



THE GOSPEL

According to Saint Mark's / March 2004

Tower Funding Kickoff



As everyone knows, the 116-year-old tower that adorns the northeast corner of St. Mark's Church has begun to crumble, and the parish is mobilizing to prevent it. During the last week in January, two meetings were held, and letters went out to everyone – past and present members and friends – asking for funds to reconstruct our tower.

The fundraising will take place from January through mid-April when we must have funds to enter into a contract with a construction company to do the work. We hope to begin construction in May and complete it by August.

The estimated cost of the repair is between \$250,000 and \$300,000. Senior Warden Penny Hansen reported that if all adult members participate in this fundraising effort and contribute an average of \$500 each, we will not have to take out a loan. She stressed, however, that the Vestry hopes that everyone will give whatever they feel comfortable giving. It is more important for all to participate in this act of mutual caring for our beautiful building than for any particular dollar amount to be reached. If we have not accumulated \$250,000 by the middle of April, we will arrange for either a line of credit or a loan to secure the remaining funds.

In the two weeks since the letter went out we have received approximately \$65,000 in donations and commitments. The

Vestry is very grateful to all of these early contributors and hope others will join them soon.

Please make out your checks to St. Mark's Church and indicate on the memo line "Tower Project." You may give your donation to the clergy, your favorite warden or member of the Vestry, place it in the Sunday offering plate or send it to:

*Susan Block
Parish Administrator
St. Mark's Church
118 Third Street, SE
Washington, DC 20003*

If you wish to contribute by donating stock, please tell Susan Block so that the stock can be identified as your donation and properly credited to the tower project. Please contact her at the above address, 202-543-0053 ext.305, or stmpad@covad.net. Instructions for making a stock donation can be obtained from Susan or the St. Mark's Web site at www.StMarks.net/about/financial.html. Questions about contributions should be addressed to Penny Hansen, Senior Warden pennyhansn@aol.com or to Rod Lawrence, the Vestry Financial Liaison, rodlawrence@earthlink.net. Questions about the technical aspects of the tower reconstruction should be directed to Junior Warden, Jack Burton, at jbburton39@aol.com. †

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Stewardship at St. Mark's

by Gene Kendall

How do we practice stewardship at St. Mark's? Do we? Should we? Why? And if so, what does it look like? What is the driving force? What do we get out of it? These and a few other questions are at the heart of the Stewardship Committee's work.

At the heart of any definition of stew-

ardship is giving something back...giving back in light of all that has been given to us. Some view it as a response to God. Others view it as an awareness of being blessed with abundance, and out of that awareness of giftedness comes generosity. Countless instances of

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What Happens to the Food in the Baskets? *by Ellen Frost*

Many of you may have wondered what happens to the food collected each Sunday in the altar baskets. Once every two or three weeks, I take it to Samaritan Ministry's Anacostia office at the corner of Alabama Avenue and Ainger Place, SE, where it is distributed under supervision to needy participants in the Ministry's Next Step program.

The program offers counseling, employment workshops, resume writing, referral services, and many other forms of assistance. Participants work one-on-one with a caseworker to identify what they need to do to improve their lives and what is the "next step" they must take in pursuit of their own goals. Some of them have just come out of prison, many have health problems, a number are homeless. All of them are struggling to establish a normal life. They have little or no money, typically spend long hours searching for

jobs and essential services, and are relieved and grateful to receive bags of food and toiletries.

St. Mark's supports Samaritan Ministry with an annual cash pledge and has a long tradition of volunteer help as well. Currently, we have St. Mark's volunteers in all three Samaritan Ministry offices. Sally Berman is active at the Northern Virginia office, Bill Flanders, at the Northwest DC office, and I, at the Anacostia office. This year, St. Mark's has adopted an apartment at one of the agency's two transitional housing buildings, Partner Arms II. To volunteer, please call Gina Gatto at (202) 722-7780. For questions about food deliveries, please contact Ellen Frost at (202) 547-8366 or elfrost@erols.com. For questions about Samaritan Ministry, please contact Bill Flanders at (202) 244-5137 or bcflanders@earthlink.net. †

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A Dietary Message from the Pub

Are you an Atkins, South Beach, Lindora or other low-carb dieter looking to have steak tartare in place of bread at Communion? And fearful that you might actually get it, are you looking for an alternative because of mad cow disease?

