



From the anvil of St. Dunstan

February 2012

St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church, Bethesda, Maryland

Dear People of God:

At this time of year, we take some time to attend to our institutional life together, first as a diocese, and then as a parish. Our **diocesan convention** was on January 27-28 – two days in our (often chilly) Cathedral with our new bishop, Mariann Edgar Budde, and 500-plus representatives of the congregations and other bodies of the Diocese of Washington. Bishop Budde has re-framed the convention so that the entire event becomes a service of Eucharist, with the Liturgy of the Word beginning on Friday, and ending with receiving Communion and going forth into the World on Saturday afternoon. Our diocesan representatives are Joan and Tom Henley, delegates; Rosi Sweeney, alternate, and myself as rector. Our wardens also attended a workshop by Bishop Budde on building stronger churches.

At St. Dunstan's, we attend to our own organizational needs at our **Annual Parish Meeting** on Sunday, February 26, 11:30 a.m., right after Eucharist. We shall elect new vestry members and other committee members to guide us in the coming year. The Vestry will also present the parish budget for 2012, which as I write in mid-January still needs greater income to meet our needs. A town-hall meeting for all parishioners, to look at our budget, will be held Sunday, February 12, at 11:30 a.m. Also this month, we prepare the annual "**Parochial Report**," a statistical report of our parish in 2011, which goes to the diocese and the national church. It covers **people** – membership, attendance, liturgies, baptisms, etc. – and **finances** – income, expenditures, outreach funds, investments, pledges, etc.

These necessary activities always force me to slow down and look at our parish more critically. Of course I am concerned with trends in attendance and stability in finances. (I'm happy to report that attendance rose in Advent and Christmas time, and continues higher than last year.) But I am also asking deeper questions, suggested by our new bishop:

‡ How clear is St. Dunstan's mission? What are we trying to accomplish here? (We have a mission statement, but it is rather broad and general.)

‡ How well do our activities align with our mission?

‡ How well do we allocate our resources to support our mission (budget, building, staff)?

‡ How do I as a leader spend my time? Am I focused on our mission?

‡ What questions am I as a leader asking?

Since last fall, our vestry and congregation have been engaging these questions about mission and vision. In the "**Imagine St. Dunstan's**" sessions last fall, we gathered ideas and opinions from many congregants. With facilitation from Sue Carroll and Ray Donnelly, the vestry tried to formulate a new, sharper **vision statement**, but struggled for clarity. In early January, the vestry spent a Saturday morning together, and realized that St. Dunstan's is in a time of transition and we have work to do before we can get clear about our vision. We want to figure out St. Dunstan's particular identity and focus as one congregation among many in the area.

‡ What are we known for? (We've just adopted "The Church on the Trail" as one promising way of promoting St. Dunstan's.)

‡ What do we do best?

- ‡ What are we *not doing* that we ought to do?
- ‡ What should we consider *not* doing anymore?
- ‡ How do we draw people to Christ and into this congregation?
- ‡ What changes do we need to make to position ourselves for a strong future?

All of this is both exciting and daunting. I am energized by our explorations, and filled with hope that St. Dunstan's is poised to begin a bright future. Change is always a challenge, and what pleases some will disappoint others. But church life was never meant to be calm and peaceful – just read the Book of Acts. We are on a journey with God. We are the church on the trail. We don't know our destination, but we know we are heading in the right direction.



Peace,
Jeffrey B. MacKnight, Rector.

Good News about Martha Watson!

Martha has been a wonderful addition to St. Dunstan's life and ministry, first as a seminarian in 2010-2011, and then continuing after her graduation from Wesley Seminary. In October Martha was ordained a deacon in her home diocese of Nevada, but continues to live and work in the Washington area where her children and grandchildren are nearby. I am personally very thankful for her presence with us, her energy and enthusiasm, her pastoral visiting, and her skilled teaching and preaching. She generously works at St. Dunstan's about half-time as a non-stipendiary member of our staff. She also leads spiritual groups and retreats at the Cathedral.

We have just received word that **Martha will be ordained a priest on Wednesday, April 11, 7:30 p.m. at St. Dunstan's**, by the new Bishop of Washington, Mariann Edgar Budde. This will be a grand occasion for the whole parish – to celebrate with Martha as she fulfills her vocation to become a priest, and to welcome Bp. Budde for her first official visit to St. Dunstan's.

