



CHURCH OF
SAINT ASAPH

OUTLOOK

April 2009 Newsletter

St. Asaph's Church is called to be a progressive Christian community

We will welcome everyone to God's table
We will stand with those in need and advocate for the poor, the sick, the friendless and the marginalized.
We will make children central to our life as a community
We will celebrate the presence of God with joyful, engaging and inviting worship.



Pastor Barry Harte

Alleluia, Alleluia... Alleluia!

Here is the sweetest of words in the Christian vocabulary. Alleluia is the song of praise to Yahweh, praise the Lord! This is the song of a people who recognize the mighty acts of a God who seeks to deliver us, deliver us even from sin, separation and death to new life in the body of Christ.

I know that we have literally sealed these words in the wooden chest that sits on the altar in the side chapel and as April begins we have yet to take the steps we must take through Holy Week, the Triduum and Easter Morning. But soon enough we will have our Easter Song to sing again and sing it we must.

The claim this word makes upon us and the world is that God not only delivered the people from their bondage in slavery long ago in Egypt, nor only delivered the Son from death 2000 years ago, but that deliverance is God's on-going action. God works to deliver us now, here and now.

As a people who are delivered, so also we are called upon to deliver others. How do we work this saving grace around us? What in our lives demonstrates that

we are about resurrection and not death? Are we about the building up of the body of Christ or do we seek to tear it down? Are we about serving others or are we more concerned with serving ourselves? Are we not a resurrection people and is not Alleluia our song?

At the great Vigil of Easter, we will bang on the wooden chest and demand it be opened so that the Alleluias buried there will be free with the children who bear them to fly around the sanctuary again in joyful proclamation. Yes, act we must, but remember first and foremost the acting of God to save us and call us into love and life.

Blessed Easter,

Fr. Barry J. Harte

Liturgy

The Adult Christian Formation Class meets in the parlor. In Lent we have been reflecting on the story of Nehemiah.

Using this story, we reflected on our own sense of calling and our response. We discussed things in the world that grieve us so much that we are moved to action. We discussed gifted-ness and the gifts and talents we bring to a project and how we interact with people and help them see the importance of what we see.

The Second Sunday of Easter we will have a "So what?" conversation. Here we will ask the question "Jesus rose from the dead, so what?" or "How does the resurrection of Jesus change your life and world view?" Following that there will be three sessions on Prayer and two on the Holy Spirit. That will bring use to end of May and

Sunday school year will end and summer break will begin

Join us for some interesting conversation about our faith on Sunday mornings at 9 Am. No classes on Palm Sunday or Easter. **Contact Steve Lindsay--610-789-1099 or SWLSimple@msn.com.**

Second Sunday Worship

Below are photos of our parishioners who regularly attend the Second Sunday Liturgy. The **Greens and Sarah Boote** play a major role in creating the liturgy.



Brandon and Jessica Green with their son, George. They are the coordinators and contact people



Sarah Boote



Second Sunday parishioners preparing to share a bowl of rice together—Mary Chris Lindsay, John Barrett, Steve Lindsay, Sarah Boote, Fr. Barry, Janet Barrett, Jessica Green and son George.

The planning group for the Second Sunday Worship met for a retreat on February 28 to review the past year's experiences and to look forward to the coming year.

This service has a particular emphasis on interaction, between the people who attend, and, between the people and the Word. There is richness to the service as

we attempt to engage all our senses as we work with the theme and readings of the day.

We continue to work to fine tune the church schedule of activities so that more of the congregation can look forward to this worship service as they do the 8am and the 10am services?

The Second Sunday Worship is less formal and more interactive than that of the other services. We envision the people reading what they have written, offering what they have created, as part of the liturgy. Instead of a sermon or homily, we take turns teaching and responding to the Word. There is often some physical task as part of the response

We share a simple meal as our communion where we talk about our experience during the worship, find a focus for our discussion and look for ways to bring this energy out to the world by doing something specific as part of our response to what we have learned.

Areas that we are working harder on are: music, movement, how to engage every one of all ages (esp. families with children), and inviting people to join us.

We invite all who are interested or curious about this service to contact Brandon and Jessica Green about sitting in on a planning session and plan on coming to a Second Sunday Worship service held on the Second Sunday of every month at 5pm.

Lent at the Second Sunday Service

We had a very moving Lenten service on March 8 at 5pm focusing on Psalm 51 and the Ash Wednesday litany of penitence. After reading the litany, we went to the baskets placed around the sanctuary that held stones to pick up according to our particular need for that repentance. The baskets represented things the list in the Litany: unfaithfulness, pride, hypocrisy, self-indulgence, anger, envy of those more fortunate, dishonesty in daily life and work, blindness to human need and suffering, indifference to injustice and cruelty, false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts, prejudice and contempt toward those who are different and for the waste and pollution of Creation.

