

VISION

NEWSLETTER OF THE
EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF
SAINTS ANDREW AND
MATTHEW

SEPTEMBER–OCTOBER 2009

The Juvenescence of the Year

by The Rev. Rod Welles

Juvenescence means “growing young.” How about *that*?!

As I was preparing to write this piece, summer was beginning to fade and autumn was approaching, so I went searching for some Scripture that spoke about autumn. Other than references to the Jewish festival of Succoth, which celebrates harvest-time, there wasn't much. On the other hand, there were innumerable references to the spring of the year.

Then it occurred to me that, for congregations, fall is really more like spring, when everything starts up again. With renewed energy, we begin a new program year. As the calendar year grows old, our church year grows young.

Already at SsAM, the Vestry held their fall retreat on August 29th, the Church School Advisory Committee held weekly planning meetings, the Search Committee is re-engaged in the search process, and the ECW is selling tickets for the Annual Prayer Breakfast.

Beginning August 16, SsAM welcomed the Universal Church as worshipping “tenants,” using our auditorium as a sanctuary and education center. We are fortunate to be able to rent this space to this Spanish-speaking congregation. Although sharing space can sometimes complicate matters, it is important that SsAM seek opportunities to rent space to appropriate organizations, so that our physical plant can “earn its keep.”

Beyond all this, we are looking forward to Bring a Friend Sunday on September 20, the Blessing of the Animals on Saturday, October 3, and finally, the inauguration of SsAM's own Season of Creation on Sunday, October 11.

Let us grow young together! Spring is just around the corner!

Faithfully,
Rod+

Vestry Report

by Geoff Sawyer

The church budget remains a major concern for the Vestry. We must continue to rely less on our endowment principal, particularly during this time of recession. A special meeting was held during the summer addressing this vitally important issue. The meeting revolved around ways to address the financial issues we are facing with emphasis on:

1. Raising funds from use of our facilities
2. Increasing pledging units by increasing membership
3. Cutting costs without sacrificing our vision and mission

In terms of #1, we have rented the auditorium to the Universal Church, a Hispanic Pentecostal church started in Brazil, Friday evenings at 7:00 pm and Sunday evenings at 6:00 pm. While we have a year-long contract, we have added a 30-day trial period; at the end of that time, either party can cancel. This additional revenue will help us meet our financial goals.

Also, SsAM's Property Committee, which oversees the leasing of our parking lot to Colonial, is soliciting bids from other parking lot companies to see if we can generate even more revenue.

The Vestry held a retreat in late August to develop specific action steps to address these three objectives, and you will be hearing more about their actions in the coming weeks and months.

Search Committee Update

by Alice Sawyer

By the time you are reading this article, the SsAM Search Committee will be well underway again interviewing new candidates for our rector position. On August 27, Walt Cheatham and I met with Gary Rowe from the Bishop's Office and our consultants, as well as Standing Committee liaison Bob Brandt, to receive new names of potential candidates.

Although we were initially very disappointed that our previous choice turned us down, we are confident that God's hand is at work. Very soon, we will find our new spiritual leader...the one that is truly meant for us at this time in our parish's journey of faith.

Once again, we continue to ask for your prayers and thank you for your patience. We will keep you posted with frequent Sunday congregational reports.

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General Convention

A Report about the 76th General Convention of the Global Episcopal Church from the perspective of Walter W. Cheatham of the Diocese of Delaware

The following is an excerpt. The complete text can be found on the SsAM Web site.

The theme of this Convention was Ubuntu, "I in you and you in me." Ubuntu (pronounced O bun tu) is an African way of seeing the world—and the people in it—as an intricate web of relationships. The word Ubuntu comes from a linguistic group of Sub-Saharan languages known as Bantu. The Rev. Michael Battle describes Ubuntu as an African way in which the identity of self is understood to be formed interdependently through community.

