



Rector's Message: The Great Fifty Days of Easter

by Rev. Russ Bohner

Sometimes a special gift comes from someone that is important to share with you. The Rev. Russ Bohner, my colleague at Christ Church, sent this, and I want to share it with you with thanks to him.
—Rev. Carl Kunz

Welcome to the Great Fifty Days of Easter. The Great Fifty Days are an extended Lord's Day (Sunday), during which, traditionally, there is no fasting and no kneeling and in some congregations no confession of sin. In the Church, we tend to spend a lot of time and energy focusing on Lent—The Great Forty Days. Each year we celebrate Ash Wednesday and are invited "to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance by prayer, fasting, and self denial and by reading and meditating on God's Holy Word." We place a great deal of emphasis on Lent and on the particular practices of Lent (like fasting), and we have special programs and liturgies. And this is appropriate. The Great Forty days of Lent are an important season of self-reflection, correction and preparation for Easter.

Easter Sunday comes, however, and we tend to see it as the conclusion of Lent and not as the beginning of Easter. It is important to note that the Great Fifty Days are the Season of Easter, not the Season *after* Easter. This means that our celebration of Easter is not reserved to one day, Easter Sunday, but is celebrated over fifty days. Since the beginning of the Christian Church, the Great Fifty Days from Easter to the Feast of Pentecost have been a time of rejoicing and feasting—in other words, a time of partying—a time for receiving, celebrating, and living thankfully for the wonderful gift of forgiveness and new life freely offered

through God in Jesus Christ.

On Easter Day, Jesus rises from the dead, demonstrating God's triumphant power over evil, sin, and death. All of us who are baptized into Christ's death and resurrection sound our common joy with our proclamation "Alleluia, Christ is risen! The Lord is risen indeed, Alleluia!" And just as we are invited to a holy season of Lent, so should we be invited to a holy season of Easter, to live and experience the Great Fifty Days, perhaps with words like these:

"I invite you to the observance of a holy Easter, by throwing huge picnics and parties and inviting family, friends, neighbors, and strangers to share the feast; by passing on the abundance of God's goodness and blessing by humble and ridiculously overwhelming acts of kindness and generosity; by praising God out loud and proclaiming God's holy Word in absolutely everything."

We have fasted; now we feast. And having fasted, how more delicious the feast! Welcome to the Great Fifty Days of Easter. Welcome to the party. Remember, this party is not just for us; it's for everyone. As we have received, so shall we give. What we have received in and through Jesus is more than we can ever give back, but we should not let this fact keep us from trying. We are Episcopalians. We know how to party. Easter is what we're good at. Now is the time. This is the season. Let us take the party, let us take the feast, let us take the good news that Christ is risen from the dead and dies no more to everyone, especially to all whose life is one continuous fast.

Report from the Search Committee

by Alice Smith

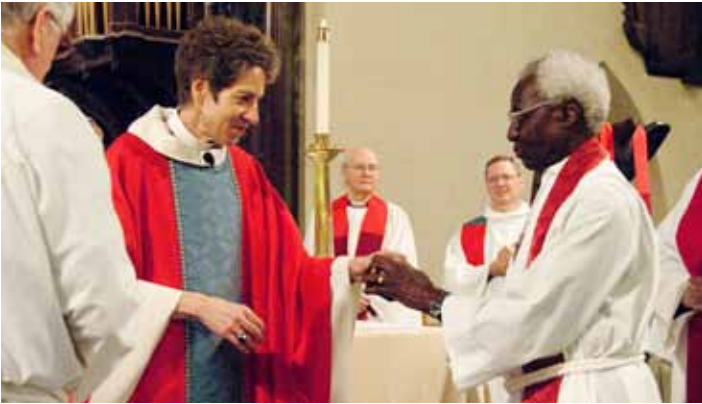
The goal is in sight! During April and May, the Search Committee has been meeting with candidates, whose names were confirmed by the Diocese.

Each candidate was invited to visit our parish for two days. Two members of the Search Committee served as hosts for the visit. On Friday, the candidates met with the Bishop, toured the church and rectory, and saw some of the sights in Wilmington. On Friday night, an informal social gathering was held with the Vestry and Search Committee, followed by dinner with the committee.

On Saturday, the candidates officiated at a service with the committee, followed by a formal interview and meeting with the wardens. In May, the committee plans to visit candidates at their home churches or invite them to preach in a church in Wilmington.

