at gatherings everywhere, in every language – people are greeting each other with “Happy New Year.”

It is like a mantra – a prayer – emerging from the collective heart of universal humanity. Every year, the whole earth longs for a new year, filled with peace and joy. Every new year we hope that things in the world, and in our communal, family and personal worlds, will be better than in the one just past. This, despite the fact that the list of things we struggle with in our personal lives, such as disappointment and loss, as well as the large issues facing our nation and world, often tend to walk with us, right into the new year.

Our wishing to ourselves and others a “Happy New Year” despite all evidence to the contrary, is a sign of something we all share deep down inside of us, in our collective unconsciousness. Profound, eternal Hope. In other words, we humans have been made to hope.

As I understand it, hoping at the deepest level is not merely wishful thinking. Hoping is desiring with the absolute certainty of gaining that which is desired. As the writer to the Hebrews puts it, “the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things unseen.” That is, built deep down inside each of us is the certainty that good overcomes evil, that love conquers hatred, that life is victorious over death - even when in the present time evil, hatred and death may appear to have the upper hand.

And what is the source of this collective certainty? The collective knowledge, also buried deep within each of us, of the active presence of that Love who is the Beginning and the End of all things, who dwells in the heart of the universe, and who calls each of us by name. The rule of God's love will prevail on earth as it is in heaven. Thus, despite all the negative chances and changes of this mortal life – indeed, in the very midst of them – we are victorious; because that One is with us. As Paul says in his letter to the Romans, “in all these things we are more than conquerors through the One who loves us.”

Moreover, we are created not simply to have hope, but in our lives to be the embodiment of that hope and faith that God's love will prevail on earth. What a transformation will take place both in our personal and in our communal lives, when we, allowing God to work through us, become instruments of peace and reconciliation, of justice and mercy!

Perhaps the years of sin, pain, worry and fear in our lives have caused layers of debris to push our built-in faith and

hope out of conscious memory. Nevertheless, thanks be to God, they are still there. I pray that this year, when you give or receive that all-too-familiar, outworn, trite greeting, you and those around you will hear the Divine Voice, calling you to recall and live by the hope that is within you.

“Happy New Year!” and

Peace,

## Sunday School Celebrates Epiphany



An Epiphany party will be held during the children's Sunday School hour on January 8.

The children will learn about the meaning of Epiphany and there will be an Epiphany cake with hidden treasure.

## Welcome the Newly Baptized!



*Gabriella Gocheva Henry, daughter of Diliانا and Marcus Henry was baptized on December 11.*

# It's Time to Invest...

*continued from page 1*

tutoring, college tuition and related expenditures. May I add more extra-curricular events to the list: sports; swimming, basketball, softball, soccer, track; even singing and dance lessons.

Then there's the investment towards their physical health and well-being: doctor's appointments, physicals, dental appointments, braces. There's also the investment in their all-important social lives: the right programs and events, the right friends, parties, cell phones, and the right clothes – we can't forget them.

Then we transport them everywhere. Think about the price of gas!!!! And at the end of the day, we've spared no expense. Nothing's too good for our children. No amount of money or even time is out of the question as we invest all of our resources to support our children's growth and development.

However, I ask you, do we make the same investment to ensure that our children develop and mature spiritually? Of course, they are baptized, fed spiritually during Sunday School, sing in the children's choir, and then are confirmed.

Then what? Is it enough to assume that attending Sunday services is sufficient to support their spiritual development once they have outgrown Sunday School? Think about it, it's certainly not sufficient for adults. Along with Sunday worship, adult education is offered every Sunday. Often, there are two weekly Bible studies for adults. If we, as adults, sense the need to continue our spiritual development, clearly we know that there's a need for a program that will enrich our young people's lives as they mature.

Would you agree that the teen years are perhaps the most critical years of their formation? Then you agree that this is the time when a ministry specifically for them is most needed. The entire SsAM faith community, not just the families of our youth, has a responsibility to invest in a ministry for our young people. Think "it takes a village." Well in this instance, it takes a faith community. This is the time for us to make the investment in our teens.

The youth committee is totally committed to this new ministry and has designed a program that focuses on the aspects vital to our teens' spiritual development and to SsAM's growth - mission, worship, education, and leadership. Our goal is to provide opportunities for our young people to meet regularly and participate in various youth activities - local and diocesan, missions/outreach sponsored by our own faith community and Sunday worship services. All of this while exploring their own spirituality. Also, it is only fitting that our young people play a vital role in the planning and celebration of SsAM's 10th anniversary!! God will lead and guide this ministry.