Martha Watson will be remaining on staff at St. Dunstan's through this year as associate/assistant for pastoral ministries. For the time being, her duties will include coordinating and facilitating our new prayer ministry (prayers for healing during the 10:15 a.m. service), lay eucharistic visitors, preaching, teaching, and pastoral care and inreach efforts. After her ordination, she will be sharing responsibilities for celebrating the Eucharist and, possibly in the future allowing us to offer some alternative services to meet parish needs.

JBM

Flower Guild News

Your Flower Guild is already making floral plans for Lent and Easter. We will keep with recent tradition and set up a spare arrangement of willow twigs for the duration of Lent. We water them weekly, so they slowly show signs of leafy life over the Lenten term. They are a lovely symbol of Easter's return to all things lively and colorful.

Our Flower Guild members are Sue Barnett, Rosemarie Barrett, Betsy Benziger, Ann Boyd, Alison Newman, Sue Newman and Ann Boyd.

Samaritan Ministry to Host Annual Next Step Breakfast on May 16

Please mark your calendars for Samaritan Ministry's annual Next Step Breakfast on May 16 at the Washington Press Club from 8 to 9 a.m. This free event is well known for its star-power MCs and inspirational speakers. This year we will see a new video which explains how Samaritan Ministry helps to transform lives, and hopefully, will make you want to help this wonderful organization.

I am hoping to line up a table for ten people from St. Dunstan's. We can form carpools from the church. Please call me at 301-229-5693 if you would like to go to this event or if you have questions.

Bert Spencer

SPARKS editor is Donna Courtney. Articles for SPARKS should be placed in the SPARKS mail folder in the church office by the 20th of the month. Items also may be sent by email to donnacourtney1@verizon.net. Submissions of suitable original poetry, prose and artwork, along with general church information are most welcome.

Passages

Please keep the following persons
in your prayers

Children's February Birthdays

Fannie Benziger, February 3
Kathleen Blass, February 24
Mary Boss, February 3
Georgia Douglas, February 3
Tucker Hemphill, February 12
Matthew Park, February 25

*Children are a heritage from the LORD,
and the fruit of the womb
is a gift. Psalm 127:4*

In Need of Healing:

Barbara Larrabee, Jennifer Mooney, Anthony Cox,
Olivia Pierce, Ken Eskey, Jane Eskey, Aston Wilson,
Marie Walter, Robert Longstreth, Shona Domeris,
Maury Hundley, Tom Meany, Dorothy Coleman,
Pam Mellor, Barbara MacKnight, Allan English,
Ronald Mahan, David Cole, Annie Montemayer,
Marty Campanello, and Joe Jeffers

*Whatever you ask for in prayer with faith,
you shall receive. Matthew 21:22*



Verbing

“Pastored” and “accessorized,”
suchlike must be curbed.
Keep in mind the grammar rule:
“Nouns should not be verbed.”

Jim Wachob
Somerset, MD

Women of St. Dunstan's February Luncheon

The Women of St. Dunstan's are planning to hold their February luncheon at the Inn at Glen Echo on McArthur Boulevard. All women in the parish are most warmly invited to join us on February 8 at 12:30 p.m. Anyone needing a ride should call our luncheon chairman, Bert Spencer.

In case of inclement weather, such as a heavy snowfall, the luncheon may be cancelled. Check the church website at www.stdunstansbethesda.org on the morning of February 8 if you think there is a chance of cancellation.

Otherwise, we hope to see a large turnout for this joyful occasion!

Lenten Journeying Groups: Exploring God's Kingdom in the Parables of Jesus

This Lent St. Dunstan's will be offering a new opportunity for reflection and faith sharing: Lenten Journeying groups. These small groups of 6-10 people will meet for the five weeks in Lent before Holy Week. Each session will be no more than 1 ½ hours and will explore one of Jesus' parables. All materials will be provided for the group facilitator and members. Days and times will be announced when we have identified

hosts and facilitators. If you are interested in facilitating, hosting or joining a group, please contact Martha Watson at martha.watson@unlv.edu or 702-592-9669. Sign up sheets will also be available on Sundays in the parish hall.