A typical day at Convention began with meetings at 7:00 am and ended after 9:00 pm. The most important meetings to me were the legislative meetings, which were held twice a day, generally lasting 6 hours and 45 minutes. Equally important to me was the daily Community Eucharist. In the opening Eucharist, Presiding Bishop Schori gave the sermon. She is a powerful speaker. She has this soft voice that makes it clear what she is speaking about and her emotional feelings about it. The point of her sermon was that we should reject "business as usual" and also concentrate on "caring for the most vulnerable."

The "elephant in the room" at Convention was the after-effects of the ordination of the openly gay bishop, Gene Robinson, and the resolution adopted at the 75th Convention to deal with the issues this ordination created with the rest of the Anglican Communion. The resolution simply said that, until the 76th Convention, no openly gay person would be ordained bishop by the Episcopal Church.

One thing I had really prepared myself for was moving past the issue of people who openly live alternative life styles being a part of our Church. As a member of SsAM, it is clear to me that our intent as a congregation is to be inclusive and to welcome everyone, without any restrictions. Our sign out front says, "Welcome." It is also clear to me as a member of our Search Committee that we have put no such restrictions about sexual preferences in our search. To me, it was definitely time to move past this resolution and this issue.

But! In my zeal to deal with the elephant, I had subconsciously assigned less importance to other significant resolutions. Some of these resolutions stood out and reminded me that we face other problems. Some examples: world poverty, judicious use of military action, restricting the use of bottled water and water conservation, establishing new congregations, addressing HIV/AIDS and other global health issues, and the general Church budget.

So where did we end up? We got past the elephant. Gay and lesbian people may be called to ordination at all levels. The Church will collect and develop resources for blessing same gender couples. How about the other stuff? The Church supports improvement of all issues where improvement is needed. The main issue really seems to be how much we can afford to support. With lower giving, our budget for the next



Top: Welcome banner. Bottom: Walter Cheatham, Judith Gregory and others from Delaware at dinner during General Convention. Photos courtesy of Judith Gregory

triennium was reduced. Some things can't and will not be funded, and others will not be funded to the extent requested.

And me, I learned a lot about my Church. When I ran for deputyship at Diocesan Convention, I noted that I wanted to be a part of working to help a Church that works hard to get "it" right. I further noted that the problem was that "it" in today's world changes rapidly, and the best efforts at responding are often not able to keep up. But my Church tries and it tries hard, and I'm proud of that.

When I left to come home from Anaheim I felt enlightened, wiser about the operations of my Church, emotionally drained, but joyous and ready to be in my house. One other thing: the Presiding Bishop has asked that we not refer to our Church as the "National Church." With representation from Europe, Africa, Asia, and South America, there was a strong presence from people from all over the world. We really are global.



Del Glover and Cecily Sawyer Harmon share a laugh during downtime at General Convention. Photo courtesy of Judith Gregory

Reflections of a Volunteer at General Convention, 2009, Anaheim, California

by Judith Gregory

For two weeks at this summer's General Convention, I volunteered as a legislative aide to the Committee on the Consecration of Bishops. This was my first General Convention and, before I went, I had no idea what "attending" meant. Speaking with those that have attended in the past did nothing to prepare me for the large number of Episcopalians gathered in one place. All sorts of Episcopalians: collared and not, short, tall, thin, not thin, old, not too many young, black, white, Latino, Asian, European. All in one place. The Anaheim Convention Center hosted us, and every inch of space was needed. Everything excited me, and I wanted to experience it all—except Disneyland.

My days started at 6:30 am with meetings, running errands for the Committee, attending their meetings, sitting in the House of Deputies and the House of Bishops, touring the Convention Exhibit Hall, meeting the Archbishop of Canterbury (ABC for short), visiting with the Archbishop of Sudan and his wife, meeting fellow missionaries as well as the priest, The Rev. David Copley, who sent me to Sudan. All along the way, I collected buttons with slogans that described points of view and various ministries. I took pictures of everything I could. I attended every daily Eucharist. In fact, I was allowed to give out the bread. How about that?

My days ended with catching a baseball game downstairs, meeting with people from around the globe, attending receptions (the food was free), or just trying to catch my breath. Difficult to do when you want to keep interacting.