It was difficult to carry all those stones... and they were a hard reminder of the brokenness of our lives and of the world.

We ended by dumping all the stones we were trying to carry at the foot of the cross, where all such cares should be dropped, and then we blessed them so that they are now prayer stones, carried to help remind us to give thanks to God and be aware of the needs of others. They have been left at the church for you to help yourself to a prayer stone, or to carry one to someone you know that needs our prayers.

By Steve Lindsay

The large Bible that has been used for the liturgies in Lent has a story. It comes to us from the Summer Chapel – St. Peter's by-the-Sea, Cape May Point, NJ. Fr. Barry had an idea of using a Bible to help us recapture the notion of being people of the Book. He wanted a large pulpit Bible that was New Revised Standard edition.

I knew of a Bible that could be borrowed because it was just sitting on the shelf in a closet until the coming summer season. After speaking to the Sr. Warden of St. Peters, and receiving permission for the Bible to be used, I drove to Cape May Point to get it. It does need to be returned by Memorial Day weekend.

The Sr. Warden of St. Peters by-the-Sea welcomes all to their summer services at 9 and 11 from the Sunday of Memorial Day until the last Sunday in September. So if you are in the Cape May area look them up and visit the Bible used at St. Asaph's this spring.

Education for Ministry Graduation (EFM)

Steve Sheeran, Mary Scherf, Linda Sterthous and Janet Barrett will graduate from the 4-year EFM program on May 2. They have been studying each week at St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Ardmore with folks from other churches.

EFM prepares one for discernment resulting in some graduates going on to prepare for ordination. I graduated from the program several years ago where, after 4 years, I learned what Christ was saying to me— "It's the community, stupid!" Old Testament, New Testament, Church History and Theology are the four areas of study over the 4-year program.

Sarah Boote was the mentor-instructor for the group I was in and again she is the mentor for the present graduating group.

St. Asaph's will host the graduating ceremony on May 2. More specifics about time will be forthcoming

Kid's and Youth Page:

About, For, and By the Children and Youth of Saint Asaph's

This is a new page in the Outlook where we will publish updates about Sunday school, Rte 13 and J2A. However, we'd like to publish pictures, poems, very short creative stories, interviews and articles by and about the young people of St. Asaph's. If you have something you'd like to submit to this page, speak to **Connie Stelzenmuller** or **Kathy Hubbard** and we'll get it in.

Important Information:

The Sunday School Children, Preschool through Intermediate, will create the story of Nebuchadnezzar, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego during the Easter Vigil, Saturday April 11. Be prepared for crazy hats, kazoos and drums. I hope everyone can attend; it will be a lot of fun. We will rehearse the story during Sunday School Time.

Sunday school: Pre-School Primary and Intermediate Classes



Caryl Menkhus from her blog:
godlyplayfoundation.blogspot.com

Inspired Through Play

... Jerome [Berryman] talks about Godly Play as a language ... Like learning any language, The first few years of doing Godly Play is just learning "the sounds and words" – learning the scripts and the gestures and the wondering questions and how we are with the children... But we all know the difference between being able to repeat key phrases in another language and being fluent in a language. Any Godly Play program after the first few years is challenged with this key transition from learning the language basics to the stage of language development where a level of fluency allows one to begin to actually make meaning and express and dialogue using that language...

Palm Sunday – The Pre School, Primary and Intermediate Sunday school classes will all meet in the downstairs room to go over our Easter Vigil parts quickly. **Please be there by 9:15am.** Thanks!

On Easter Sunday we will once again have our annual Easter egg hunt in the graveyard shortly after the Easter Service. Bring a basket, if you have one, (if you don't we will supply one), and your sweet tooth. Bunny ears optional.

Pre-School and Primary Classes:

The Pre-School and K-2 graders have been working with the Parables (ask your child about the “gold box”). Janet and I were both a little nervous about presenting the parables of Jesus to the children -- they are dense, sometimes, and weird and tough to parse even for theologians. But of all the stories we've presented this year, the parables have probably engendered our most lively discussions.

Each week I am amazed and awed by our children's insightful responses to the Godly Play Lessons they hear. For instance, last week was the Parable of the Leaven, (Matthew 13:33; Luke13:20-21) -- and the children spent a long time talking about leaven, what it is, why we use it, why and how someone would “hide” leaven in flour. One of the aspects I appreciate most about Godly Play, particularly with these age groups, are the “I wonder” questions. When a leader begins the discussion with “I wonder” it truly leaves the discussion open for the children to interpret any way they want to. There is no right or wrong, just a time for reflection and curiosity.