By now you have received a copy of the first issue of the Youth Newsletter. This is an attempt to bring attention to our teen program and help you become better acquainted with our young people.

We invite all teens join and participate in the new teen group. How many of you know a young person in our congregation, or even within your family or circle that could benefit from this new ministry? **Our first teen event, a kick-off pizza party is scheduled for 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, January 8.** There will be plenty of pizza, hot wings, sodas and juices, games, prizes, and lots of fun.

There are many ways for you to support the teen group. Pledging your time and talent is the first and major step towards making and keeping the vision for our young people a reality.

In the book of Isaiah the Lord says "I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" Close your eyes for a second, and perceive this new teen ministry. Then pledge your time and talent. Make your investment in our teens.

## Youth Are the Church of Today!

Many people celebrate the presence of youth in our churches by saying "...and remember, the youth are the church of tomorrow."

Well, I say, "the youth are the church of today!" It warms my heart to see the youth ministry at SsAM. As I see it, what we have in our church is a ministry of, for and by persons of all ages. I pray that, through SsAM's youth ministry, all the other young people will lend their gifts and leadership to our shared ministry of worship, education, mission and service. I am looking forward to journeying with you.

Peace,  
Canon Casson

## Teen New Year's Eve Party



Let's all meet in the Teen Suite at 9:30 p.m. for a little party before attending the 10:30 p.m. service. We can sit together in the balcony and bring in the New Year. Please contact Linda Jackson at 302-762-2400 if you are able to attend.

## Next *Vision* Deadline

The copy deadline for the March/April *Vision* is February 10. This will include Lent and Easter.

Please contact Barbara Henry at 475-0998 evenings to discuss story ideas or photos.

Please put "Vision" in the subject line of all emails.

# All Parish Meeting Held in November



An all-parish meeting was held following Eucharist on Sunday, November 13. The purpose of the meeting was to receive membership, financial and other information regarding our parish life, and to review and make recommendations on the first draft of a Strategic Plan which had been developed by the Vestry at a special planning retreat.

Several reports were presented and group discussion of a draft strategic plan took place.

## Membership Demographics

Membership at SsAM as of December 2004 was 380 individuals. Average attendance for 2004 was 185. Fifty six per cent of our members live in Wilmington; 16% in Hockessin; 7% in Newark; 5.2% in New Castle; 7.8% in Pennsylvania or New Jersey. Approximately 8% of our membership lives elsewhere.

Twelve percent of our members are under 18; 10 % 19-30 years old; 21.7% 31-45 years; 28% 46-60 years; 12.7% 61-70 years old; 9.2% 71-80 years old; 5.8% over 80.

Sixty per cent of our members are female.

## Operating Budget

Gene Wilds talked about 2005 income and expenditures as well as projected 2006 figures. Budgeted income for 2005 is \$824,900 with \$820,900 actual income. Of this, pledges are \$310,000 (budgeted) vs. \$288,000 (actual) and offerings \$62,400 (budgeted) vs. \$48,000 (actual).

The largest difference between budgeted and actual monies was in the area of "other income" which includes user fees for the building. \$5800 was budgeted, but actual has been \$30,600. Gene pointed out this is not something that will not necessarily happen every year.

## Stewardship

The 2006 budget target is \$796,700 with targeted pledges being \$310,000 and targeted offerings set at \$48,000.

One hundred thirty eight people pledged in 2005 (53% of the congregation). The average pledge for 2005 was \$2087 annually or \$40 per week per pledge unit.

The targeted pledges and offerings for 2006 account for

45¢ of every dollar required for the programs and operations of the parish.

An increase of 10 new pledges at the 2005 average annual pledge will reach the target.

## Draft Strategic Plan

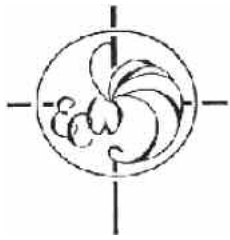
The meeting divided into small working groups to make suggestions on draft Vision and Mission statements and the draft strategic goals. Parishioners were asked to comment on the merits of the goals, standards for their measurement and possible strategies for their achievement. A member of the Vestry or other designated parish leader sat at each small group table to facilitate discussion and take notes.

