



# THE GOSPEL

*According to Saint Mark's | March 2005*

## The Candidates for Elected Office at St. Mark's

This issue of the *Gospel* contains statements from candidates running for the of senior warden, junior warden, members of the Vestry and delegate to the diocese.

All pledging members are eligible to vote for these candidates (check the list on the Vestry bulletin board in the foyer). The election will take place at the annual parish meeting on Sunday, April 3, at 10:00 a.m., directly following the 9:00 a.m. service—the only service that Sunday.

This is a time for the whole community to gather and hear from our clergy and lay leaders and ask questions of the nominees. Come and exercise your right to vote for those who will represent you. If this is your first annual meeting, you might be surprised to find it is a meeting you will actually enjoy.

There is no Sunday school on April 3. Nursery care will be available during the service, and care for all children will be provided during the meeting. After the meeting, lunch will be available in the parish hall. †

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*Candidate for Senior Warden*  
**Michael Townsend**

When the idea of running for senior warden was first suggested to me last fall, I laughed out loud. I am, by nature, a person who is happiest when juggling about 14

balls at once. But being senior warden at St. Mark's? That seemed like keeping the first 14 balls in the air—and then adding a couple of chainsaws to the mix.

Thinking about it over the past few months, I realized I could have come up with a dozen reasons to say “no.” But instead, I found myself thinking about how I could make it work. About how much I wanted to make it work. I found myself drawn to this job, at this time in my life, at this time in our communal life. I found myself figuring out which of those other 14 balls I could let drop.

*Continued on p. 2*



*Candidate for Junior Warden*  
**Charley Donnelly**

I first entered St. Mark's on Easter Sunday in the spring of 1975. Like most, I was immediately struck by the beauty of the place and, of course, the colorful riot of

helium-filled balloons reaching to the rafters above the narthex. That Sunday's service of celebration impressed me with the congregation's commitment to making the parish interesting, both to members and strangers who came visiting on Easter. Not only that, it was apparent that great care had been taken to preserve the magnificent structure handed down to us.

I can remember that shortly after that Easter, I told my father about this amazing community I just had discovered. I also described the building as best I could. He was an architect

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**Michael Townsend** *Continued from p. 1*

So I come before you now, humbled, honored and yes, a tad horrified, asking for your support on April 3 to become your next senior warden.

I first came to St. Mark's a decade ago, dragged somewhat unwillingly by my then girlfriend (now wife) Elizabeth. I am a cradle Episcopalian, but after college I took some time off, uncertain whether being part of a church was something I wanted or just something I'd become accustomed to. So it had been a few years since I had been to church when I first walked into St. Mark's. I was struck immediately that this wasn't the Episcopal church I'd grown up in.

In 1997, I took confirmation class and began an amazing journey as a full-fledged member of this community. I started getting more involved, first as co-editor of the Gospel for two years, then as a member of the Canvass Committee and as a member (later convener) of Paul's advisory committee. I subsequently co-chaired the 2003 and 2004 canvasses, a leadership experience that I found both profoundly moving and agonizingly frustrating.

St. Mark's for me has become a place to be challenged and to challenge, a place to ask questions and wrestle with the answers or the lack of answers. I have gotten to know some of the most fascinating, wonderful people I have ever known. Our community is imperfect, a little bit crazy, occasionally annoying, often hilarious and always interesting. It is a place where I am inspired to take on things I might otherwise resist—and this role is no doubt one.

Among the myriad issues confronting our community, two

stand out for me. The first is that I believe we are at a point when a closer examination of how we worship is critical. Over the last few years, we have heard in various ways—through the parish survey, through one-on-one canvass meetings, through Liturgies of Departure—that our way of worshipping is both our greatest asset and our largest liability. Questions have been raised recently over the role of Worship Task Forces, over whether our clergy preach as often as they should or could, over whether we are too “high church” or too informal. These questions intrigue and challenge me, and I look forward to fostering a discussion of them over the next two years.