Entering Lent

On February 22 we gather for Ash Wednesday services to mark the beginning of Lent. Historically, the ashes imposed on our foreheads were from the palms of the previous Palm Sunday. They remind us both of our mortality and of our tendency to turn away from God just as those who welcomed Jesus into Jerusalem soon joined the crowd calling for his crucifixion.



The early church first established Lent as a time of intense reflection and preparation for catechumens (persons seeking to be baptized) before their baptisms and confirmations at the Easter vigil. In many cases, the catechumens had undergone three years of study and preparation and Lent was the final stretch, a time of withdrawal with fasting and prayer, before they joined the Christian community.

Although many of us have considered Lent solely as a penitential season, perhaps this year we might embrace the approach of the early church and see this season as a time of preparation for Easter. Thus, we might combine the historic practice of giving up something for Lent, a form of fasting, with the idea of spending more time in reflecting on our faith and opening ourselves to God's continuing work in our lives. For these 40 days (remember Sundays are not included since they are always mini-celebrations of Easter), consider this possibility. Take a mini-fast each week from being connected through email, facebook and cell phones and do one or more of the following:

✠ Spend a few minutes each time simply being present to God. Light a candle, settle in with deep breaths, and consent to God's presence or action in your life.

✠ Read our Lenten booklet meditations, including the entire scripture passage on which the meditation is based.

✠ Commit to hosting or participating in one of the St. Dunstan's Lenten Journeying Groups.

✠ Explore using online sites for daily prayer. Two possibilities are Mission St. Clare (www.missionstclare.com/english/) and (www.sacredspace.ie/).

✠ Include one or more of the daily devotions outlined in the *Book of Common Prayer* (137-140) in your daily routine. Wonderfully, the BCP is available online at www.bcponline.org or <http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/>.

✠ Use your warm-up or cool-down time from your exercise to thank God for the blessings in your life and to reflect on God's continuing presence with you.

✠ Join our ongoing Wednesday night Centering Prayer group or the Morning Prayer meeting at St. Dunstan's at 8 a.m. weekdays during Lent in the rear nave.

Whatever you decide for a Lenten discipline, may you have a holy and restorative Lent.

Martha Watson, Deacon

Burkhalter CD Now Available



Susan Burkhalter is a member of St. Dunstan's where she has been a substitute organist on many occasions. Susan now has a professionally recorded CD available, "*Susan Burkhalter, Organist/Pianist.*" This lovely CD has nine organ pieces which were recorded on the large three-manual Lewis and Hitchcock organ at St. Andrew's Episcopal in College Park, Md., and eight piano pieces recorded on her home Steinway grand. There are four works by Bach, including a vocal solo of "*Jesu, Joy*" (sung by Bev Benda, a professional singer at Church of Christ, Scientist in Mt. Vernon, VA), and the beloved hymn, "*Michael.*" The piano pieces include a Beethoven sonata, a ragtime piece, and two pieces by Robert Schumann.

The cost of the CD is \$15, 10% of which will be donated to St. Dunstan's music program when pur-

chased by a member of St. Dunstan's. If you wish to avoid the shipping charge, you may send your check for \$15 and the order form below with instructions, and your CD can be left in an envelope with your name on it on the table in the Narthex. If you have any questions, please contact Susan at 301-469-8728.

You will be able to meet Susan after church on February 19 during coffee hour, when her CD will be available for purchase.

TO ORDER: When you order the CD, send a check or use Paypal (Note: if you haven't used Paypal and already have an account, you just send payment to Susan's e-mail address at Scastlekep@aol.com). When payment is received, your CD will be shipped immediately. Below is a form for ordering by mail.

-----ORDER FORM-----
-
I wish to order ()CD(s), *Susan Burkhalter, Organist/Pianist* Please send to the following address:

I enclose a check (or money order) for \$18.99 which includes \$3.99 postage.
Send order form and payment to: Susan Burkhalter,
7504 Hamilton Spring Road, Bethesda, MD 20817

Pledge envelopes are in the front hall. If you requested an envelope at the time of pledging, there will be a box of envelopes with your name on it. If you would like to have a box of pledge envelopes, leave your name on the pad provided, and I will put a box out for you the following Sunday.

If you have any changes to your contact information, please send me your new information by e-mail or leave it for me in my mail box or on my desk in the church office. If you are not receiving our weekly St. Dunstan's email *Details* and would like to receive them, let me know and I'll add your email address.