Goals for the parish were presented with specific tactics for each goal. The goals are:

- *Community involvement and outreach/justice advocacy* – to sharpen our awareness of current and emerging community issues and develop ministries that address them.
- *Ministries/Programs/Youth Programs/Non-member Involvement/Vestry Committees* – design worship, programs and ministries to meet emerging trends and needs of members in order to attract new members and retain existing members.
- *Close Knit Members* – form and maintain a supportive family of faith united in love for Christ and one another and who are involved together in the life and mission of the parish.
- *Spiritual enrichment* – be a gathering place for spiritual enrichment, worship, ministry and dialogue for all those who live and work in the Wilmington community.
- *Communications* – develop an effective communications plan with targeted audiences to bring greater awareness about SsAM and ministries and to attract and retain members.
- *Stewardship* – develop and maintain a high level of commitment to Christian stewardship, fiscal soundness, effective management of material, human resources and facilities maintenance so as to sustain a long range, effective presence in the diocese and the broader community.

Concluding the discussion, the Vestry shared its intention to be guided by these discussions as they prepare the Parish Strategic Plan, and that the Plan would be presented to the congregation upon its completion.

# News from Episcopal Church Women of Saints Andrew and Matthew



The seventh annual ECW Christmas luncheon was held on December 10.

The opening and closing prayers were led by Ernestine Brock-Walker. Karen Johnson, President, welcomed all to the luncheon. Pat Hamptom spoke on the theme Many Gifts - One Spirit.

All women of the church are invited to attend the ECW meetings held on the second Saturday of each month. ECW sponsors several annual events and supports a variety of church functions.

## Upcoming Meetings

The next ECW meeting will be on Saturday, January 14 at 10:00 a.m. It will be followed by brunch and the first quarterly book discussion. The book that will be reviewed is *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe.

The February meeting will be held on February 11 at 10:00 a.m.

## Recipes Needed for New SsAM Cookbook

If you have a great recipe and would like to share it in the new SsAM cookbook, please call Karen Johnson at 765-2218.

## Plan Now for Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

The Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper will take place on February 28, beginning at 5:00 p.m. The menu will be chicken legs and breasts (fried or baked), green beans, macaroni & cheese, pancakes, a variety of desserts, and a beverage. The cost for tickets to this popular event is \$8.00 each. They may be purchased from any ECW member or through the church office. You may dine in the Auditorium, or do take-out. A popular tradition following the Supper is a Rite of Burning the Palms (Preparation of the Ashes for Ash Wednesday), conducted by the Rector.

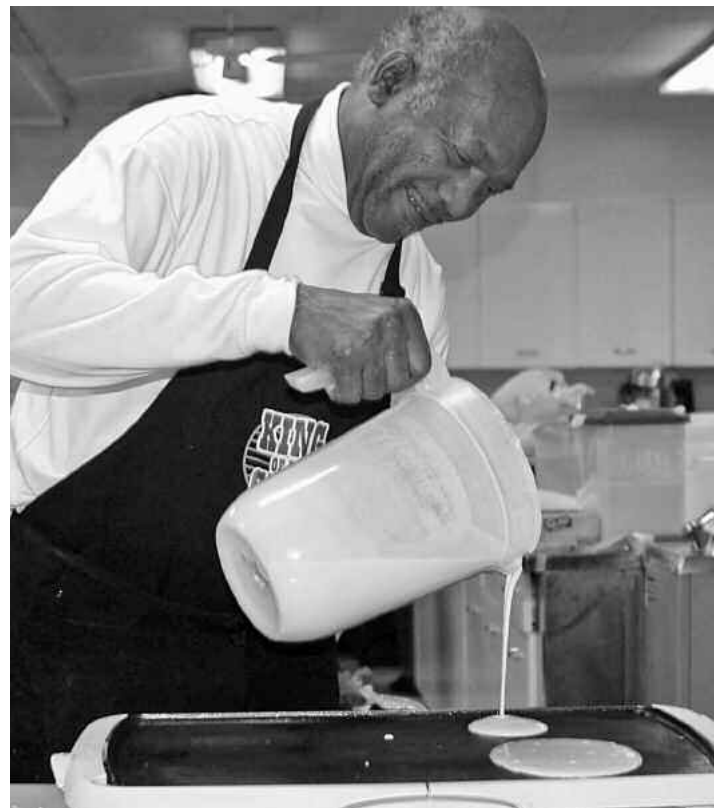
## “Experiencing the Living Word”

Please join us for this weekly Bible study led by Canon Casson. It is held on Thursday evenings, 7:00 – 8:15 p.m. “The Bible is not only about the way things were, but about the way things are.” This truth is experienced by those involved in this particular approach to Bible study. Participants share in the reading and interpretation of the texts by “walking in the shoes” of Biblical characters. In the light of the realities of those ancient times, we discover meaning and power from scripture texts for our personal lives, and for today’s world.