The second issue is the need to increase the size of the church. We are a community of grand ideas and ambitious plans. To implement them, however, we need more resources. Unfortunately, our membership numbers are declining. We need to address the demographic changes our community is facing, be more welcoming to newcomers, find new leaders and find ways to encourage people to contribute their gifts, without burning them out. Our Vestry is already working on a comprehensive plan to address these issues. I believe I can be a leader in turning that plan into results.

If elected, my term as senior warden will have to follow a different model from that of my predecessor. I work full time and have two small children: Avery, who is four, and Emily, who will be two in April. I will need to ask more of all of you—more help, more patience, more flexibility. But I pledge to you that in return you will get the very best I have to offer. †

**Charley Donnelly** *Continued from p. 1*

and had been junior warden at his home parish for *four years*. He knew full well the challenge of preserving a venerable edifice, especially one that was in constant use. He was impressed with what I told him about St. Mark's.

I can also remember times, when I was still in high school, looking up at my father atop a ladder, painting a vestibule or some other set of walls at our church. Being junior warden seemed an honorable way to serve one's faith and one's community, and I helped. So part of the reason I want the job is to give back some of that service in his memory.

I thought of my father up there painting away when I saw Jack Burton not long ago climbing the ladder in St. Mark's newly restored bell tower. That project has been extremely demanding, but Jack handled it with his customary good humor and fortitude. The great tradition of service thus lives on in Jack and all of us, and certainly he can claim recognition as a superb superintendent of the place we all cherish. So I would also like to be junior warden to thank him for the example he has set.

There is no lack of tasks ahead, and if I become the new junior warden, I intend to take them on, in whatever order of priority the Vestry establishes. There is always painting and repainting, carpeting is in trouble all over the place, the terrazzo

in the nave is crumbling in spots, Baxter House needs work and so on. Repairs and replacements will require money and physical effort.

One way I will not emulate my father is in the way he basically volunteered to do all the hard stuff himself—that's not good use of time and energy. The Fabric Committee is a great asset in contributing to the hard work that needs to be done and in setting goals; I would depend on its members a great deal. And here's where you come in. I will be looking for additional volunteers where appropriate, so if you see me coming, please listen politely to my invitation and respond as you are moved to do. I would also like to remind everyone that there are funds that you can contribute to, as you are able, to advance important parish projects (never ever, of course, slighting the every member canvass in the process).

This should be a good year. We have the excellent foundation established by recent and past junior wardens and their committees, we have been given expert, professional advice as to what must be done and we obviously have the interest and attention of all of you who are a part of this remarkable community. Thank you for your time and commitment. Don't forget to come to the election to cast your ballot. †



# Presenting the Candidates for the Vestry of St. Mark's



—Terry Adlhock—  
Candidate for Vestry

**Who:**

Terry Adlhock, third decade St. Mark's member; partner for 21+ years with St. Mark's parishioner Jeffrey Hunter; public utility company lawyer/lobbyist (electrons, natural gas, hydropower, windmills).

**What:**

Possible Vestry service.

**Why:**

1) Saying "thanks" for what I've received from St. Mark's, especially our edifying clergy leadership for 20+ years—Jim Adams, Anne (Amy) Ritchie, Susan Gresinger, Jim Steen, Stephanie Nagley, Paul and Shearon—and my genuine gratitude for their insights, lessons and questions imparted to me.

St. Mark's is where I met my partner-to-be, Jeffrey. Another parishioner, Janis Hoffman (then Jeffrey's boss), prodded him to give St. Mark's a try one Sunday when by wonderful coincidence I sat next to both him and Janis. I didn't know Janis, yet because of Jeffrey have come to know and love her, and through her Verna Dozier, Al Rollins and Dee Hahn-Rollins, among others.

It was a thankful and firm "yes" I gave Junior Warden Jack Burton one recent

Sunday when he requested me to run. "Thanks" manifest in many ways: spoken and written words, gestures, tangible objects, service. I sincerely hope I can evidence my "thanks" to St. Mark's in more service.