Intermediate Class



Pictured from left to right are Kate Harte-McCormick, Maddy Ragsdale, teacher Barbara Rideout, and Zack Love.

This class has been working with the “Foundation” materials: Creation story, Exodus, Noah, The Ten Best Ways (10 Commandments).

Barbara Rideout told me the kids decided they needed to write their own, personal, ten best ways, which included things as: “respect animals as you would respect anyone else”, and “respect your sister and listen to her”. But after some lengthy discussion, all the children agreed that 10Commandments in the Bible were not quite enough. There needed to be one more: **Respect your self.**



These Easter Eggs were made by **Nina and Lucy Silbaugh, Neve Brennan, and Kate Hart-McCormick** during Sunday school.

The J2A



Pictured from left to right are **Raffa Porrata-Doria, Becky Barrett and Chris Nelsen.**



Pictured from left to right are teachers **Pam Sheeran and Neil Desnoyers; Michael Scherf and Raffa Porrata-Doria.**

J2A will do a multi-media piece on the creation story. Easter Vigil Saturday.

J2A Yard Sale

Our J2A youth group is having a yard sale on the Church campus on Saturday, April 18th, from 9--3 to raise money for their mission trip to West Virginia. The rain date is Sunday, April 19th from 12noon – 5..

(Editor's correction. The J2A did decide on a pilgrimage project. They will participate in a World Vision Mission Project in W. VA from June 21 – 27,)

Rite 13

The Rite 13 is working on a song about the "flood story for Easter Vigil on Saturday."



Pictured from left to right are teachers Andi Gray and Brandon Green with Youth Formation leader Steve Sheeran.



Pictured left to right are Mary Chawaga, Margaret Nelsen and Kevin Harte-McCormick.

What Are YOU Doing?

Kevin Hart-McCormick will perform the part of the COMMAND CENTER ASSISTANT # 1 in Cynwyd Elementary's Spring Musical: Internal Teen Machine which will be performed at **Cynwyd, Friday May 20 9:30am, Monday June 1, and Tuesday June 2 at 7pm.** Cynwyd 4th Graders; **Neve Brennan and Maddy Ragsdale** will be in the chorus of the Cynwyd musical.

Poem: No One By Emma Ragsdale

No One is here
He is listening to the words we speak, the songs we sing
He lives in the corners of alleyways that have been abandoned
He is cold
He has be lying on the pavement for hours in the rain
Let him in
Embrace him, though he is different But aren't we all?

Kairos By Steve Lindsay



On April 23rd, 2009 at noon I, and a team of approximately 25 other volunteers, will enter the Pennsylvania State Correctional Institution (SCI) in Chester PA for the ninth Kairos, called K-9. We will be there to deliver to approximately 30+ inmate/residents of the institution a Christian presentation of Christ's love and forgiveness. The goal is to establish strong Christian communities among the population of the institution. Kairos is a multi-denominational event; the team members and inmates are from many Christian denominations.

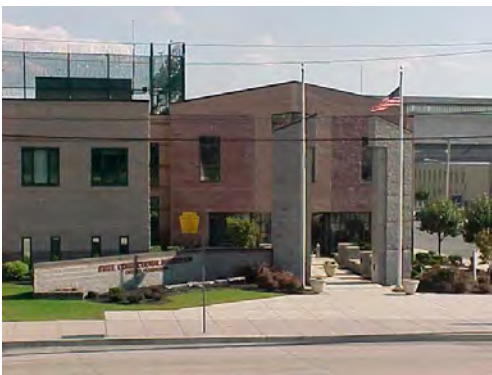
SCI Chester opened in April, 1998 as the state's first facility designed to treat inmates with substance abuse problems. Since then, and with prison over-population, there is more of a general population. It also is the state's first tobacco-free facility. Kairos retreat initiates relationships between the team and the residents of SCI Chester that are continued in regular meetings with the residents. Kairos community visits residents in the prison chapel twice a month to share life and pray.

Kairos of Eastern PA sponsors this weekend. It is part of Kairos International (www.kairosprisonministry.org), an international prison ministry. Kairos functions in 34 states and 7 countries. The weekend is a ministry that works at the pleasure of the Chaplain of the prison. Kairos of Eastern PA is in active negotiations with the Chaplain and Administration of SCI Graterford. Bishop Bartlett was one of the sponsoring Bishops when the original agreement was made with Kairos International and Kairos Pennsylvania in the 1990s.