## “Be Still and Know...”

This is a weekly meditation class led by Canon Casson on Tuesday evenings, 7:00 – 8:15 p.m.

This course draws on meditation practices from Christian and other spiritual traditions of the world. Through meditative exercise, disciplined sitting, guided commentaries and group discussion, participants learn how to experience each moment with calm awareness, be in constant touch and act from their inner being, and draw nearer to the Presence of God.



2005 Pancake Supper. Photo by De Vere Patton



Carnival Sunday 2005

Photo by Bob Haynes

## Celebrate Carnival Sunday February 26!

Carnival Sunday 2006 will be celebrated on February 26 at 10:30 a.m.

Robert Ray's *Gospel Mass* will be sung. Additional music includes *In that Great Gittin' Up Mornin'*, *Hold to God's Unchanging Hand*, *Perfect Praise*, and *When the Saints Go Marching In*.

Make plans now to attend this festive Eucharist.

## Four Ash Wednesday Services, March 1

The Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion  
8:15 a.m., 12:15 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. - Holy Eucharist  
7:00 p.m. - Choral Eucharist

## Parish Snapshot Available in Diocesan Report

The Parish Statistical Report for 2004 recently arrived from Diocese of Delaware.

The data presented provides a snapshot of the parish. The report examines a church's statistics in two ways: in relation to the diocesan and national benchmarks, and in relation to itself. The document is not meant to be a report card, but rather a tool to be used by parish leadership.

There are 35 churches in the Diocese of Delaware. SsAM's rank among these churches varies greatly depending on what is being measured.

Exerpts from two sections of the report are shown here. From these figures, you can see that SsAM is the 11th largest parish in the Diocese of Delaware in terms of membership, but ranks 7th in attendance.

Where SsAM excels is in church school size and in giving. Our church school is the third largest in the Diocese and fourth as a percentage of membership!

Our rank in terms of giving is especially impressive. Total donations to the church through pledges and plate offerings are the 5th highest in the Diocese. We also rank 5th in terms of the proportion of total revenue given for work outside the church and, even better, SsAM ranks third in terms of the amount given through outreach.

### Highlights from the Vital & Financial Statistics report:

MEASUREMENT	RANK
Year-end membership	11
Average attendance	7
Church School size	3
Church School size as % of membership	4
Pledge & plate	5
Pledge & plate as % of total revenues	33
Net operating revenues	29

### Highlights from the Stewardship Statistics report:

MEASUREMENT	RANK
Pledging units	11
Pledging units as % of communicants	19
Church's average pledge	2
Proportional giving %	1
Pledge to Diocese	2
Amount given through outreach	3
Proportion of total revenue given for work outside congregation	5

## October Work Day a Success

Canon Casson and the members of the Vestry wish to thank the following volunteers who gave their time and talents painting, washing windows, replacing lights, making repairs where needed, and reorganizing storage spaces on the October work day.

Thanks go to James and Maria Ballard, Joe Johnson, Chuck and Sandy Hines, Ken Francis, Jim Linderman, Dot Dorsey, Kitty Esterly, Linda Jackson, Geoff Sawyer, James Thomas, Leroy Ames, Walt Cheatham, Nate Martin, John Owens, Ann Tate, Leroy Burks, Bob Richmond, Richard Jones, Ben Lolly, Alfred Gemignani, and John Spears.

## Art Slam Ministry Sponsors Programs

The Art Slam Ministry will host a viewing of the movie *Crash* on Friday, January 27. Check the weekly *Vision* and the website, [www.ssam.org](http://www.ssam.org) for the time.

A discussion will follow the film with a facilitator from the YWCA Racism Study Circle. Members of the B'hai community will be attending.

Art Slam on February 25 will feature Sharon Moore from the Delaware Humanities Forum. She will give a presentation on Bessie Coleman (1892-1926), the first African-American aviatrix. Time is 7:00-9:00 p.m.

## Eden: the Polyphonic Paradise of Obrecht & Bosch



Piffaro returns to SsAM for a concert on Sunday, February 12 at 4:00 p.m.

Jacob Obrecht, one of the outstanding polyphonists of the late 15th century, wrote on the cusp of a new, more secular world.