2) Having served on numerous Worship Task Forces the past several years and also being on the current Worship Pillar, I've become more familiar with the richness, diversity and complexity of our ongoing collective religious worship experience—familiarity likely relevant, even instrumental, in months ahead as St. Mark's considers possible changes in worship.

3) My heretofore help with our buildings and grounds "fabric" convinces me of strength in numbers: persons, volunteer labor, sweat equity. Example: St. Mark's Garden Committee, of which I've been a happy helper for several years, keeps outdoor spaces reasonably agreeable, even inviting, at no expense to the currently challenged budget (we didn't achieve the target in our last canvass). All who volunteer time, labor, talents and thoughts on behalf of our community are this church's essential "fabric." If we build—even capitalize—upon all us volunteers, St. Mark's "fabric" will certainly be even more sound, and I will be the richer for my additional volunteer endeavor.

4) As a canvasser in six St. Mark's budget quests, I've learned the significance—and challenges—of this necessary, if not beloved, fundraising. Likely, St. Mark's 2006 budget quest will be no more easy than the past two. Although I have no 'silver bullets' for success, I commit to be as energetic a canvasser in the next quest as possible. The canvass is just us volunteers, as Mike Townsend, Pam Lacey and Michael Knipe, among others recently, know so well. †



—Eileen Blumenthal—  
Candidate for Vestry

I'd like to tell you why I'm running for Vestry and why you should consider voting for me. I'm running because since I joined St. Mark's in 1984, St. Mark's has challenged and enriched me in significant ways. *Let me tell you about three events I am grateful for.*

Something important for me occurred during a Christian Ed class on work when we discussed what makes work meaningful. For me, this led to my joining the Peace Corps at age 59, just in time to celebrate my 60th birthday in Nepal.

Another significant event occurred during a St. Mark's service when I was commissioned for work in Romania. My assignment there was in an orphanage with HIV and AIDS children, a heart-rending experience. I might have left early, except for remembering the St. Mark's commission.

A further important event for me was the memorial service here for a colleague who was murdered in Honduras. The clergy and the community supported me and helped organize a wonderful service, for which I am grateful

I am running for Vestry out of a desire that St. Mark's provide for others the challenge and support that I have found here. *Now why should you vote for me?*

*First, I think I could bring needed generational balance to the Vestry.* I'm a



**Eileen Blumenthal** *Continued from p. 3*

senior, and I think we should pay attention to the changing needs of my age group. But I'm also an old-timer who is open to change. I'm aware of the changing demographics of our congregation, and I applaud the programs for children and youth that help us attract and serve newer members. I want to be alert to the needs of all age groups.

*Besides generational balance, I would bring a commitment to encourage St. Mark's connections with the wider community in this city and in the world.*

- Locally, I've represented St. Mark's in Samaritan Ministry and Washington Interfaith Network, and I've participated in the shelter project when homeless people sleep at St. Mark's. I've found that these opportunities to share with our brothers and sisters enrich me.
- I first went to Honduras with a St. Mark's work trip. I saw what an important learning experience the trip was for the teen participants, including my 14-year-old granddaughter. So I strongly support such opportunities to work together across cultural and economic lines.

After a huge hurricane hit Honduras, I worked in Colonia Episcopal, a new village built with funds from the Diocese of Washington. Now I continue my connection with Colonia kids through the nonprofit I set up to provide scholarships for them. I support close cooperation with the Diocese of Washington, and I've served as a member of the Diocesan Honduras Committee and as a delegate to the Diocesan Convention.

To sum up, as a Vestry member, I'd provide generational balance, and I'd be a strong voice reminding St. Mark's of the needs of the world outside our doors. I hope you will vote for me. †



—**Raiford Gaffney**—  
**Candidate for Vestry**

I came to St. Mark's in 1997—the year before Paul and Ponthecolla. Worship has been my major calling—I've been a member of the Worship Committee since 1998 and served as Worship Task Force leader (LION) or member every year. I've been an acolyte (coordinated the 11:00 acolytes for two years), lay server, altar guild member, usher (beadle), lay reader and choir member. I've helped out with many other worship activities.