Kairos is a Greek word that means "God's Special Time". The way we usually think about time is Chronos

– clock time. Kairos is the time that occurs when God acts in a special way. The program is a modified version of the Cursillo 3-day weekend. Cursillo is a movement within the Church created to develop leaders in their Christian Life. It is centered on a series of weekly small group meetings. Cursillo is active in the Diocese of Pennsylvania and puts on 2 weekends a year. Please pray for the team and the residents of SCI Chester. If you are interested, there is a practice of having people pray for every hour during the weekend. Just let me know which of the 75 hours you would be interested in praying and I will send it to the people creating the Prayer Wheel. This wheel is presented to the residents during the weekend as a sign of the greater community that surrounds them.

The weekend costs about \$6,000. Any financial assistance would be appreciated. I am excited to attend and participate in my fourth weekend at SCI Chester. It is an exciting experience to meet and discuss faith in Jesus with these men. I will be presenting a talk on Saturday afternoon called “a Christian”. Please remember me in your prayers. If you are interested in hearing more, please contact me.



Pennsylvania State Correctional Institution

Stewardship

By Katherine Kurtz, Chair



Stewarding All Year Long

Hello again from Stewardship. Our pledge drive for 2009 was remarkably successful,

even though -- due to the economic downturn--we didn't quite reach last year's total. Our congregation pledged \$189,379 last year versus \$159,059 this year.

Like the rest of the country and the world, most of us are tightening our belts. Here at St Asaph's we are operating on a deficit budget while continuing to maintain our beautiful and expensive plant and yet stay committed to growing our programs and outreach mission.

The vestry needs your help in cutting our expenses and increasing our growth. Come to our monthly work days and help us save money on building maintenance and grounds care--bring the kids, too. There is plenty of unskilled as well as skilled work to be done. Every hour you put in will save us \$20.

Join with a friend or another family and sign up for coffee hour. Contact **Andrea Dawkins** to bring refreshments to the art openings and invite your neighbors. Speak to **Roy Harker** about joining the choir. **Kathy Hubbard** can you use help with our growing Sunday school. Join the **outreach team**, the **theater group**, the **book club**, **Loaves and Fishes**.

Come up with new ways for us to raise money and fulfill our mission statement. Speak to one of the member of our vestry or Father Barry. We need your talents to keep St Asaph's growing. And, if you are new and want to make a financial pledge, speak to me. **Stewardship—Time, Talent and Energy are All Year.**

Katherine Kurtz 610-664-0716

**Behold what you are; become what you see.
(St. Augustine)**

Outreach

**ST. ASAPH, BALA HOUSE AND
JUST CHILDREN EARTH DAY**

We are preparing for a tri-group Earth Day on Saturday, April 25 that would involve St. Asaph's, Bala House and our Head Start outreach at "Just Children." There will be projects to work on for all three groups and then we will come together for a picnic at St. Asaph's at 12:30.

St. Asaph's group will start at 9 am, which will include Just Children, and the Bala House group will begin at 11 am. Although Bala House usually brings their own picnic lunch, they are treating us to drinks and dessert. St. Asaph will supply hot dogs and sides. Look for signup sheets in the church and a project list of needs for that day on the bulletin board.

During the week of April 19, John Barrett will get a "head start" before Saturday the 25th to begin building a raised garden at Just Children. If there is anyone who can join John on the project during the week, please contact him at johnbarrett1507@comcast.net

Look for the list of projects on the bulletin board in the tower stairwell and signup sheets in the church for the picnic.

Contact Nicky Garvan at nichola16@comcast.net

STORY TIME AT JUST CHILDREN

We continue to read stories to **Just Children's Head Start** children on Wednesday mornings at 9:30 am. **Carolyn Ramsey, Carolyn Langfitt, Anne Speyer, Laura Breenan and Kathy Hubbard** are presently reading. Do you have time to be a story teller? **Contact Anne Speyer at annespeyer@comcast.net**

LENDING LIBRARY AT JUST CHILDREN

Have your children outgrown their story books? We are collecting hard back books for 1 – 5 year olds for our head start children at Just Children. The teachers want to start a lending library with their families. The books do not have to be new--gently used. We understand that many of our township libraries have books for sale outside the children's room for \$1 and under. Picture books about animals, diversity and nature are always good. A basket will be in the church foyer for donated books. This project will be ongoing. **Contact Nicky Garvan at nichola16@comcast.net**

PHILABUNDANCE GARDEN

By Katherine Kurtz

Feed the Hungry. Grow Our Garden The Outreach Garden Team is gearing up to start digging and planting. Last year from a very small plot, we easily harvested bushels of tomatoes and green beans for Philabundance. We also had a few eggplants and peppers. This year Philabundance needs us to help feed more and more of our hungry neighbors and we are planning to expand our space and to grow more crops. You can join us to help dig, plant, mulch or to get on the watering and harvesting schedule.