Piffaro and Capilla Flamenca, Belgium's premier early music vocal ensemble, will present a concert drawing mainly from his colorful secular works, particularly his Flemish songs and untexted compositions. The music will be accompanied by an unusual video projection of Hieronymous Bosch's *Garden of Delights*. Contemporaries, Obrecht and Bosch depict a society reawakened to the pleasures of human life and yet acutely aware of the dangers of those pleasures, each in his own artistic medium.

For more information, call (215) 235-8469 or visit [www.piffaro.com](http://www.piffaro.com)

## Celebrate Kwanzaa at SsAM



Kwanzaa is a celebration of family, community, culture, and seven higher principles.

The sixth night of Kwanzaa, *Kuumba* (Creativity), will be celebrated at SsAM on December 31 from 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. in the Auditorium.

The guest presenter will be Baba Kamau Ngom, there will be a Kwanzaa skit, music and a poetry slam by young adults.

This family event is free and open to everyone. Attendees may dress ethnically if they wish. The evening will close with a feast.

## First Night Activities at SsAM

The Kwanzaa celebration ends at 9:00 p.m.

At 10:30 p.m., *Food for the Journey in the New Year*, a service of reflection, repentance and renewal with Holy Communion will take place. This service includes a burning ritual, an act of commitment, prayers, chants and hymns.

The church will remain open from 11:30 p.m. - midnight for silent meditation by candlelight.

## Membership Committee Launching New Feature

Beginning with the March/April issue of *Vision*, we will feature a member or members of our parish. This is an effort for our community to get to know each other better.

*Did you know...*

- we have three members who are in the Delaware Women's Hall of Fame?
- we have an 86 year old who was a professional photographer in the military?
- one of our young members is a talented tennis champion?
- the Barbatundes have returned to South Africa for a year?
- Kitty Esterly has a nursing school named after her?

*We count among our members...*

- a doctor who began a nonprofit to educate against teen pregnancy,
- two members who spend about half the year in Maine doing as much for a small parish there as they do with us,
- someone whose hobby is bonsai,
- two championship swimmers under 14 years of age,
- members who are no longer homeless and have moved to self sufficiency, and
- two sisters who have sung in the choir for over 15 years.

*Read Vision and learn more about our members.*

# Dr. Katherine "Kitty" Esterly Honored



*(excerpts from a letter from the University of Delaware)*

I am proud to announce the establishment of the Katherine L. Esterly Nursing Education Scholarship fund in the College of Health Sciences at the University of Delaware. Along with many members of the College of

Health Sciences Visiting Committee, we approached Doctor "Kitty" Esterly with the idea of creating this award to honor her lifelong commitment to championing the work of nurses. Imagine our delight when Doctor Esterly not only agreed to have the scholarship named in her honor, but also gave a generous gift of her own to the fund. I hope you will join me in making a gift to the Katherine L. Esterly Nursing Education Scholarship fund.

I have long been an admirer of Doctor Esterly's work as a neonatologist at Christiana Hospital and her work on behalf of nurses. Doctor Esterly has worked with her colleagues, legislators, government officials and members of the University's College of Health Sciences to improve relationships between physicians and nurses and to elevate respect for professional nurses. As a result of these efforts, the State now recognizes the qualifications of nurse practitioners to treat patients and write prescriptions. Doctor Esterly also fostered the creation of professional development opportunities for nurses including the initiation of a Delaware neonatal nurse practitioner program offered at the University in cooperation with Thomas Jefferson University and the College of New Jersey.

Doctor Esterly has said that "nurses are the backbone of medicine . . . they are more than valuable, they are critical" to quality patient care. Indeed, the current demand for nurses emphasizes the essential role they play in all health care settings. The Esterly Scholarship will be awarded annually to an exceptional nursing student enrolled in the School of Nursing on the basis of academic achievement.

Doctor Esterly has received many honors during her long, distinguished career, including the University of Delaware's Medal of Distinction. The Katherine L. Esterly Nursing Education Scholarship celebrates and recognizes her honors and accomplishments. It is a permanent legacy that will directly impact the lives of award recipients as well as countless patients and families. Please ... join me in creating this lasting honor for Doctor Kitty. I can think of no one who deserves it more.