If all goes well, the Search Committee will recommend one name to the Vestry, who will vote on the candidate and contact the Bishop for consent. The Vestry will then extend the call and a letter of agreement will be signed. If the chosen candidate accepts the call, "Alleluia!" The search process will be finished.

Of course, that will be just the beginning of this new pastorate. There will be moving arrangements to make, family inclusion in the parish and community, and celebration of this new ministry. In the words of Jeremiah, "For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope."



Each clergy member was given a vial of oil, the Chrism, which is used to bless those received into the household of Christ at their confirmation as members of the Episcopal Church.

Photos by Danny Schweers

Delaware Welcomes Presiding Bishop

by Danny Schweers

Hundreds of people welcomed the Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori to Delaware on a blustery Tuesday in Holy Week at the Cathedral Church of Saint John. For the first hour, she said little. Having asked everyone there to reflect on what it means that we are beloved of God, she listened as one person after another shared their reflections. Then she answered questions from the floor about the Episcopal Church and the challenges it faces. Then, after a brief reception in the Great Hall, everyone returned to the sanctuary for a service in which the clergy of the Episcopal Diocese of Delaware renewed their ordination vows. A luncheon followed, but the Presiding Bishop and her husband had already left, to catch a flight to Italy.

SsAM was well represented at the event, including Walt and LaVerne Cheatham, Kitty Esterly, Sandy Holt, Jim Linderman, Leslie Roberts, and others. Three of our clergy were there—Carl Kunz, Jeanne Linderman, and Rod Welles—as well as myself and Judi Gregory, who serve on the Bishop of Delaware’s staff.

You can read the Presiding Bishop’s inspiring sermon, and see many photos from the event, by visiting the Web site of the diocese: www.DioceseofDelaware.net. There is also a link there to Gary Soulsman’s excellent article that appeared in the *News Journal*.

Vestry Report

by Geoff Sawyer

The Vestry has formed an ad hoc committee, headed by Bob Richmond, to create a list of capital needs for our church buildings. Ministry heads have been asked to submit a wish list of property needs which would help make their ministries’ work more effective. This may or may not involve major capital projects and could include some needed furniture, painting a wall, or something that would involve major expense. The objective: to have a prioritized list of needed improvements ready for when we are in a financial position to do them. It is an informal wish list drawn up now and will be posted on the parish Web site. Our history over the past twenty years has included the receipt of “windfalls” at unexpected times or from unexpected sources. Now we will be ready to use those funds in an appropriate way and in an expeditious fashion.



Lenten Lunches

by Danny Schweers

Yes, Lenten Lunches are an oxymoron, a contradiction in terms. We are encouraged to fast during Lent, but who can resist the Texas nut cake or the praline pie, not to mention the lemon meringue and sweet potato pies? Every Tuesday in Lent, homemade sandwiches, wraps, soup, muffins, fruit salad, and dessert were offered to all. In the sanctuary during this time, a half-hour Taizé service was offered—a simple meditative calming to focus our thoughts back on God before going back downstairs for a brownie.

In the photo are many who helped prepare and serve lunch (left to right): Carolyn Haon, Dot Dorsey, Eudel Drain, Pattie Richmond, Nancy Ware, Jayne Britt, Mary Ann Edwards, Gloria Conner-Bungy, Louise Lewis, Pat Saunders, Muff Scott, Pat Griffith, James Thomas, Bob Richmond, Nancy Naeve, Susan Murphree.

Sunday School News

by Tanisha Julius

This has been a rebuilding year for the Sunday School. We continue to use the *Seasons of the Spirit* curriculum and to integrate music and art into weekly lessons. Children are divided into two age groups; both have participated in creating cards for residents at Regal Health Care and for parishioners who are homebound. The children enjoyed this form of outreach, and we will continue these projects in the future.

As we bring the year to a close I would like to thank Sherry Bell, Jenna Christy, Anne Gibson, Carolyn Haon, Kelly Holt, David Julius, Linda Julius, Ben Kiel, Ida McCall, Beatrice Polk, Alice Sawyer, Geoff Sawyer, Gloria Williams, TiAnna Wisher, and all the volunteers and parents for making this a wonderful experience. We have grown by leaps and bounds as a ministry and hope to continue to do so in the future.

On **May 17 at 10:30 am**, we will have an end-of-the-year celebration to which all children are invited. During this social gathering the children will be recognized for taking part in this year's program and will have the opportunity to participate in fellowship and games. I encourage all to come and be part of this celebration.