The Rector's Pantry & Help for the Needy: Each week, homeless or needy people come to the church for help. Winters are especially hard for these folks. One of our regulars, Philip, was in the hospital recently with gout and infections, and now he needs help with food and prescriptions. He asks for our prayers. Another man is HIV-positive and diabetic. He has a family and home, but needs help, in addition, with co-pays and buying food. A third man lost his foot to diabetes and uses a walker. Please help us with grocery/pharmacy gift cards, metro tokens, and petty cash for prescription co-pays. These are very much appreciated and are kept in the office and given out as needed. If you can donate any of these items, please mark them as "local help" and leave them in the office or the plate addressed to Tina. We can also use "lunchables" that I keep in the refrigerator and can give to people who need a meal. Thank you.

Remember to check our website, www.stdunstansbethesda.org for calendar listings and emergency weather notices. In order to avoid scheduling conflicts, please contact the office to schedule, post and announce any upcoming meetings or events that you would like to hold at the church. If you would like to place an announcement in the bulletin or in the weekly St. Dunstan's email *Details*, please write and e-mail the announcement to me at the above address.

We are always looking for current photos of church events to add to the website. If you have photos, please send some to either John Barton at jbar@loc.gov or to me in the office at stdunstans@verizon.net with a short description of what/who they are and we will post them on the site's event page.



Parish Particulars
*Administrative Notes from your
Church Office*

The Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, February 26, after the 10:15 worship service. **If you are a committee chair, your annual report should have been in the office by January 30.** We would like to have the reports out for review by Sunday, Feb. 12.

The 2011 end-of-the-year pledge contribution statements were mailed at the end of January. If you have not received your statement, or have any questions about it, please contact me. If you are interested in electronic payments, let me know, and I will send you the information about how to sign up.

Check out our facebook page and “like” us. Then watch for updates and postings.

The office will be closed Monday, February 20, for President’s Day. The office is closed on all federal holidays. Regular office hours are 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, and you can reach me during those hours. Otherwise, reach me via e-mail at stdunstans@verizon.net or leave a message at 301-229-2960, Ext. 10.

Flower Dedications for February

The 2012 Flower Chart is posted in the front hall. There are plenty of dates still open, and the Flower Guild needs your support. Please sign up to reserve your preferred dates.

February 5: Courtney
February 12: _____ (open)
February 19: _____ (open)
February 26: Sweeney



The Altar dedication costs \$50, check payable to St Dunstan’s Episcopal Church (with “flowers” written in the memo line). Send the check along with the wording for your dedication at least two weeks prior to your date.

One of the arrangements is yours to take if you dedicated and paid for the flowers. Please take the flowers only, and leave the containers in the sacristy. There is paper available in the sacristy to wrap your flowers. The other arrangement is taken by our Inreach Committee to someone in the parish who is ill or grieving with a note from St. Dunstan’s letting them know they are kept in our prayers.

In peace ~
Tina Barton, Parish Administrator
Church Office, 301-229-2960

Italy Pilgrimage Update

Unfortunately, the Pilgrimage to Italy has been cancelled. We were unable to get enough people to sign up for the trip. Those of us who were planning to go are very disappointed. I believe that the economy was mostly to blame, but also that we didn’t have enough time for people to think about it and make a decision. Our last pilgrimage was advertised for more than a year, and after that time, we had 17 people sign up. We only had 4 months before the deadline of January 15 for the Italy trip, and we had 10 people who signed up. Also, the holidays in the middle of that time made it difficult for people to plan and think about a trip in the spring.

Besides the economy and timing, people who decided against the trip said they had already been to Italy, and/or they can’t stand to fly anymore. The airline industry has made taking a transatlantic flight miserable for people, and they actually cited that as a factor.

I hope that we can organize a meeting of those pilgrims and others who might be interested in a pilgrimage and talk about where and when we would like to go. I think we should start talking soon about a trip next year and make a plan. Look for an announcement about this, and let’s start the conversation!

Tina Barton

Children’s Formation



The Magi that traveled from afar made a visit to St. Dunstan’s on Jan 8 as we celebrated Epiphany. They showed us what real myrrh and frankincense look like, as well as the sweet smell of frankincense when it is burned. I want to thank Joel Hemphill, Clint Chamberlin and Rev. Robert for being our kings as well as Lauren Chamberlin, who was a page, and Frederick Bentley who led the way with the star.