Would I do it again? You bet. In fact I am figuring out my budget needs in order to be ready for 2012 in Indianapolis. Come join us.

Disciple Bible Study

"If you make my word your home, you will indeed be my disciples" -John, 8:31

by Judith Gregory

Would you like to study the Old and New Testaments? Would you like to relate what you study with what is going on around you? Then, come study with us beginning this September. We will meet weekly on Tuesday evenings at 6:00 pm to view a video applying biblical scholarship, discuss what we have read for the week, and support one another on our spiritual journeys. Why now? Why not?

The resource guide states that in the above verse, Jesus challenges those that want to be his disciples to take up residence in his teachings—to spend time with him, long enough to feel at home. This challenge comes with a promise: to make a home in his word is to find a home in his way. The nature of discipleship, Jesus says, is like the lifetime of labor it takes to establish a place of growth and nurture, refuge and redemption, trust and hope. The Disciple study will guide our small group to submit ourselves to examination by Scripture, to put ourselves under the power of God's Word, and to be changed by God's Word. When the group starts in September, you and I will make this journey together. An in-depth knowledge of the Bible is not a requirement to joining (if so, I would not be the facilitator). My wish is that we will support each other, challenge each other, and grow with each other.

Workbooks may be ordered for \$30. For details and to sign up, call me at 598-1973 or email judithlgregory@comcast.net.

Adult Education

The Adult Education Forum will resume its fall program on Sunday, September 20 at 9:15 am in the auditorium. The first program will be the video presentation, "If you want to walk on water, you've got to get out of the boat," by John Ortberg.

This video, along with our discussion, will help you answer Christ's call to greater faith, power-filled deeds, and a new way of knowing him. Through group discussion, you will discover how God's call asks us to transcend fear, risk faith, manage failure, and trust God. Relating the story in Matthew 14 to life today, you will be invited to consider the incredible potential that awaits you outside your comfort zone.

All are WELCOME! We will see you on September 20, at 9:15 am, sharp!

ECW Prayer Breakfast

The Episcopal Church Women of the Church of Sts. Andrew and Matthew are pleased to announce that the annual Prayer Breakfast will be held on Saturday, September 19 at 9:00 am at our church. Please join us for a hearty breakfast and hear our guest speaker, Mrs. Renee Beaman, director of Beautiful Gates, a resource center for people with HIV/AIDS. The cost of tickets is \$10. They can be purchased ahead of time from an ECW member or at the door. Parking will be available adjacent to the church. For more information, please call the church at 656-6628.

Stewardship and Pledging

by Geoff Sawyer

Pledging is an integral part of the upcoming Season of Creation at SsAM. The following are some frequently asked questions and answers about pledging (with thanks to Trinity Church, Boston).

Why are annual pledges important?

Annual pledges support everything we do and are at SsAM. Our yearly budget is driven by the generosity of our parishioners through annual pledges. These pledges support all the operating costs of our ministry programs as well as our building and staff operations, and expenses such as heating, outreach grants, worship leaflets, and nursery caregivers.

How much should I give with an annual pledge?

We believe strongly that our standard of giving should reflect our standard of living. We ask each parishioner to consider making a pledge that is both responsible and significant based on his or her financial situation.

How can I pay my annual pledge?

SsAM accepts cash (when included in a pledge envelope) and checks. Contributions may be easily made to SsAM by automatically debiting your credit card or bank account.

Why should I pledge when I regularly put money in the offering plate?

Loose funds collected each week do help to support the ongoing life of the parish. However, pledges are very important

because they enable us to plan responsibly and to establish a parish operating budget for the coming year.

I'm not sure what I can afford this year. How can I pledge?

A pledge can be adjusted throughout the year if your circumstances change. We suggest that you pledge responsibly, based on your best estimate of the year's income. A pledge can be increased if your circumstances change.

Stewardship Prayer

Gracious and generous God, everything we have and all that we are comes from you, and you call us to be faithful stewards of our time, talent, and treasure.