For the summer months we will provide childcare for children five and under beginning May 24. We will start each Sunday at 10:30 am and will continue until the end of the service. If you would like your child to join you for communion please let us know when you arrive.

Annual Diocesan Convention

by Charles Annan, Diane Streett, and Bob Richmond

The 224th Convention of the Diocese of Delaware was held at Christ Church Christiana Hundred March 27 and 28. Each congregation in the diocese is represented at convention, which is the legislative body of a diocese. SsAM was represented by delegates Carol Scott and Bob Richmond, with Charles Annan and Diane Clarke Streett as alternates, and other SsAM members also attended. On Friday, there were open hearings on convention resolutions, introductions and election of candidates for Diocesan Council and others offices, diocesan finances, and General Convention updates.

Elections were held and Diane Streett was re-elected to another 5-year term as a lay member of the Diocesan Trial Court, which has responsibility for adjudication of ecclesiastical matters. Sandra Johnson was elected as a lay member of the Diocesan Standing Committee, which has responsibility for matters of clergy and ecclesiastical authority.

Seven resolutions were carried; one failed. Resolution 7 (adopted), Church Taskforce on Older Adult Ministries, was submitted by the leadership of SsAM. The purpose of this resolution is to urge General Convention to provide a budget allocation for the taskforce. SsAM member Chris Brennan Lee is on that taskforce; she offered background information and explained its purpose.



The SsAM Sunday School wowed the congregation with their singing at the Easter service. A high resolution version, suitable for prints, is available on the SsAM Web site: www.ssam.org.

Bottom row from left to right: Savion Thompson, Charles, Cheyenne Tanner, Mikey Gurnee, Taylor Graham, Forrest Fistzgiles Jr., Seth Faulk. *Top row from left to right:* Stephen Moss, Geoffrey Moss, Kamryn Matthews, Tammi Morris, Kennedy Graham, Kori Mobley, Iyabo Babatunde, and Onalenna Babatunde.

In the upcoming weeks we will begin planning next year's program. If you are interested in being part of this process please contact me. I welcome your thoughts and suggestions in hopes that we can continue to provide our children with a program that cultivates spiritual growth and nurtures the imagination.

Resolution 1 (adopted), Apology for Support by the Episcopal Church for the Institution of Slavery in Delaware, is the culmination of the work of the Diocesan Committee on Slavery established by the 222nd Diocesan Convention. Diane Streett, co-chair of this committee, spoke in favor of the resolution, as did Bob Richmond and Rod Welles. It calls for an apology, a Day of Repentance religious service, and the showing of the film *Traces of the Trade* in all congregations before the next diocesan convention.

Between the business sessions, ministry workshops were held on a number of topics. Fair Trade: Good Stewardship in a Global Economy revealed how one parish is assisting entrepreneurs in underdeveloped countries. Photographer Kevin Fleming provided a slide show of his stunning wildlife photographs to highlight Delaware environmental awareness. In the Slavery and the Diocese workshop, a film was shown featuring interviews by Jeanne Nutter, a member of the Diocesan Committee on Slavery, with several Episcopal Civil Rights pioneers (Helen Thomas, Rev. Lloyd Casson, Dr. Eugene McGowan, Dr. Joe Johnson). In the film, these leaders challenge the church and its members to keep chipping away at racism. The workshop was held twice, with approximately 60 people at each session. It was very powerful.

SsAM Soul Youth Group

by Linda Jackson

Trip to New Orleans



1st row from left: Diocese of Louisiana disaster relief worker, LaErica Conner-Sims, Eve Day of Immanuel Church, Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana representative, Ron Pierce of Church of the Nativity. 2nd row from left: Louisiana team leader, Gloria Williams, Alex Oates, Linda Jackson. 3rd row from left: Ron Jackson, Lori Williams-Fistzgiles. Top: Monica Oates.

We wish to thank you for your support and all of your prayers during our Katrina Mission Team trip to New Orleans. It was extremely comforting to know that there were so many people praying for us and our ministry. It was obvious that we were being supported by our faith community. The power of the Lord is amazing.

We spent our week working on the exterior of Ms. Shannon's home, located in the Lower Ninth Ward—painting, scraping, caulking and sweeping. Occasionally, one or two of our members would be assigned an off-site task to frame or collect and dump debris from work sites. It was hard, hard work. But it was extremely gratifying to know that we were empowered by the Holy Spirit to make a contribution and a difference in the lives of others. We were living the great commandments: Love the Lord and Love Your Neighbors.