Onward towards February we will continue with our lectionary stories as we move from Epiphany into Lent on Feb. 22. Our stories this month will be a mix from both Old and New Testaments during Epiphany and then we will switch back to the Old Testament during Lent.

Feb. 5 will be: Jesus heals, from Mark 1:29-39. Our theme is: Jesus goes with us wherever we go.

Feb. 12 will be: Naaman is healed, from 2 Kings 5:1-19. Our theme is: God uses people in all kinds of places.

Feb. 19 will be: the transfiguration, from Mark 9:2-9. Our theme is: God's glory is forever – in the past, present, and future.

Feb. 26 will be: Noah's ark, from Genesis 6-9. Our theme is: Rainbows remind us that God will never flood the entire earth again.

Join us on **Sunday Feb. 12** as we will also be making special baskets of love and goodies for some special parishioners in our church. I am not sure who enjoys the project more, the givers or the receivers. Look for more details from your child's teachers.

Come and have some fun and excitement as we celebrate **Shrove Tuesday, Feb. 21**, with a dinner (pancakes anyone?) and programs for children and adults. The children's program will be broken into two parts as we celebrate Mardi Gras with a mixture of games and learning, then close with getting the parish hall and altar ready for Lent. Dinner will be at 6, programs at 7.

Please sign up on the bulletin board if you are coming.

Faithfully,
Bettianne Quinn

Camp EDOW

There is a new camp in town for the summer. It is being sponsored by the Diocese and is called Camp EDOW (Episcopal Diocese of Washington) I am on the planning committee, here is more information for you hot off the press.

Who – The camp is designed for children entering fourth through eighth grade.

When – August 5 to 10, 2012..

What – a residential camp focusing on faith, fun and friends with an Olympics theme down by the waterfront.

Where – Camp Maria in St. Mary's county.

Cost - \$500.

Fliers will be out shortly and there will be more information online, so stay tuned.

Faithfully,
Bettianne

From the Senior Warden

St. Dunstan's faces a budget challenge this year. Revenues are projected to fall short of expenses by as much as \$15,000 in 2012. Additional pledges may come in, but the vestry is using this estimate as it seeks to increase income and/or reduce expenses. St. Dunstan's has experienced such shortages in the past, which fortunately have been temporary. They can be painful, but they also can be an opportunity for us to really think about what's working, what's not, and where our dollars are best invested to position us for the future. Although this year's shortfall is not huge, we are taking it seriously. Some of the church's biggest supporters have passed away in recent years. Not only do we miss their presence and wisdom, but they also made substantial annual gifts to the church. It will take a large number of new pledges to make up the loss.

The budget shortfall this year comes as the vestry has already been considering updates in many areas. This work began with our 2009 parish survey, and has continued ever since. As you know, we asked parishioners to evaluate our Christian education program and other areas. We've also examined how some area churches are growing in

this era of challenge for traditional religious denominations, and discussed some options for worship services and programs. All are invited to attend a parish-wide meeting on February 12 to discuss our plans for next year. We'll also present detailed information on the 2012 budget. Babysitting will be provided. We welcome your help and input and look forward to seeing you there.

The annual parish meeting, at which new vestry members will be elected, is scheduled two weeks later, on February 26. Again, babysitting is provided and there will be an opportunity for questions and discussion.

Parents' Night Out: Our first parents' night out shortly before Christmas was a great success. The middle-school students who helped babysit raised money for work camp, and the kids who attended had a roaring good time eating pizza, watching movies, making shadow figures on the screen and playing hide-and-seek. Having seen the action, I am glad the church is childproofed. Please save the date for the **next Parents' Night Out on Saturday, February 11 from 6 to 8 p.m.** Don Larrabee is choosing the film. We welcome your young children and your cash contributions (\$5 per child suggested) for our work camp!

Help build St. Dunstan's 2.0: The vestry would like to create a new high-tech task force to come up with recommendations for updating our technology and bringing St. Dunstan's into the 21st century. If you have thoughts or expertise on our Web presence, use of social media, or on some of the other new electronic tools available, please contact me (elizabeth_schwinn@yahoo.com) or Jeff (jbmacknight@yahoo.com).