Both master gardeners and total beginners are very welcome. Watch the bulletin and E Message for dates. Speak to **Margaret Hunting mhunting@gmail.com** or **Wendy Flegal wendyflegal@yahoo.com** for more information.

We haven't ironed out the details, but we hope you will join us for a future field trip to a Bucks County Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) garden run by **Margaret Hunting's daughter.**

NORTHLIGHT COMMUNITY CENTER

Thanks to all who continue to fill our food baskets for the food pantry. As you know, the need is great in this economy. These nonperishable items are presently delivered by our team--**Renee Banson, Mary Chris Lindsay and Liz Silbaugh** on the 2nd, 4th and 5th Sundays.

ELDERNET OF LOWER MERION AND NARBERTH

Provides a range of services to those in need living within Lower Merion Township. On 1st and 3rd Sundays, we share our food donations with Eldernet. We collect not only nonperishable foods, but also paper products, cleaning supplies and other dry goods not covered by food stamps to help stock the their food cupboard located in the white building that shares the parking lot with Ludington Library. **Jane Carton, Nicky Garvan and Connie Stelzenmuller** will make those deliveries.

THE SOLOIST BOOK DISCUSSION

Outreach wants to thank **Joan Frank** for guiding the One Book One Philadelphia book discussion of "The Soloist" as part of the St. Asaph Art Opening on March 6. Approximately 30 people participated in the discussion in our sanctuary. Joan was also helpful in handing out material highlighting organizations that support people with mental illness.

DANCE AT JUST CHILDREN

Renee Banson has agreed to start a dance project at Just Children. The director had this kind of activity on her "wish list." Read Renee's background in this newsletter and know what a treat these children are in for.

"Explore your faith in a place that is as open minded as you are."

Music and Arts



By Roy Harker, Director of Music and Arts

**Julie Zahn
Japanese Stencil Dyeing and Woodcuts
April 12 through May 5, 2009**

Opening Reception:

Friday, April 17, 2009, 6:00-8:00pm

Julie Zahn's work is a unique blend of printmaking and painting. Ms. Zahn paints using katazome, or Japanese stencil dyeing, a paste-resist method that she learned while living in Kyoto, Japan, for a year after graduating from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. The work, while decorative and playful, reflects deeper aspects of her relationship with nature. She also works in woodcut, producing land and seascapes. Most recently she has been making a series of black and white woodcuts depicting a harbor and its surrounding

small town on an island (Frenchboro) off the coast of Maine.

The current show contains a series of large, colorful Japanese stencil dyeing pieces inspired by her garden and the ducks and rabbits with whom she is acquainted, as well as the series of recent woodcuts.

Congregation



Renee Banson is a dancer and an involved member of our congregation. She and I have been talking over the last year or more about her desire to perform a creative dance piece for our congregation. Finally, I hear from Renee that the congregation can expect a dance performance in May or June.

Renee served on our vestry from 2003-2005 and during that time she was the Outreach chair; and, in her early years, a Sunday school teacher. Presently, she is an active member of the Altar Guild and has been a loyal greeter for many years. She can always be depended on to deliver the St. Asaph food donations to the Northern Light Community Center in Manayunk.

She is the mother of two grown boys—Jake and Dave.

I asked her at what age she began dancing and what was her inspiration to continue dancing as an adult. She said that she has been dancing since she was 6 years old. Her mom did what a lot of moms do—gave her dance lessons, especially in ballet and tap. She loved it from the start and has never stopped.

Renee says that when you do something well and are encouraged and supported by your teacher as she was, it makes you feel special and that encouragement is so important when you are growing up. She went on to say that she continues to dance because it is so much a part of who she is. Dancing makes her life richer by being involved with artists and in projects from all genres. Renee says that dancing keeps her physically fit, even though, “when you are not so young any more, aches and pains go along with it.”

Also, Renee strongly believes that dance was a personal healing place for her while growing up. She attributes dancing to helping her “navigate some pretty murky waters and troubled times.” She goes on to say that dancing “was my anchor in the world and still is. Artists are my clan so to speak.”

Renee is a very busy dance instructor. She presently teaches modern dance at Bryn Mawr College; modern dance and ballet at Cabrini College, where she recently started a dance ensemble; and, she is the director of the Upper School Dance Company at the Baldwin School.