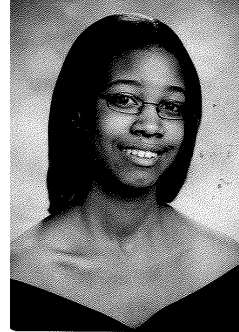
We attended Sunday service at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, located in New Orleans, also in the midst of a search for a new rector. The congregation immediately embraced us. In fact, SsAM Soul Youth/Mission team members La'Erica Conner-Sims, Alex Oates, and Gloria Williams participated in the service. Following the service, we enjoyed a most delicious "New Orleans" meal hosted by St. Luke's.

When our work was done for the day, much of the evening was spent recuperating and resting for the next day's work. Nonetheless, we found time to walk through the Garden District, ride the St. Charles Street Trolley, and savor New Orleans cuisine.

The mission trip was amazing and life changing. We have all become activists. God is working in and through us. We pray that the experiences of our trip will stay with us forever.

Fashion Show

On May 2, SsAM children and youth came together in the SsAM auditorium to welcome spring and our family and friends to the 3rd Annual Spring Banquet and Fashion Show, presented by the SsAM Soul Youth Group. This year's theme was "A Year of Color." Whether you came for the delicious meal or the colorful and stylish fashions, your involvement and support make this a popular and positive event.



Spotlight on Graduating Senior La'Erica Conner-Sims

SsAM Soul Secretary/Treasurer La'Erica has been a faithful SsAM Soul member since the group's 2005 inception. Over the years she has participated in group activities, including our regular meetings, field trips, and joint Diocesan youth activities such as the 30 Hour Famine project, AIDS Walk, and the National

Acolyte Festival. This year La'Erica traveled to New Orleans as a member of the Katrina Mission Team to assist in the rebuilding effort. In service to SsAM, La'Erica has served as an acolyte, usher, Sunday School teacher assistant, and day care assistant. She has volunteered for SsAM clean up days, the Christmas pageant, Pancake Dinner, and modeled in the fashion shows. She is an honor roll student, a member of the William Penn track team, a participant in Delaware Futures motivational program, and the recent recipient of the State Farm Ujima Scholarship. Erica was accepted by and plans to attend Delaware State University. Congratulations, La'Erica!!!

Confirmations

Blessings to our new Youth Confirmands, Iyabo Babatunde, Onalenne Babatunde, and Veronica Oates. Confirmation class includes study and service facilitated by youth director Linda Jackson and Rev. Carl Kunz. The Bishop will administer the Sacrament of Confirmation during his visit to our church on Sunday, May 31.

Congratulations, Clif Gordon

Congratulations, Clif, on your selection to the Delaware All-State Swim Team! Clif Gordon won two state titles and swam in two winning relays to lead Salesianum School to the team title during the boys' finals of the Delaware High School Swimming & Diving Championships. A sophomore, Clif won the 100-yard butterfly (50.53) and the 100 backstroke (52.16).

Youth Calendar

May

Sunday, May 10, 10:30 am
Mother's Day Service, Nave

Sunday, May 17, 10:30-12:00 pm
Youth Confirmation Class, Teen Suite

Saturday, May 23, 10:00 am
Confirmation Rehearsal & Luncheon, Teen Suite/Loc.TBD

Sunday, May 31, 10:30 am
Bishop's Visit/Confirmation, Nave

June

Sunday, June 7, 12:30
Annual Meeting/Senior Luncheon, TBD

Visions of the Future

The editors and designers of the bi-monthly Vision are considering some new and different ways to deliver the news, and we want to hear from you! Would you like to receive the Vision in an email rather than in print? Would you like to receive it as both email and print? Please let us know by going to the SsAM Web site, www.ssam.org and filling out the subscription form.

Summer Prayer

Long warm days...

The pace of life slows...

A time for picnics and rest in the shade...

Lord,

help me to rest awhile in the cooling shade of your presence.

Slow down my restless heart and fill me with gentle compassion for all your people.

Amen.

Property Corner

by *Jim Linderman*

Work at the Rectory has taken increased emphasis over the past few months as we have begun showing the property to several clergy candidates for the Rector position. A major repainting of the interior rooms was undertaken by Jim Ballard, and the result has been a significant upgrade. Outside, drain pipes have been reinstalled, shrubs pruned, and various things repaired.