Help us ground our daily lives in thankfulness for all your gifts and mindfulness of how these gifts shape our material and spiritual well-being, our parish, community, and world.

Help us return to you for your work a generous proportion of all your blessings to us, and grant us the courage to give according to your teachings with the Holy Spirit as our guide.

Help us take the next step together to discern and grow into a fuller understanding of what it means to be good and faithful stewards of our time, talent, and treasure.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, our Companion on the Way. Amen.

Upcoming Events

Saturday, September 19, 9:00 am

ECW Prayer Breakfast

Sunday, September 20, 10:30 am

Bring a Friend Sunday - Invite all your friends to experience worship at SsAM!

Festival Choral Eucharist

Sunday School begins

Adult Education Forum, 9:15 am

Tuesday, September 22, 6:00 pm

First meeting of Disciple Bible Study Group

Saturday, October 3, 1:00 pm

Blessing of the Animals - A special liturgy celebrating the spiritual life of our beloved pets

Sunday, October 11, 5:00 pm

Jazz Vespers - featuring Jeff Knoettner, Raye Jones Avery, and guest artists

Sunday, October 25, 5:00 pm

Choral Evensong - featuring the SsAM Adult Choir and the Choral Scholars

Season of Creation 2009

At the 10:30 am service

Celebrate seven Sundays symbolizing the seven days (or aspects) of Creation with guest speakers, musicians, and poets.

October 11 - Creation Sunday

October 18 - Gaia Sunday (The Planet Earth)

October 25 - Our Common Humanity

November 1 - Eternal Life (All Saints)

November 8 - The World at Peace

November 15 - Stewards of Creation

November 22 - The Cosmic Christ (The Reign of Christ)

Piffaro, The Renaissance Band, at SsAM

Sunday, October 18, 4:00 pm

Music of Spain, Portugal and the New World
"Iberia, Old and New"

An all-instrumental program of treasures from Spain and the New World. Highlights will include recently discovered music from the archives of mission churches in Bolivia, where Piffaro has been invited to perform in April of 2010. For tickets and more information visit www.piffaro.org or call 215-235-8469.

Church Picnic



Sunday School



SsAM Soul Youth Group

by Linda Jackson

SsAM Soul members meet on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of every month in the Teen Suite to socialize and participate in service to SsAM and our wider community. With a continuing focus on education, leadership, mission, and worship, junior and senior SsAM Soul members will glorify God by our words and actions, serve others, share the good news of Christ, and explore social and personal issues in a safe atmosphere of fellowship and support.

We are excited about this new season. While it has become a SsAM Soul tradition to support SsAM ministries, we will also participate in the 2009 AIDS Walk, the Diocesan Youth Council, the National Acolyte Festival, and the 30 Hour Famine Project. We will continue to sponsor the fall Canned Food Drive and the annual spring Family Banquet and Fashion Show. We also look forward to introducing three new events: the holiday Indoor Street Market, the "Cook-Off," and the Legends Banquet, honoring our own SsAM "Legends."

The SsAM Katrina Mission Team has expressed a desire to return to New Orleans this season to assist in the continuing historic rebuilding effort. Last year's much anticipated trip was especially meaningful for our group. Through their experiences, living and working towards making a difference in New Orleans, they became activists. Stay tuned for more information.

AIDS Walk

SsAM Soul will contribute towards making Delaware a healthier place by participating in this year's AIDS Walk in Rockford Park at 2:00 pm, Sunday, September 27.

Acolyte Festival

Friday, October 10, members will travel to the National Cathedral to participate in the 30th Annual Acolyte Festival. Acolytes and leaders from parishes and dioceses around the country will come together for an exciting weekend of activities. The highlight of the weekend is the *Festival Service of Holy Eucharist with Rededication of Acolytes* occurring at 10:00 am, October 11, followed by lunch and a variety of workshops and tours. We ask for your support and blessings as we prepare for our trip.

Diocesan Youth Council and Youth Ministry Mailing List

The Council is a group of 2-3 senior high school students and 1-2 adults from each parish in the diocese. The group meets every other month to work out details for diocesan events and representation at provincial and national events. Anyone may attend a meeting. For more information, contact Teri Valente at terivalente@gmail.com or on Facebook.