But you look, and chicken may carry avian flu. Some Atlantic salmon are sick. And you are concerned about Brussels sprouts as a matter of course!

Well, the Pub is concerned, even if you answered "No" to all those concerns! And we are pleased to announce a healthy alternative, available exclusively through the Pub.

IGUANA, the other white meat. Yes, iguana— farm raised, free range iguana. It's the low carb, low fat, low cholesterol, low calorie, high protein alternative. Imported from the rainforests of Central America, this savory alternative tastes like chicken. That's why we say, when you buy iguana, insist on the best, Chicken of the Tree brand iguana.

The Pub. Not just a watering hole, but serving your nutritional needs. Tee shirts available on special order. †

Action for Community Transformation (ACT)

Invites you to celebrate three successful years of service to Honduran youth



March 28, 2004, from four until six o'clock



*Frederick Douglass Museum
320 A Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002*



*Performance by Sin Fronteras,
a Honduran Garifuna
Dance Troupe*



Wine and Tapas



*\$25 per person,
kids under 18 are free*



One of ACT's projects is the John Quinn Scholarships. In Honduras, families must pay for schooling past grade six, and without help, poor children cannot continue their education. Through the scholarships, students in Colonia Episcopal can continue in academic or vocational programs.



R. S. V. P. or Questions?

Contact Eileen Blumenthal at 202.544.8460, or Raiford Gaffney at 202.543.8930 or e-mail to ACT Reception@AOL.com



A bell calling to worship symbolizes the need of priority for the things of God over the secular; the sounding forth of the Word. †



The February 15 Vestry Meeting

by Hank Donnelly, Vestry Reporter

Coffee Hour: Resolving what Rector Paul Abernathy called "one of the eternal St. Mark's issues," the Vestry formally approved and provided funding for a coffee hour in the parish hall after the 10:30 conclusion of the new 9:00 service/sermon seminar. Reporting a chorus of approval from parishioners for the revised schedule, members made permanent the Worship Committee's recent experiment, which was designed to ease the long-running transition issues between the 9:00 and 11:00 services. They also approved \$200 a month to fund coffee and refreshments. When there is only one service on a Sunday morning, for example during the summer, the pub lunch program will take precedence, the Vestry ruled.

"People have been talking about the transition from the 9:00 to the 11:00 services ever since I first visited St. Mark's in the fall of 1997," Paul recalled. "This

new schedule does seem to have made the transition more graceful."

Building Maintenance: The Vestry endorsed Junior Warden Jack Burton's plan to reduce maintenance costs on the hot water system, which will be of special note for those who use the building in the less crowded hours. Jack explained that there have been repeated breakdowns in the hot water recirculating system, which makes hot water available in taps almost immediately, rather than having to be pumped from the boiler room.

Under the new system, the recirculating system will be on during weekday evenings, all day Saturday and until mid-afternoon on Sunday. At other times, users should expect to have to run the water a bit to get it to run hot.

Transition Issues: Senior Warden Penny Hansen led a discussion of leadership

transition issues. She identified a lengthy list of positions to be filled and pondered the tensions in the policy of two-year rotation on most parish positions.

"We sometimes have a tough time with the transition from old leadership to new. It's important to help people make that transition, by passing on the knowledge. We have the benefit of a lot of new blood, but sometimes the transition is so tough that it takes the person a year to really learn the job," she added.

Outreach Service: The group also briefly talked about that morning's service, which featured small group discussions about the St. Mark's approach to outreach. Paul described the conversations as being about "our movement as a community towards a more corporate consciousness about outreach as part of our identity as a community." †

The Mural in Art and Poetry: Contribute Your Vision

by Vicki Street, Arts Council Co-Convener

The parish hall mural has been with us for more than 40 years. It's intense, it's complex, it speaks of a time in our parish and community's life that is behind us, or maybe isn't. When was the last time you looked at it as a work of art? Come see the mural afresh and share your vision with your St. Mark's community in art or poetry.