Warmly,
Elizabeth Schwinn Cohn
Senior Warden

Prayer Ministry Continues

Building on suggestions from members, we began a healing prayer ministry on a trial basis at the 10:15 service during Advent. The response was so positive we have decided to continue, renaming it the Prayer Ministry since many people requested prayers for things outside the usual definition of healing. On Sunday mornings, when the candle is lit by the kneeler at the left rear of the church, a prayer minister will be there during communion to offer prayers for any concern you may have. If you would like to know more about this ministry or to become part of the prayer ministry team, please come to our informational session on February 4 from 10 to 11:30 a.m., or contact Martha Watson (702-592-9669 or martha.watson@unlv.edu).

Martha Watson

Music Notes

Now that we have finished the Christmas season and Lent fast approaches, my thoughts once again turn to how wonderful it would be to have a few more men volunteer for the Senior Choir. As you may have noticed, we have about twice as many people in our soprano and alto sections as we have tenors and basses, and a few more men could help balance things out nicely. Rehearsals are 7:30-9:30 p.m. Thursdays and 9:15 a.m. on Sundays. A devil-may-care attitude is all you really need. Or you might consider it your Lenten discipline. The Interim Choir Director is willing to spend time to help you get up to speed if assistance is what you require. You won't regret it: you'll get to learn some very beautiful music and spend fun time with some very devoted members of the St. Dunstan's community. Give Choir a try!



Leslie MacKnight
Interim Music Director
301-655-6988

Youth at St. Dunstan's And the Confirmation Class

Every other year at St. Dunstan's I am responsible for the confirmation class. I regard the teaching of the class as a sacred trust. It is delightful to hear the questions of the primarily 12- and 13-year-old youth, as well as the occasional older person. The youth are interested in knowing the truth, whether it is metaphor or fact. I have always tried to open their way into an extended journey of faith, somewhat like the journey in *Lord of the Rings*, by being as honest as I can. In our church there is no need to believe something that violates your common sense.

We have discussed science and religion in a session led by Boots Quimby. We have adopted meditation practices that help slow us down, so we can talk and listen. We are telling some of the stories from the oral tradition of the Hebrew Scriptures, stories that have a capacity to understand us and guide us during times of turmoil: Abraham, Hagar, Sarah, Rebecca, Isaiah, Jacob, Leah, Rachel, Joseph & brothers, the Prophets. Recently we sat in with the class Rev Jeff was teaching about Esther, which was a good multi-generational experience. We will continue in the late winter and spring with the stories from the Christian scriptures, to see how the teachings of Jesus can guide us and question us.

Each youth is guided by a Mentor, who shares their own faith experience in a dialogue. We will look, too, at the Prayer Book and the Creeds, along with the history of our Anglican/Episcopal faith in today's world.

One metaphor for what confirmation class can do to enable youth to develop stories with psychic depth that will serve them in the future like the shell of the turtle. It is a dimension that can be carried with each person, giving them a place to reflect and resources with real depth that are sustaining. The stories of religion can be a place to think, reflect, and motivate action. When I face difficulties, the stories of faith surround me and uphold me, like Abraham's journey of faith, like Rebecca's choice of a way of peace and learning, like Jacob's Ladder, and Jesus reaching out to the alien-

ated, and confronting those who milk the faith for power and wealth. When faith is sustaining the youth will not abandon the community of faith.

It was wonderful to see the college youth of St. Dunstan's who were members of our confirmation class return over the Christmas break. I would hope the college youth would continue to join us, to help us develop new programs for the youth of St. Dunstan's such as the coffee house music. Some who joined us this Christmas season are: Rachel Edwards, now at UMD, Ben Hull at Montgomery College, Maggie MacKnight at UMD, who also sings in the our choir, Colin MacKnight, Juilliard and rocks the organ, Robert Cobb at UMD, Lauren Hewins, on a leave from U of Mo.; Matt Repka, Tufts; Marisa Repka, Williams; Erica Hewins, Syracuse; Austin Mellor, South Carolina; Michael Jenkins, Michigan; Jack Jenkins, graduate of Wisconsin; Alexa Ciesinski, Wake Forest; Amanda Hundley, UNH; Lizzie Murdter, Goucher College; Nick Barton, UMBC; Geoffrey Barrett, Montgomery College; Jonathan Rice, Pitzer College; Kate Poropatich, Johns Hopkins Med School; Kurt Poropatich, Carnegie Mellon grad school. Other members of St. Dunstan's confirmation classes assure me that they, too, wanted to be with us: Camila Natoro, Colby; Peter Benziger, U Texas; Charlie Benziger, Eckhart College; Ross Slaughter, UNC; Abigail Es, U of O; Priscilla North, working in Costa Rica, & Victoria North, Liberty U.; Michael Bombard, U of Vermont; Wyatt Hyndman, Carroll CCC, and others.