The Happening Retreat

The Happening is an intense spiritual retreat for high school students desiring some time to explore their relationship with God and what it means to be an Episcopal Christian. Teens from the tri-state region will gather at the Kirby Episcopal House in Mountaintop, PA for fun and fellowship. For more information, contact Linda Jackson at (302) 540-3278.

Youth Calendar

September

9/20	12:00-2:00 pm	Open House	Teen Suite
9/27	12:00-3:00 pm	AIDS Walk	Teen Suite

October

10/10-12	National Acolyte Festival <i>National Cathedral, Washington, DC</i>		
10/11	12:00-2:00 pm	Meeting	Teen Suite
10/24	Meeting		Time/Loc TBD
10/25	12:00-2:00 pm	Meeting	Teen Suite

November

11/8	12:00-2:00 pm	Meeting	Teen Suite
11/13-15	Happening Teen Retreat <i>Kirby Episcopal House, Mountaintop, PA</i>		
11/22	12:00-2:00 pm	Meeting	Teen Suite

SsAM Scholarship Recipients

Eleven members of SsAM are returning to school this fall supported by scholarships awarded through The Rev. Canon Lloyd Casson Scholarship Program. The program, administered by the Community Advocacy Committee, receives funding from the church budget and parishioners' donations through the AIM Fund.

Applicants for the scholarships attend SsAM and submit an essay with their application form. We are very proud of these young people as they pursue higher education and for their commitment to the community. Excerpts of their essays can be found on the SsAM Web site.

Naa-Okailey Annan - Howard University, Sophomore
Andrew Byrd - University of Delaware, Senior
Tyler Byrd - Elon University, Sophomore
La'Erica Conner-Sims - Delaware State University, Freshman
Christian Harvey - LaSalle University, Senior
Jordan Hastie - Yale University, Freshman
Jazmyn Holt - Wilmington College, Graduate Studies
Tanisha Julius - Goldey Beacom College
Kristin Lake - University of Maryland, College Park, Junior
Charlene Ralston - Springfield College, Returning to school after absence
Darren Saunders - Temple University, Junior
Courtney Streett - Columbia School of Journalism, Graduate School

In conjunction with the essays by former SsAM Soul Youth Group members that ran in the last Vision, here are two more. We hope you enjoy hearing from our parish's young people in their own words.

Chronicles of a College Freshman

by Tyler Byrd

Entering college, I never realized the journey that I would begin. Hearing many stories and receiving advice from existing college students and alumni on the days leading up to the beginning of this new chapter in my life was both insightful and overwhelming. Arriving, I had many ideas of what to expect, yet as my freshman year came to an end this May I realized that it had been everything that I expected and much more. Freshman year turned out to be a year to remember, one that was exciting, challenging, and fun.

Arriving in Elon University in Burlington, North Carolina on a humid Friday afternoon in August after hours of driving, I was both excited and nervous to begin this new chapter in my life. Often, while sitting at home doing tedious homework or spending countless hours completing college applications, I questioned whether this day would ever arrive; it always seemed so distant in the future. Yet pulling up to my dorm in an unfamiliar area, I realized this was the place that I would spend the next four years of my life. As I arrived at my new dorm, a flat that would house seven other freshman girls from six different states and Jordan, I faced the anticipation that went along with living on my own and living for the first time with a roommate. Meeting the people I would be living with for the next nine months was both curious and awkward—all of us unsure of what to do next with this new found freedom and seemingly no rules. Yet eventually over the months, I found my own rhythm, and during my time living in Danieleley G104 I realized that although we were different in many aspects, we all essentially had the same goals and wanted the same things in life.