She has taught at the Rock School West and Spirit in Motion Ballet Theatre as teacher and company choreographer. When Renee was still dancing professionally, she taught master classes for “Diversions”, the National Dance Company of Wales, as well as having performed in Germany, Scotland and London, England.

Renee is the founder and director (a volunteer position) of a program for performing artists that conduct workshops and performances called The Field/Philadelphia, headquartered in New York with sites in most major cities in the U.S. In recognition of her work and for her performance history in Philly, Renee was awarded a “Rocky Award” by her peers. In 2007 Renee was recognized by Philadelphia Dance Awards for her “outstanding contribution to the Philadelphia dance community”.

I asked Renee about her students. She said they range in age from 7 through college but she has taught children as young as 4. She teaches students from a diverse socio/economic background and is inspired by her students. She enjoys bringing out their unique qualities and channeling their creativity. She is particularly inspired by the younger dancers. She says they “warm my heart with their uninhibited and spontaneous creativity.”

She is guided by an important principal—“I believe that anyone can dance.” She said that this principal extends to the image that dancers must have a “certain look” and “body type.” Renee says, “Not true.” For professional reasons, she reasoned that a dancer should be in excellent physical shape and in ballet one must be quite slender; but that this should not be an issue with the general dance population. Renee said that a few of her dancers do not have the “stereotypical” dancer image; but can they dance!!

Renee says that she has been at St. A's for 13 years and “I love the energy, new people, new look and as always the diversity.” She said that when she joined the church with her two sons, Jake and Dave, the church was quiet and somewhat stagnant. She confessed that the Sunday school curriculum was in need of an

overhaul--nothing like the wonderful program we have today. Renee said that with each new rector came positive changes in the church.

Renee is feeling very positive about Barry as our new priest and says it is a pleasure to be around him, his partner, Mark and their two children, Kate and Kevin. She thinks they give a positive outlook to the church and its life. She is looking forward to watching how the church is shaped by their presence.

Renee hopes that St. Asaph's can continue to move and grow in ways that truly "reflect who we are as a congregation and the arts are a good place to start." She says, "We all have a personal ministry that sometimes grows and changes with our life experiences and mine has shifted from my own art-making as a priority to nurturing others in their creative endeavors."



EXPRESSIONS by Anne Speyer

Every human being is creative, because God made us that way. A new group, tentatively called "Expressions", is being formed after Easter. The underlying format is similar to that of St. Asaph's Fresh Speech Theatre, except in "Expressions," the members will be invited to paint, draw, write, dance, or sing their epiphanies after being confronted with a story from the Bible.

We will start with a simple format:

- a. share the reading of a story
- b. meditate briefly upon a phrase or word or image from the reading
- c. spend twenty minutes writing or drawing/painting, choreographing a work that issues from the Word that caught our imagination
- d. Sharing
- e. Picking a new word or phrase and creating another work (20 minutes)
- f. Sharing our work and epiphanies (if desired)

This simple practice dispels cobwebs and blocks, as we gain courage and proficiency in our creative lives.

The rules for the group are: confidentiality; no judging; freedom to explore more than one form of creativity.

This group is open to all from high school age and older. Anyone interested in trying out the group is invited to the first meeting scheduled on Monday, April 21 at 7:15 p.m.



Roger and Mary Allen will return to us in July following Roger's sabbatical. The following is the second installment of their travels:

Our first account finished with us in Berlin. We left that wonderful city, with its garland of lakes, on January 26th and flew to Venice.

At this time of year Venice is still filled with tourists, but seems delightfully emptier than the madhouse it turns into during the warmer months. Our hotel was in the older part of the city, near the university. Roger has stayed there before while teaching at the university; it is particularly convenient because it is within walking distance of the Piazzale Roma, which is where all wheeled transport from "the mainland" comes to an end and water transport takes over.

However, during the course of our stay, even that proximity was of no help, since we were in Venice during the season for what is known as "aqua alta," the situation in which the Adriatic comes up so high as to inundate the streets of the city. On December 1st 2008, even Venetians were surprised when the tide came up over the piazzas and sidewalks some four feet overnight, and no one had time to put down the usual walkways and planks (you can see some photographs of it on the website "Venice Aqua Alta," if you wish). During our visit "high water" was a mere six inches or so, but even that does not allow for much walking! Fortunately for us, our hotel kindly provided us with wading boots made of plastic, and we were thus able to wade our way around, or at least far enough to get on some form of water-transport, mostly in the form of the "vaporetto" or Venetian equivalent of the bus.