Keep all of these youth in your prayers, keep them safe from the harm of bad decisions or physical maladies, and the harm of bad policy decisions. Remember that they do not forget their community at St Dunstan's. They have not left. They are here, with us, nearby, giving leadership and new languages for their search for the presence of God, because, I think, our interpretations of our faith sustain our youth in their lives.

Youth Programs

The most visible presence of the youth at St. Dunstan's is their leadership in the service of worship on

the third Sunday of each month. We have opened the children's sermon to the youth this year, as well as leading in all other aspects of the service other than the sermon. In May, usually on Mother's Day, the youth are responsible for all elements in the service, including the sermon.

We have been fortunate to have Jessica Ault and Ben Hundley as co-youth leaders this year. They were the adult leaders for our mid-June WorkCamp, in Queens, NYC, where we went for one week to work feeding the homeless, cleaning up the community, and getting to know youth from other churches. We are now planning for another WorkCamp, which is planned for the Sunday following the end of the school year. We are now deliberating where we will go. In the past we have gone to Savannah, York, Hedgesville, Inoncoke, and Anacostia.



Another dimension of the youth program is focused on the middle school program, which has had a good mix of religious reflection and service. Matt, son of the Skillings, talked about his humanitarian work in Afghanistan as well as recounted how a bird flew into his helicopter and knocked him unconscious. Beth Cohn has done a good job this year in sketching out the program, which I have assisted, along with John Skillings, Tim Nanof, Nancy Douglas, Karin Hemphill and others. The participation of the parents is a critical dimension of success.

We have held programs for the youth on the first Sunday in the month with mixed success. We changed the time from Sunday evening at 5:30 p.m. to limit driving. We have walked to McDonald's along the Crescent Trail, an early endorsement of the "Church on the Trail" theme. We also held two discussions on planning. The Dunstan's Dialogue programs after church have been one of my efforts to involve the youth in intergenerational programs. John Longstreth is leading a discussion of the Penn State traumas. These Dialogues have appealed to some youth, but not to all. There are parents who have offered to become more involved.

Brian Berger agreed to go with us to the Cathedral Lock-In, for which we have a good deal of interest.

With more parental involvement I think our youth program will grow. One program I am working on, with Clint Chamberlin, is a musical coffee house, to involve the youth by enabling and encouraging them to share their music and their stories (in poem & conversation). There is remarkable talent in the youth of St. Dunstan's, and it will be exciting to see them help us open our doors more widely to youth, to college students, to au pairs, and to all ranges of adults. Plan to come February 18 at 6 p.m.

Under the Lamb,
Rev Rob



Give me a sense of humor, Lord;
give me the grace to see a joke,
to get some humor out of life
and pass it on to other folk.

St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church

5450 Massachusetts Avenue
Bethesda MD 20816
301/229-2960 FAX 301/229-7785
www.stdunstansbethesda.org
"The Church on the Trail"

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Bethesda MD
Permit No. 6471

The Rev. Jeffrey B. MacKnight, Rector
Christina Barton, Parish Administrator
The Rev. Robert Hundley, Pastoral Associate for Youth
Leslie MacKnight, Interim Music Director
Bettianne Quinn, Director of Christian Education
The Rev. Martha Watson, Deacon

Vestry:

Elizabeth Schwinn-Cohn, Senior Warden
Brian Berger, Junior Warden
Rich Boss, Registrar
Clifford White, Treasurer
Cynthia Dibiasi **Tim Nanof**
Jackie Karlin **Sterling North**
Mike Lackey **Angela Ostrom**
Don Larrabee **Nils Overdahl**
Eleanor Smith

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SPARKS

From the Anvil of St. Dunstan