The Vestry has appointed me to two positions: Vestry "mouse" (2002-2004), where I attended and reported on every Vestry meeting through the St. Mark's e-group within 48 hours of each meeting, and delegate to the diocese (2004-2006), where I represented St. Mark's at the annual Diocesan Convention. In 2005 the diocese appointed me to the Resolutions Committee.

I've served as a canvasser for many years and been a full pledging member since I arrived. I've both enjoyed and supported Outreach and Parish Life activities.

In the Christian education program, I've taken a number of classes, including the confirmation class (predecessor of LCF). I'm a graduate of the four-year Education for Ministry program. I'm currently a member of the rector's Bible study and *The Dream of God* class.

I just successfully managed the first Jesus Seminar on the Road at St. Mark's, which was attended by over 135 people from 9 states.

Since retirement from the Feds in 1998 as a Senior Program Analyst, I've volunteered in the parish office one day a week. This past fall I answered the call to be interim parish assistant on a full-time basis for five months.

I've been at St. Mark's long enough to appreciate the gifts of those who shaped what St. Mark's is today. I'm actively involved and have an excellent understanding of the workings of the parish. I've attended Vestry meetings, served on committees, worked in the office and generally pitched in. In addition, I have experience as a Vestry member and treasurer in my former parish and attended diocesan training in stewardship, Vestry responsibilities and treasurer duties.

I welcome everyone into St. Mark's, especially young people and families, and honor those who have continued to support the parish for many years. I endorse our open communion, welcoming of both skeptics and believers, shared lay leadership with the clergy and blessing of same-sex relationships.

These are challenging times ahead for our community, especially as we prepare for Paul's sabbatical in 2006 and wrestle with what the parish is called to be in the next few years. I support more intentionality on stewardship to help each of us discern what that means for us. I have experience and knowledge in St. Mark's, and I promise to continue to commit my time, talent and dollars. I'm proud to be a member of St. Mark's and an Episcopalian.

I ask for your vote to the Vestry. Please contact me if you have any questions or comments. †



—Ray L. Murray—  
**Candidate for Vestry**

I was born and raised in Kansas City. Baptized into St. Paul's Episcopal Church at 40th and Main, midtown, my teenage years were spent as a mop-haired acolyte there. After college, Charlotte and I were married in St. Paul's—our priest was the son of the priest who had married my parents. We spent some years moving around the country—Alabama, New Mexico, Arizona—attending church at Christmas and Easter.

Then in Tucson we joined Grace-St. Paul's Episcopal Church. It had merged ten years previously from two churches, one with many people connected to the university and another of mostly retirees. The result was a multigenerational mix that brought together traditional and non-traditional thinking in a very positive way.

A job opportunity at the Library of Congress moved Charlotte, Macray and me to Washington. The last year and a half I've been on the steering committee for the National Digital Newspaper Program, a new 20-year interagency initiative, and I've enjoyed the work. I have really been struck by the intricate ways in which changes in budget can affect the program, while changes in the program plans impact the budget.

When we first arrived from Arizona, we began shopping around for churches. We found St. Mark's on Easter two years ago. The balloons! Champagne! People sipping Starbucks coffee! I thought this might just be the place. We heard the

rector's strong public stance on open communion, felt the welcoming attitude of the congregation and have stayed.

Our church has great strength in its traditions, as well as in its willingness to try new things. I see the Vestry's role as one of synergy, aligning those things that are working with the resources they need. The youth and education programs are vibrant, and I'd like to see them continue their work. When I see new faces, I'd like to see them engaged, drawn in, their ideas and experiences represented in the church. There's a lot of positive activity going on at St. Mark's. We need a Vestry that will continue to shape and encourage those good things. †



—Lisa Sotir Ozkan—  
**Candidate for Vestry**

I wasn't looking to join a church in September 2003 when my husband Ozgur and I went to dinner with Greg and Missy Smith. Somehow though, the conversation veered, Missy mentioned the words "community of faith," and we found ourselves a couple weekends later at St. Mark's.