Venice is, of course, one of the most magical places on earth: there are the buildings, of course, the art—almost

every church you go into (and there are many of them) has a Titian or Tintoretto as an altar-piece; and the Doge's Palace has some six centuries of Venetian art on its walls. But there is also and above all the light (when the sun is shining, which for us it did less than in summertime, but enough) which gives everything a particular hue.

Almost every ancient building in Italy seems to be under repair; it must be a constant reality when you are dealing with so much architectural history and of such antiquity. St. Mark's Cathedral was no exception, with its triumphal strutting horses outside (which were stolen from Istanbul in earlier centuries--actually, the originals are now inside the cathedral museum; the ones outside are replicas). St. Mark's itself, for one period the home of glorious choral and instrumental music by the Gabrieli family, is entirely covered in gold mosaic, an astonishing sight. Venice was, of course, also the home of the "red-haired priest," Vivaldi, and we went to hear a wonderful concert (yes, including the "four seasons") in yet another spectacular church.

On February 2nd, we waded our reluctant way (see above about the wading bit) to the Venice train-station and traveled south to Arezzo (south of Florence) and the Tuscan mountain-town of Anghiari. One of Roger's former PhD students has purchased a "conventino" (small convent, no longer in use) just outside the town; while its age is not known, the latest date for its construction is 12th century (and it may go back to the 8th !!). It has however been refurbished and modernized inside; indeed, the chapel is now used as a concert-hall and has a grand piano in it, so Roger was able to expunge the frustration of not having had access to a keyboard for several weeks.

From Anghiari we made two very notable day-trips to neighboring places. The first was to Assisi, which both of us have visited before, but not in such wonderfully uncrowded circumstances. We were able to explore the treasures in both the lower and upper parts of the Basilica—with its famous Giotto art in an unhurried and quiet manner, and to wander around Assisi, yet another lovely Tuscan hill-town (it seems that almost every hill of any size and respectability has one on it!). Our second visit was to the equally wonderful but very different city of Siena, with its striped cathedral (under reconstruction, of course!). We did not charge round the "campo" (the central square) on horseback as happens during the famous "palio" horse-race (bareback at that), but once again we were able to wander around the city streets—which this time were more crowded, but with local people shopping and holding lively conversations.

Tomorrow we leave Anghiari and Italy for Basel in Switzerland, from where we will be flying on February 16th to Istanbul, yet another magical city, the old Constantinople founded by the Emperor Constantine as the center of Eastern Christianity. When the Ottoman Turks captured the city in 1453, they decided to give the

city a new name. Unfortunately, the one they chose, "Istanbul," is derived from "eis ten polin" ('into the city') in Greek! More on that later....

RUGGIERO ALLEN

"Now send us forth a people forgiven, healed, renewed; that we may proclaim your love to the world."

Lunch and conversation with the rector

It was great to hear folks sharing stories about their daily lives, especially for newer members. Yes, we had soup; Doris Weimar brought a wonderful salad; Teresa Wallace, who couldn't stay, left crusty delicious bread; and the brownies that Joan Roberts brought were good and soft. There was enough soup also for our Bala House folks who were in and out of the kitchen at lunch time.

Bring a sandwich and join us if you can on April 22. We meet on most second Wednesdays—from 12 – 1:30

Property



Steve Sheeran

Bala Build Update

All of the work for the new addition is schedule to be completed by mid-April with the exception of the custom windows and doors for the link between the existing building and the new addition. The custom window/door manufacturer hopes to deliver the windows and doors by mid-May but will not guarantee delivery in May. Because of this delay is it unlikely Lower Merion Township will issue a Use and Occupancy permit until the windows and doors are installed which may not be until the end of May or June.

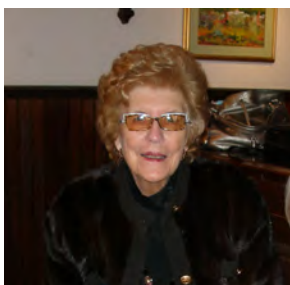
During this final phase of construction be sure to check the "Weekly Construction Update" that is sent out via email every Friday as entering and exiting the campus as well as parking may be restricted due to repaving the asphalt, landscaping and other construction activity.

Israel, Roberta and their daughter Brittany. They live in our apartment on campus



Loaves and Fishes

By Karen Love



Spring Schedule

48th Annual Philadelphia Antiques Show Saturday, April 18 at 10 am.

\$30 per person or if 6 or more participate in the group, the entrance fee is \$25. Lunch on your own in the Eagle Café. The tour includes:

- Trained guided tours
- McNeil Lectures featuring Dr. Robert and Katherine Booth. Hear the stories of liberty, adventure, fortune and family told in the faces of the Philadelphia miniatures.