After settling into dorm life, the real work began with the beginning of classes, and a whole new challenge emerged. Coming from a small all-girls prep school, I was used to small classes sizes with teachers that were aware of who we all were and what was occurring in their classrooms daily. Entering the academic scene of college, I realized that achieving in school and attending classes was my job only. Professors knew it wasn't their job to make sure students attended class or guarantee that they earned good grades; instead their sole purpose was to teach their daily lessons ensuring that students understood the lesson presented. Fortunately, I had instilled in me the importance of an education. While others around me might have taken it for granted, I knew how blessed I was to have such an opportunity for improvement that many lack. As time passed and spring semester began, I became more confident in my academic abilities and felt more comfortable living on my own miles away from my home. Yes, these monumental moments in my college career served as a confidence-building experience as I gained a better understanding and appreciation of the differences of backgrounds and perspectives in others and my personal responsibility for learning. As a result, in returning to Wilmington for the summer, I realize that I have become more purposeful, mature, and independent.

A High School Graduate Looks Forward to College

by La'Erica Conner-Sims

I am a graduate of William Penn High School where I was an active student. I participated in the Winter Indoor Track and Spring Outdoor Track teams. I also was involved in the FCCLA for a short while as well as the French Club. Now that I have graduated from WPHS, I will embark on a new journey into the college world.

I would like to talk about a scholarship program that helped me achieve this new status of being a future college student. The program, Delaware Futures, helps students stay in school and assists them with college. As an active member of this program, I learned that if I wasn't a part of Delaware Futures, it would have been much harder for me to pay for college. I participated in weekly meetings as well as a college tour and community service trips. Delaware Futures is a great program for students who want to do something productive with their lives. They help you out along the way when you need it. I'm proud to say that I was part of this program and that I am now ready to start my years in college.

I will be attending Delaware State University in Dover, Delaware. Even though it's not out of state, it will still be a long drive from there to my house. I will be majoring in Mass Communications and will be focusing on Print Journalism. Since I'll be staying in-state, I already know of a few WPHS students who will be freshmen with me this fall. I'm anxious to be going to college because I'll be on my own and will have a lot more responsibilities. I know I'll have to open up and start networking with others. I think I'm ready for college, but I know there is still a lot I need to know before I go.

I have kept in contact with past graduates of WPHS that attend Delaware State, so besides knowing other freshmen, I'll also know some upperclassmen that can tell me more about activities that I can participate in. I'll focus more on my classes my first year so I don't mess my grades up, and since the Dover Mall is exactly across from the college, I'll see about getting a part-time job on the weekends so I can pay for other expenses. I just plan on making the best out of my first year in college.

Sunday School Opens September 20

We are delighted to join with you in nurturing the faith journey of the children of SsAM. Let's make this a time of tremendous energy and enthusiasm in the life of the church as we approach the re-opening of Sunday School on September 20. Registration will be held in the auditorium on September 6 and 13 after the 8:00 am and 10:30 am services. Detailed information on the program will be available to you at that time; teachers will also be present to answer any questions you may have.

We will celebrate the opening day of Sunday School with a welcome party for the children in the Education Suite beginning at 10:30 am on September 20. Please drop them off at 10:15 am, so they can join in this fellowship as we get to know one another and lay the foundation for a year of growth and development.

Look for more information on this year's Sunday School program in the Weekly Vision and on church bulletin boards.

Birthdays

September

3 Karen Edwards
7 Beatrice Polk
10 Linda Jackson
13 Kelly Holt
14 Charles Bungy, Joshua Martin
15 Joyce Bembry, Seth Faulk
16 Gerald Hastie, Andrew Hengel
17 Danny Schweers
19 Karen Brown
25 Jordan Hastie, Christina Russell
26 Phil Murphree
27 Rochelle Harvey
28 Max Bell

October

1 Michelle Jones, Cheryl Thomas
2 Geoff Sawyer, Hugh Wallace
8 Ernest Barnes
10 Neonta Crain
11 Katherine Esterly
15 Clifton Gordon, Matt Smith
17 James Ballard, Ernestine Brock-Walker, La'Erica Conner Sims
19 Susan Murphree
21 Monica Oates
22 Rayon Pinnock
24 Bob Richmond
25 Marvin Nwanekwu
28 Ana Washington
29 Anand Alexander



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