I've been taken by the openness of the community, its embracing of doubt and thought over judgment and certitude. I don't have to turn my brain off to come to services. I relish the fact that it's a place where people choose to come to worship, as opposed to coming because it is expected.

My candidacy for the Vestry derives

from what I value in St. Mark's. Thus I hope to maintain and develop the St. Mark's ethos for longtime and recent members and attract new members to add vibrancy to our parish life.

The Vestry is a forum that can embody the diversity of longtime members and newcomers, of single and partnered, of white and of color, of those with and without children, of Episcopalians and others. I moved so many times growing up that I was often the outsider, without a defined community, without a defined religious tradition. As a result, I treasure St. Mark's community authentically embracing my husband and me in our individual spiritual journeys. Through the Vestry I want to encourage that openness and authenticity, particularly in the face of other parishes' rejection of diversity.

Now that I have been a Washingtonian for over 15 years, I envision my participation in the Vestry as a means to encourage youth to connect with St. Mark's traditions and appreciate the heterogeneity of our community. I hope to reach out to the next generations to demonstrate and enlarge St. Mark's views of diversity in our multi-cultural, multi-faith, multi-class, somewhat nomadic Washington metropolitan region. These values are the fruits of the efforts of our longtime members; to make these values fresh and vital for current and future members is what I seek to help the Vestry accomplish.

As one new to St. Mark's and to the Episcopal Church, I've found that we need to demystify how one joins both institutions. The process of joining a parish vs. becoming part of the Episcopal Church can be somewhat bewildering. For the financial health and community vibrancy of St. Mark's, I want to be part of the Vestry and look at improving communication to newcomers on these important subjects.

Thus, in running for the Vestry, I want to help longtime members and newcomers appreciate our rare community today and tomorrow and to grow and maintain our community for the future. †



March 2005



*—Don Mosher—*  
**Candidate for Diocesan Delegate**

During the years I have been a member of St. Mark's, the way our parish related to the diocese has been inconsistent. Sometimes we have been willingly participatory and, at other times, balky or oppositional. It is time to stabilize this relationship.

The Episcopal Church currently confronts serious issues, such as declining denominational membership, the threatened Anglican schism over the ordination and acceptance of gay bishops, the tensions between traditional/conservative and innovative/liberal congregations and the appropriateness of gay marriages. St. Mark's should take an active role in the diocese as it wrestles with these issues. Within our parish, there is a diversity of opinion on some of these matters. The proposals to be supported or opposed by the delegates at diocesan meetings should be determined by the parish's democratically elected representative body, the Vestry.

The work of the delegates should consist of: 1) studying the agendas of upcoming diocesan meetings and presenting a concise summary of the issues for the Vestry to consider; 2) articulating and voting the positions decided upon by the Vestry, together with the clergy; and 3) reporting succinctly to the Vestry the outcomes of the meetings.

I attended the recent Diocesan Convention as an observer and found it interesting. I would be pleased to serve St. Mark's as one of its delegates. †



*—Margaret Wood—*  
**Candidate for Vestry**

Traditionally, this statement should tell you who I am, what problems or challenges I see facing St. Mark's and ergo, why you should elect me as a Vestry member. I'm afraid that this isn't going to be exactly that kind of statement. For those who don't know me, I came to St. Mark's in January 1992. I was church shopping, and St. Mark's was the first church I came to. The second Sunday I was here, I signed up for confirmation class, and I haven't looked back since. I have taught Sunday school for seven years, worked on outreach programs and served in a variety of worship positions including co-director of worship. In my spare time I've helped hang art shows, green the church, polish the altar silver and have frequently beaded on Sundays.

I could also say a lot about the various issues facing St. Mark's at this time. Certainly money is an issue as is membership: last year's canvass came in under the goal while at the same time we failed to recruit enough new members to match the attrition rate of the old ones. We are faced with trying to

fill over 400 volunteer jobs, and many of us are often involved in two, three and sometimes four different programs to make sure things get done. All of these things should concern us and need our considered thought and action.