Pulling the Weeds

by *Danny Schweers*

Who wouldn't want to dig in the garden, pulling the weeds on a cold, windy day? At least it was sunny on Saturday, April 4 when ten people or so made our building and grounds more presentable for Holy Week and Easter by weeding and mulching the flower beds, sweeping the sidewalks, cleaning the windows, and doing office repairs. Jim Linderman supervised us, drove up into Pennsylvania for the big bags of mulch, and drove elsewhere for ceiling tiles to replace damaged ones in the office ceiling. Jenna Christie worked in the graveyard out front and joined Fr. Carl in the side garden. James Thomas seemed to be everywhere.

This was my first Work Day at SsAM, and I was surprised to find the parking lot full. The Rector Search Committee was in Crypt Hall, possibly interviewing a candidate. Upstairs, members of the children's choir were rehearsing. Other people were there as well, making the church hum. Is every Saturday like this? What a busy bunch of people we are!

Birthdays

May

1 Sharon Leyhow • 2 Laura Ames, Venera Casson, Thomas Noyes, Alice Smith • 4 Elliott Smith • 6 Natalie Nwanekwu • 10 Tierra Wisher • 13 Lisa Barkley, Judith Gregory • 14 Maria Ballard • 15 Jamie McCready • 19 Jeannette Johns • 20 Barbara Henry • 22 Elizabeth Townsend • 23 David Feasel • 25 Christof Dorsey • 26 Matthew Shipp • 28 Julian Dorsey

June

1 Evyline Nwanekwu • 3 Tanisha Julius, William Young • 5 Charles Annan • 7 Shirley Bynoe • 11 Carolyn Haon • 14 Ernest Barnes, Linda Smith • 18 Jayne Britt, Eric Polk • 21 Patricia Hampton • 22 Elmore Walker • 27 Gary Butler, Tyler Byrd, Juanita Gibbs • 28 Alana Walker • 30 Lois McGinnis

2008-2009 Code Purple Sanctuary Report

by *Phil Murphree*

This winter, Friendship House used SsAM's auditorium space to provide shelter for Code Purple nights. Code Purple weather is understood to be when the nighttime wind chill factor falls below 15 degrees Fahrenheit. While every winter night is a hardship for those without proper clothing, shelter and warmth, Code Purple weather is so severe that extended exposure to the elements will prove deadly. On such nights the typical survival strategies of those homeless men and women who refuse to stay in emergency shelters prove inadequate and people die. On Code Purple nights in Wilmington, Friendship House offered emergency sanctuary to the chronically homeless at the Episcopal Church of Sts. Andrew and Matthew. The auditorium was opened at 3:00 pm (after the Friendship House Day Center closed for the day) and closed at 9:00 pm (when the Salvation Army Code Purple night shelter opened for the remainder of the night).

Staffed by volunteers from Westminster Presbyterian Church, Immanuel Highlands Episcopal Church and SsAM, along with paid staff from Friendship House, the evening sanctuary served soup and sandwiches to about 60-80 chronically homeless men and women each evening. The volunteers provided the soup and sandwiches; Friendship House provided the hot beverages, paper, and cleaning products.

During this past winter, Code Purple was declared on 28 nights (26 were held at SsAM, the other 2 were held at Old Asbury United Methodist Church due to schedule conflicts at SsAM). We served 393 unduplicated homeless clients. Out of the 26 nights at SsAM, our team hosted 6 nights.

Special thanks to team members Karen and Joe Johnson, Carolyn Haon, Rob and Wes Gurnee, Cheryl Thomas-Etienne, Ana and Orlen Washington, Phil and Susan Murphree, and Berta Hamilton for their service to this important outreach at SsAM.

Upcoming Events

Adult Education in May

May is Prayer Book Month! During the month of May, we will use the Sunday forum time to explore the gifts in our Prayer Book. Rod and Carl will lead us in the history of the Prayer Book, the wonders within it, and its use both in public worship and private devotion. This will be a good introduction for newcomers and a refresher course for others.

Annual Visit by Bishop Wright

May 31, 10:30 service

At this special service, we'll celebrate baptisms, confirmations, receptions, and reaffirmations.

Annual Meeting & Sunday Worship Service

of the Episcopal Church of Saints Andrew & Matthew
Sunday, June 7 at 9:30 am

There will be only one service that day.

Find out about our year past...and our year ahead. Vote for the candidates for the new Vestry.

The future strength and health of SsAM depends on the participation of the parishioners,
SO PLEASE JOIN US ON JUNE 7!

JEREMIAH 29:11

*“For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the **Lord**, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.”*



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