Sincerely,

Jane Maroney  
College of Health Sciences Visiting Committee  
University of Delaware

## You Can Contribute to the Esterly Scholarship

Please mail your check to the Katherine L. Esterly Nursing Education Scholarship to:

Barbara S. Vogt, Secretary  
College of Health Sciences  
345 McDowell Hall  
University of Delaware  
Newark, DE 19716  
Tel: (302) 831-2381  
Fax: (302) 831-3490

## Welcome to SsAM's 10th Anniversary Year!

In April 1996, a new parish entered the 211th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Delaware – the Episcopal Church of Saints Andrew and Matthew.

Ten years later, SsAM – an exciting, worship, spiritual and missionary phenomenon – has been emerging on this corner of Eighth and Shipley, and drawing persons of all ages and many races and walks of life into its sphere.

Throughout the year, SsAM will observe this anniversary through prayer, liturgical, educational, social and other events, and by hosting the 221st Annual Convention of the Diocese.

At the time of this writing, a 10th Anniversary Committee, chaired by Sylvia Banks, has begun planning and developing written and audiovisual presentations of our historic roots and life up to today. All parish organizations will be involved in planning 10th anniversary events.

The entire committee, which has been organized into working subcommittees, will meet at the church on the evening of January 17 at 6:00 p.m. Anyone interested in participating in the planning is invited to attend.

## Your Response is Needed

SsAM's Saturday Hospitality Chapel outreach is now in full swing. As communicated before, this is a program to provide warm shelter and a place for quiet meditation and prayer each Saturday afternoon from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m., November through March of 2006.

Unfortunately, the request for volunteers to act as hosts for this program has been unanswered. The need is for two persons per Saturday to be present in the Chapel to greet and host our guests. Please contact Phil Murphree at (302) 427-0392 or Max Bell at (302) 478-1106 if you can help support this important outreach effort as well as enrich your own life by sharing God's love with others.

# Community Advocacy News

by Alice Smith

Thanks to all who participated in providing Christmas gifts for our Friendship House Sunday breakfast guests, as well as for the Angel Tree and Adopt-a-Family programs.

For the Friendship House Sunday breakfast guests, SsAM parishioners donated over 100 brightly wrapped gifts which were distributed to the homeless who eat breakfast at our church each Sunday.

In addition, sixteen children received four gifts each through our participation in Angel Tree. Thanks so much to all who bought and delivered gifts to the children. The Community Advocacy Committee also delivered a bright poinsettia to the caregivers of these children. In order not to forget the children's parents who are incarcerated and away from loved ones, the committee sent cards to let them know what gifts their children received in their name.

Finally, SsAM adopted a family associated with our own parish this year. Gift certificates were given to the family so they could purchase clothes, shoes, and toys for the holiday. As always, the generosity of our parish was remarkable!



## Soup's On Again!

Coming February 5:  
Souper Bowl Sunday!

SsAM's Souper Bowl Sunday is sponsored annually by the Community Advocacy Committee.

Cups of soup will be sold after the 10:30 a.m. service on Super Bowl Sunday. Several tasty varieties of soup will be available to eat-in or takeout.

Souper Bowl Sunday is a compassionate alternative for those wishing to participate rather than spectate for the Super Bowl. Souper Bowl Sunday is a charity drive by church congregations nationwide to help feed the hungry in their communities.

This "Souper Bowl of Caring" was founded by the Rev. Brad Smith, an associate pastor at the Spring Valley Presbyterian Church in Columbia, S.C. His concept was straightforward - congregations simply ask parishioners to give \$1 each as they leave worship that Sunday. Churches have expanded on the concept, with many, like SsAM, selling soup made by members of the congregation.

If you are willing to cook a pot of soup to support this effort, please contact Alice Smith at 376-0200.

# Undee Sunday Results

The Community Advocacy Committee thanks all of you who helped make Undee Sunday a success. With your contributions and donations, we were able to provide 52 complete sets of thermal underwear to our needy friends.

We were able to give all 19 of our friends that reside in Andrew's Place each a nice set that was sized to fit their needs. The remaining 33 sets were donated to the Friendship House Clothing Bank to be distributed to those in need. We thank you for your participation in this worthy cause.



A plaque was recently installed adjacent to the arch shown above. The text reads, "The arch above was uncovered during foyer renovations in 2004. It was part of a former entrance to this building, originally the parish house of Saint Andrew's Church. In 1996, Saint Matthew's Parish (located at 700 North Walnut Street) and Saint Andrew's Parish consolidated to form the present Episcopal Church of Saints Andrew and Matthew." *Photo by Ken Francis*

## Delaware Center for Justice Seeks Volunteers

The Delaware Center for Justice needs volunteers.