But the key to facing these problems is not to be found in some creative moneymaking scheme or in the lucky acquisition of 100 new members wandering around Capitol Hill. It will be found in how well we treat each other, how well we listen to each other and how well we remember we are one community. The longer I live, the more I believe that it is our relationships that are the key to how well we face life and its challenges. I am inspired by the relationships we develop with the families in the summer shelter project. We cannot solve the myriad problems that most of these families face, but we can and do build bridges with these people and are enriched on both sides. I am moved by the women who do liturgical dance. I suspect we will never get a contract as a commercial troupe, but together we experience the joy of preparing an offering for our community.

I am not naïve enough to believe living in right relationship with each other and God will automatically solve any of the real problems and concerns we face as a community. Nor am I suggesting that we will all be friends and agree about things—life would be dull if we all agreed about everything. But I believe the Bible in both the Old and New Testament calls us to be in right relationship with those around us, and from this we will have the strength and courage to face our challenges. †



# Monologues—a Smash Hit at St. Mark's

by Linda Huntington

I knew about the *Vagina Monologues* only from a half-remembered snippet on TV, staged by professional actresses. It wasn't that appealing. I concluded that it was intended to shock audiences about the extent of violence against women. To combat this violence was a cause I wanted to support, so I attended the St. Mark's production. I expected the show to be hard going.

I cannot imagine a show with more energy, better pacing or stronger acting. Mary Alex (M.A.) Dill, Pontheolla (Ponthy) Abernathy, Jane Osborne, Jane Rutherford, Doris Burton and Jan Hoffman seemed to channel the spirit of many anonymous women characters. On stage, the faces of familiar women morphed into other women—young and old and of all backgrounds—baring their most intimate feelings about sexuality, gender roles and intimacy (most did not describe violence). The show was embarrassing, unpredictable, poignant, wrenching, hilarious, sad and, somehow, redemptive.

Comments in a post-show feedback session reflected the play's power. Several men said they felt gratitude for the insights the evening had given them, and cast members responded to questions about their roles. Director Jack Burton said a cast member had complained to him during rehearsals about how difficult one part was. However, when he offered to give it to someone else, she quickly refused the offer, obviously still drawn to the part despite her discomfort. Jane Osborne expressed how staging the play had brought the cast members closer in a unique way. She also marveled at how all fell into place: from permission to stage the play, to using Jack Burton's directing experience, to the ease of recruiting people for publicity, the box-office, information fair, pre-show and post-show refreshments and choosing local recipients of the proceeds (two parish-

## Prayer List

Our prayers are requested for these members of our parish family:

Taylor Adams  
Linda Barnes  
Paul Bugge and family  
Heather Burneson  
Karen Cox  
Richard Dobson  
Verna Dozier  
Elissa Feldmanm  
Karen Gangloff (in Iraq)  
Jo Ellen Hayden  
Pat Latin  
Margie Mahany  
Reed Watts (in Iraq)  
Nancy and John Yanish



ioners worked for My Sister's Place and Women Empowered Against Violence).

Congratulations to all who became personally involved with this fine production. The accolades are still coming in. †

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September 2003

## From the Parish Registry

January 1– February 26, 2005

### Baptism

January 16, 2005: Chase McPherson Bellows, son of Keith Adams Bellows and Melina Gerosa Bellows

### Liturgy of Departure

February 6, 2005: Matthias Senger  
February 20, 2005: Linda and David Meade

### Transfer In

Geoffrey Hugh Phillip Sharpe, from St. Helen's Anglican Church, Abington, U.K.

### Transfer Out

Stephen L. Skardon, Jr., to Grace Episcopal Church, Charleston, S.C.

### Funerals/Memorial Services

January 28, 2005: Betty Haddock Lawrenz  
(March 9, 1933 – January 19, 2005)

February 4, 2005: James Louis Kelley  
(May 30, 1935 – February 1, 2005)

### Confirmation/Reception – February 26, 2005,

#### Washington National Cathedral

#### Confirmed

Nathan Bruinooge  
Suanna Steeby Bruinooge  
Elizabeth Adele English Kropf

Dennis John Lewis

#### Received

David Mulvihill Carter