The Visual Arts Group will host a parish-wide show March 26-28, and instead of covering up the mural as we usually do, it will be the show's focal point. Echoing St. Mark's theme for the year, "Nurturing Community and Compassion in a Broken World," we invite all artists to submit a piece or two that reflects the way you see the mural or some part of it, or that is evocative of the St. Mark's theme, or that is appropriate for Lent in any other way. If you can create a piece in a short timeframe, consider spending some time studying the mural for inspiration. Painting, drawing, collage, photography, sculpture – all are welcome. Please give your ready-to-hang (or stand) submission(s) to Kristen Hartke, Visual Arts Group Coordinator, on Sunday, March 21 after the 9:00 and 11:00 services.

If you prefer to express yourself in words, join us for a special

morning transforming the inspiration of the art show into poetry. Fairfield Butt and Vicki Street will lead a Saturday morning poetry workshop, 9:00 – 12:00 on March 27, surrounded by the mural and contributions from St. Mark's artists. A supportive environment will make this a rewarding experience for novice poets as well as old hands, as we try to capture what stirs us. Those of us who are brave enough will share our poems at pub lunch the next day! A \$10 contribution per person is requested. Sign up over the water fountain, or contact Vicki at vstreet@earthlink.net or 301-270-1613.

The Arts Council will sponsor a decorative arts show (fiber and wearable arts, including jewelry) in June. Dates will be announced in April. Be planning your submissions!

December's retrospective of David Evelyn's work, held in conjunction with the St. Mark's Dance Studio's gala open house and a reading by Lou Bayard from his acclaimed novel, *Mr. Timothy*, made for a magical weekend. Thanks to David, Kristen, Lou and Dance Studio Director Rosie Brooks for the superb December events. Thanks in advance all of you who will make the March and June shows and workshop equally wonderful. †



Steel Magnolias, The Play *by Johana McCarthy*

What is it like being one of the producers of Steel Magnolias? It is kind of crazy. You get to sit with the director, as 48 wonderful actors come to audition for the 6 female parts in Steel Magnolias. Then, you get to call the actors who are not being called back. You want to talk to them directly, not their spouses, roommates or partners, nor their voicemail. Again, you get to sit with the director and watch 15 callbacks work. They know, as you do, only six people will be chosen.

What do you do when you are not sitting with the director? You scrounge for personnel to make the show work: prop manager, wig person, house manager, costume person and light board person. When personnel are not the issue, you look for props such as beauty parlor sinks; the hairdryers are already available. You get to go to

production meetings, where there is another interesting group of people: set designers and light specialists. All sit quietly for the most part. They know what they are doing. Like the actors, many are finishing another show before they work on the Magnolias. Traffic on the Internet keeps you busy as the daily demands change for props to be invented and costumes to be sought.

You also wonder whether you need body armor when you are accosted by those who want to do your producer's job—their way. "A smile is the body armor I use," someone told me when I noted my plight.

What can you do? Come see Steel Magnolias! Learn more about relationships and how people live, learn and love one another. **Opening night is Friday, March 5.** †

Disaster in the Clerestory Averted

by Bert Cooper, Parish Historian

The loss of one of the clerestory windows in the chancel was averted in January, thanks to Dick and Nora Rumpf. They noticed light coming in around the window and reported this anomaly to Junior Warden Jack Burton. He had the problem checked out by Dieter Goldkuhle, who takes care of the Cathedral's windows and recently restored five of our triptych windows in the nave.

Dieter recommended that we have the window repaired as soon as possible by the Washington Art Glass Studio; he was already committed to other jobs. The glass studio replaced a missing bar that holds the glass in place and then checked the other clerestory windows. Fortunately, the other 27 windows in the clerestory were found to be secure.