Project REACH facilitates visits between incarcerated mothers and their children. Children in the program are linked with a Big Brother or Big Sister. If you are interested in serving as a mentor, contact Big Brothers - Big Sisters of Wilmington at 998-3577.

"Read-In Read-Out" Program is seeking volunteers to assist incarcerated mothers read books on tape to their children. This service is provided in cooperation with Read-Aloud Delaware. If interested, call Janet Leban, 658-7173, ext. 14.

# Get to Know the Choral Scholars: Angelyn, Suzette and Philip

The Choral Scholars at the Episcopal Church of Saints Andrew and Matthew is one of the Delaware Valley's finest professional vocal ensembles. The group consists of eight professional singers who sing weekly at SsAM's 10:30 a.m. Sunday liturgy as well as in concerts and special liturgies throughout the season. They perform a wide range of motets and anthems, frequently perform solos, and serve as the

professional core of the SsAM Adult Choir.



**Angelyn Robinson**, soprano, has been a Choral Scholar and vocal soloist at the Episcopal Church of Saints Andrew and Matthew for the past six years. She studied voice and opera at The University of Delaware and currently studies at Delaware Technical and Community College pursuing a degree in Human Services Technologies. She made her operatic debut in

*Porgy and Bess* at the Graz Opera house in Austria. While at the University of Delaware, she performed two roles with the Opera Workshop Ensemble: the Wife in *The Music Shop* and Lady Bilows in *Albert Herring*. With Opera Delaware she has performed in *Aida*, *Tosca* and *Turandot* and is a regular performer with the Rainbow Chorale of Delaware. Angelyn was a NATS winner on the District and Regional levels. She has studied voice with her mother, Marie Hadley Robinson,

and currently works with David Christopher.



**Suzette Scheffler Burgess** travels from Elkton, Maryland, for the privilege of singing with the Choral Scholars. Originally from Hagerstown, she graduated from Western Maryland College with a BA in Music Education, and received a Master of Music in Vocal Performance from West Chester

University. A music teacher for the Cecil County (Maryland) public school system, Suzette currently teaches vocal/choral music at North East High School. Outside of her day job, Suzette has performed with Chorale Delaware, the Westminster Presbyterian Church Choir, and NewArk Chorale. She is especially fond of musical theatre, and has performed numerous roles in the area with Covered Bridge Theatre, The Tidewater Players, and The Brandywiners. Her favorite roles include Hope in *Anything Goes*, Nancy in *Oliver!*, Sally Brown in *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*, and Miss Hannigan in *Annie*. Suzette lives with the other musicians in her family: her three children, Emily, Keith, and Alison, and her husband, Matt.



**Philip Doucette**, tenor, has sung professionally with Opera Delaware, Lancaster Opera Company, The Northeast Oratorio Society, Trinity Opera Company, Coro Allegro, The Princeton Pro Musica Chorus, The Philadelphia Opera Company Chorus, and The New Jersey Opera Festival Chorus. With a voice described as "marvelous" by the *Chadds Ford Post*, Philip has been establishing himself as a

new young voice to be reckoned with in the greater Philadelphia area. Recent opera and operetta appearances have included Verdi's *La Traviata*, Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, Offenbach's *Orfeus in the Underworld*, and Strass' *Die Fledermaus*. His oratorio and sacred appearances have included Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's *Johnnes Passionnes*, Mendlessohn's *Lobgesang*, Mozart's *Requiem*, and Ramierez's *Missa Criolla*. Mr. Doucette earned his BM in Voice Performance at The College of New Jersey and his MM in Voice Performance and Pedagogy from The Pennsylvania State University. A native of Middletown, New Jersey, Philip currently resides in Wilmington with his wife, Kimberly, and their greyhound Trevor.

# What Is Hinduism?

by *Danny Schweers*



On Sunday morning, December 11, Asha Dodia told twenty or so people in SsAM's auditorium about her religion: Hinduism. She did not, thankfully, try to minimize the differences between Hinduism and Christianity, which are substantial. After all, we are not a church that minimizes differences. The challenge of

diversity is not for everyone to be the same but rather for everyone to tolerate and even love what is different. In this respect, Ms. Dodia fit right in!

The first difference Ms. Dodia touched upon was that Hinduism is not an organized religion, but rather an individual affair. She talked of rituals practiced every day—perhaps to include greeting the sun in the morning—and of having shrines in the home. She also talked about festivals, lots of festivals, 30 a year in India, all of them celebratory, including the festivals of Buddhists, Sikhs, Moslems, Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians, and Farsis. She also talked about those who conduct the Hindu rituals—the Brahmins—and those who teach—the Swamis.