The imperiled window, next to the rood screen in the east clerestory of the chancel, depicts St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr (Acts 7:54-60). Made in 1916 by Mayer of Munich, who made most of our stained glass, this window was given in memory of Vestryman and Treasurer John Chew (1852-1916). His writings about the early years of St. Mark's make him our Venerable Bede as the first parish historian.

The addition of the St. Stephen window in 1916 completed the series of windows in the chancel begun in 1905 with the "Angel's Choir" above the high altar and followed by four in the west clerestory (Sts. John, Paul, Luke and Peter) and four in the east clerestory (Sts. Mary, Elizabeth, Mark and Stephen). John Chew and Dr. DeVries, our third Rector (1896-1911), developed a plan for the subjects of the clerestory windows. This plan was generally followed in the early years, with 12 of the proposed subjects represented in 26 clerestory windows.

Dr. DeVries discussed the designs of our windows with Franz Mayer during trips to Europe in 1905 and 1910. At that time each of the large Mayer windows in the nave was insured for \$500; the Tiffany window for \$1,300. In 1992 and 1994, when Mary and I discussed the windows with Franz Mayer's grandson, Dr. Gabriel Mayer, he estimated the replacement cost of clerestory windows at about \$10,000, with one of the large triptych windows in the nave costing around \$340,000 (about \$1,000 per square foot). Needless to say, anyone seeing a stepladder or some similar object within range of the nave windows should take immediate action to prevent such perils to these windows. †

Stewardship *Continued from p. 1*

people giving back to the community—our community, to one another, to a particular program or pillar—could be cited here. Stewardship is alive and well at St. Mark's... and sometimes hidden or disguised or called by other names.

Any notion of stewardship also involves a dimension of taking care of what has been given to us, and leaving it even better than we found it. The repair of the tower provides a great stewardship opportunity for us. Our fabulous building has been handed down to us from previous generations, and it's our duty to take care of it for future generations. So soliciting funds for the tower repair is essentially a stewardship request. Raising money for this repair is an opportunity to practice corporate stewardship.

So how else do you see stewardship practiced at St. Mark's? Any hidden or not so hidden stories out there? The stewardship committee solicits your input. Send us your examples, c/o gkendall@mindspring.com.

P.S. For anyone interested in learning more on this subject, the diocese is sponsoring a stewardship conference on March 13. Log on to www.edow.org for more info. †



Repairing the Fabric – Hot News *by Jack Burton*

■ A Gift of New Lanterns

Do notice the handsome lanterns which now light up the A St. entrances to the nave, gifts of Pamela Lacey and Richard Bradshaw.

■ Thanks to Bill Baxter and Jo Ellen Hayden

To date, the Buildings and Grounds Fund has received nearly \$2,000 from the sale of Bill Baxter's book. Thanks to Jo Ellen Hayden, editor, all proceeds are coming to this fund.

■ Hot Water—Just Not as Quickly

The hot water may take longer to come up from now on. Since last July we have had three significant leaks in the line that carries the hot water throughout the church. This line was recirculating the hot water 24/7. That, plus DC's caustic

water, caused the pipe failures. We have now put the hot water recirculating line on a timer in an attempt to save our copper pipes. Limiting the time the water recirculates will, we hope, prolong the life of the pipes. Additional steps to extend the life of the pipes and prevent a massive replacement project are being considered.

The hot water recirculating system (meaning quick response) will be ON:

6:30 p.m. - 10:30 p.m. M-F

8:00 a.m. - 10:30 p.m. Sat.

8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Sun

Other than these times, hot water will just take longer to reach you.

■ News on the Tower Repair Project

After considering eight companies, we've interviewed the first of the three top choices for the tower contracting work.

We may or we may not like either of the others better; but the committee agreed, after this first interview, that we would have complete confidence hiring this first candidate. It's a great relief when your first one is a winner. Please read the Senior Warden's article about the funding of the tower work. And, of course, contribute what you can!

■ St. Stephen Not a Martyr, Thanks to Bert and Mary Cooper!

The stained glass clerestory (upper level) window of St. Stephen, which threatened to crash onto the chancel floor and take out our music director with it, has been removed, repaired, and reinstalled. The work was done in the 1970's so it's hard to hold the installation company responsible. Thanks to Bert and Mary Cooper. Their gift covered the costs of both repair and inspection. †

Outreach as a Road Trip *by Collie Agle*

The gospels tell us that Jesus encountered his disciples in their daily lives and called them out to take a road trip with him. If the gospels may have some relevance to the way I conduct my daily life, then I am challenged to consider being drawn out of what is familiar. I am called to hit the road with someone I hardly know, with a minimum of stuff I can quickly stuff into a small pack, and to associate myself with others who may be poor, unkempt and needy.

I find myself overwhelmed by the thought of leaving my cherished family and community and of giving up my things. So, here is what I can live with.

Joseph Campbell, in his *Hero With A Thousand Faces*, speaks about the "hero's" trip. The "hero" is someone who leaves a safe and comfortable place, journeys out into the wider world, encounters friends and possibly adversaries, is transformed and then comes home again. For me, the notion of the hero's trip is as much internal as it is external and involves a lot of the heart stuff as well.

And that is what I have come to experience: trips (such as to Honduras) are part of my spiritual path. St. Mark's is an important touchstone for me. The church and the community ground me in who I am as a Christian, remind me of the power of a spiritual community and give me the support and

faith to go out again. It is not the major place where I can have my conversations with God or do God's work.

If I go forth with an open heart, then I am consistently surprised by the richness and the transforming nature of the experiences that I have with others. I am powerfully reminded about how important we all are to each other and how we are arms and limbs of the same body. The social justice part of me then says that if harm is done to someone else who is brown or black and speaks a different language, then they are doing harm to me, and that is not good.

For me, outreach has involved letting go of my comfortable gated mentality, stepping into some pretty weird places and experiencing those places and people with respect, humility and openness to other stories. In the process of doing that, I deepen my understanding of how God moves through the world.

I am grateful to St. Mark's and my community for helping to keep alive and enrich my marriage to Betsy and to make my life as vibrant and alive as I feel it be. I, however, don't think that I can experience the passions and epiphanies of the world or do the work I have been given to do by staying inside the confines of the church. Perhaps I am just a road junkie. But so be it. †



March 2004

St. Mark's Official Sport *by Nivek Sgnillib*

Let us begin with a hymn.....

Hail to the Redskins!

Hail Victory!

Joe Gibbs is back! Sundays will once again have meaning!

I know by the time you are reading this, a couple of months will have passed since the announcement of the Second Coming, but it is an event of such biblical importance that I would be remiss not to mention it.

Please tell us you are not going to subject us to a religious diatribe filled with sports metaphors.

Actually, I think this will be a sports diatribe filled with religious metaphors. But nobody is forcing you to read this.

BREAKING NEWS!!!! – Kathy Bates has taken "umbrage" at being cast as Ellen Cardwell. Lucky for all of us that Tyne Daly was ready to step in and fill the role. (*A much better choice, I'm sure we will all agree.*) You know, when God shuts a door, He/She opens a window somewhere else. Phew!

Now where was I? Oh, yes, religion and sports. I just heard someone refer to NASCAR as the sport of the Christian Right. I guess that could be. You don't see many pick-up trucks with

confederate flags around St. Mark's. And heck, with so many cars sponsored by breweries and products for erectile dysfunction, I'm sure televangelists everywhere are right at home. I really don't think God follows sports much. But if Bobby Labonte wins Daytona, it could be a sign.

So, if NASCAR is the sport of the Christian Right, what's the sport of St. Mark's?

Catholics seem to have a lock on football with the Mormons close behind. Baseball is a great class, but with so many players named Jesus, it might be too confining for the skeptics.

It clearly needs to be a contact sport – we're constantly running around hugging one another. It certainly can't be mainstream. Communication is a must. It should avoid animal products such as any type of leather ball. Both men and women need to be able to participate as equals. It needs to be done in the round. It could go on forever but can get cut off at any time. It should be fun for participants and spectators alike. But most importantly, if you don't want to think of it as a sport, you don't have to.

Roller Derby – the sport of St Mark's †