The most notable difference between Hinduism and Christianity, that they have many gods and we have one God, turns out not to be quite true. Hinduism, Ms. Dodia said, believes in only one God, but many roles for God, including you and your neighbor, all of us part of the divine and worthy of love. The different Hindu gods are all manifestations of the one God. There is, for example, the god of prosperity, celebrated by 20 days of fireworks and the exchange of sweets, dried fruit, nuts, puddings and other food as well as greeting cards but not by the exchange of gifts. This god of prosperity is God in one form. Everything is God. There is nothing but God. There is no separation in Hinduism between the creator and the created. Christians, because we believe that Father, Son and Holy Spirit are one God, have some parallel for understanding Hinduism's many gods/one God theology. Hindus have gods of money, courage, wisdom, motherhood and many more but all are only some aspects of God, worthy of recognition. This view makes it easy for Hindus to respect other religions as having some of the truth, but not the whole truth.

From what Ms. Dodia said, having the whole truth seems to be the goal of Hinduism. Ignorance, on the other hand, is Hinduism's explanation for evil. People do bad things not knowing any better. (Christianity's Saint Augustine had a somewhat similar understanding, that sin was to be understood as an absence of something good, not the

presence of something bad.) The ignorant steal thinking they need more than they have. The ignorant kill thinking they need to protect. Those with knowledge do good because the bad holds no interest. Enlightenment is knowing you already are what you are trying to become, that you already have what you lack.

Christianity's concept of judgement is one of the hardest for Ms. Dodia to understand, that some aspects of the divine should be rejected as evil. She says that, if Hinduism has any kind of fundamental commandment, it is to do the least amount of harm that you can (non-violence in thought and deed).

I confess that this was only the second Adult Ed class I've attended in two years. Both times were rewarding, but I always seem to be too busy to attend, even though attending only means arriving an hour early on Sundays, at 9:30 a.m. Next year will be different! I hope to see you at Adult Ed on Sunday, January 8, for the beginning of a series on "Faith."

## Interfaith Concert to be Held January 16

An InterFaith Concert entitled Many Voices Proclaiming Peace, will be held at SsAM on Monday, January 16 (Martin Luther King's birthday) at 7:00 p.m..

Past concert have featured singers and dancers from Christian, Jewish, Hindu, buddhist, Muslim, Native American, and Baha'i faith traditions.

## Children of West Center City Need Your Help

Volunteers are needed to assist in an after-school program in West Center City.

The program is located at Grace United Methodist Church, 900 West Street, Wilmington.

This is an ongoing ministry to these children and is supported by Grace United Methodist Church, SsAM, Trinity Episcopal Church and West Presbyterian Church.

Volunteers work with children in grades 1-5. The program takes place on school days, from 3:00 -6:30 p.m. Its focus is to provide a safe haven and give education support to the children.

If you can help, please call Angela White at 655-8847, or speak to Walt Cheatham if you have questions or want additional information.

# Upcoming Activities & Events

## *January*

- 1 8:00 a.m. New Year's Day service  
10:30 a.m. New Year's Day service  
AIM Sunday  
14 10:00 a.m. ECW meeting, brunch, book discussion  
15 AIM Sunday  
16 7:00 p.m. Interfaith Concert for Peace  
Offices closed in honor of Martin Luther King's birthday  
17 6:00 p.m. Tenth Anniversary committee meeting  
22 2:00 p.m. Hockessin Hills  
27 ArtSlam @ SsAM - *Crash* with discussion following  
29 2:00-4:00 p.m. Teen meeting, Teen Suite

## *February*

- 5 AIM Sunday  
Souper Bowl Sunday  
11 10:00 a.m. ECW meeting  
12 4:00 p.m. Piffaro concert  
19 AIM Sunday  
24 7:00-9:00 p.m. ArtSlam @ SsAM  
26 10:30 a.m. Carnival Sunday  
2:00 p.m. Hockessin Hills  
28 5:00-8:00 p.m. Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

## *March*

- 1 8:00 a.m. Ash Wednesday services with Eucharist  
12:15 p.m.,  
5:30 p.m.  
7:00 p.m. Choral Eucharist

The Daily Parish  
Calendar can be  
seen on the  
SsAM website—  
[www.ssam.org](http://www.ssam.org).



THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF SAINTS ANDREW AND MATTHEW  
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