Saturday, May 2 at 9 am

Cezanne and Beyond at the Philadelphia Museum of Art
\$30 - \$36

The guided tour is before public hours, but leaves one hour which you are free to enjoy the museum on your own. The tour includes:

- Masterpieces of Paul Cezanne
- Exceptional works by modern and contemporary artists ranging from Henri Matisse and Pablo Picasso to Ellsworth Kelly and Jasper Johns.

Book Review

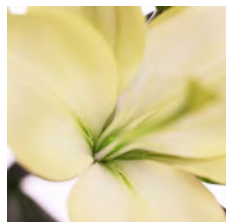
On Monday, April 13 at 7:30, the book club will discuss **“The Master and Margarita” by Mikhail Bulgakov.**

The plot is a satire set in first century Jerusalem and post revolutionary Moscow. The entire action takes place on four days, from Wednesday to Sunday of Holy Week. This book reflects the author’s own struggle as a writer under the Soviet political system which censored his writing.

According to the flyleaf in my book, “this is Bulgakov’s greatest work and was published in 1966-67.” The narrative continues by saying, “each reader will enjoy and interpret this bizarre and comic fantasy in his own way. Its rich and uproarious black humor, its devastating satire on the effect of evil on human beings, its tragic yet triumphant and powerful story of good and truth are many stories in one.”

At this writing I am half way through the book thoroughly enjoying this satire and am enjoying the antics of the devil and his evil band of mischief makers as they raise havoc and expose the weaknesses of Moscow society in the 1920’s. I am looking forward to finding the compassion and truth among the innocents in this complex novel as they go toe-to-toe with the devil and his cohorts.

Easter Memorials



Don’t forget to pick up an envelope to memorialize your friends and family with lilies for Easter. The lilies will decorate our sanctuary and will be available to take home the week after Easter. We must have

your memorial names by April 5 in time for printing in the Easter bulletin. The recommended donation is \$10. Envelopes are available at the church or call the office with your requests—**610-664-0966**.

Welcome Guests

St. Asaph’s is a place that expects guests: people of all faiths, race, nationalities and walks of life; urban and suburban; rich and poor, gay and straight; families and singles; young, old, and in-between. We view hospitality as an important part of our ministry, and we hope you will feel welcomed here.

PRAYERS

Those for whom our prayers have been asked: **Everett William Frank, June Hiers, Norman Hjelm, Geraldine Lindsay, Karen Love, Tom Newman, Ken Rideout, Joan Schroeter, Florence Sheeran, Margaret Van Steenwyk, Joseph Touchstone, Art Valentine, and Raymond Weston, Sr.**

Those who have died in the parish: **Athie Sosangelis-White, (Kathy Hubbard) Violet Schroeter, (Pam Sheeran), Katy Roggenburk, (Katherine and Ronald Roggenburk), Joan Martin, (Mary Chris Lindsay), Connie Bevins, Kathryn Lenoir, (Kristen Stewart), Edward Dougherty (Terry Dougherty).**

St. Asaph's Church is a house of prayer for all people and a community that works to be progressive in belief and inclusive in practice.

Contact **Connie Stelzenmuller**, stelzen@verizon.net, newsletter editor, to submit articles or to request changes.

Sunday Schedule

8 am, Contemplative Communion
9 am, Spiritual Formation for all ages
10 am, Parish Eucharist
5 pm, Emerging worship (2nd Sun only)

Holy Days as announced

Parish Staff

Roy Harker, *Director of Music & Arts*
Kathy Hubbard, *Children's Formation*
Steve Sheeran, *Youth Formation*
Lynda Staton, *Parish Administrator*

Parish Vestry

Neil Desnoyers, *Accounting Warden*
Teresa Wallace, *Rector's Warden*
Janet Barrett, Joanne Behm, Chris Dennis, Nicky Garvan,
Michael Kaufmann, Katherine Kurtz, Mary Chris Lindsay, Lori
Wernersbach, Bob Powell, Connie Stelzenmuller

Parish Office

Hours: Mon-Fri, 9a-3p
Phone: 610-664-0966
Fax: 610-664-3760

Diocese of Pennsylvania

The Rt. Rev'd Charles E. Bennison, Jr, *Bishop*
The Rt. Rev'd Allen Bartlett, *Assisting Bishop*
The Rt. Rev'd Ed Lee, *Assisting Bishop*

TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL -- PLEASE HANDLE PROMPTLY

OUTLOOK

CHURCH OF SAINT ASAPH
27 Conshohocken State Rd
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004

On the web at
www.saintasaphs.org

Check and return to church office
if you no longer wish to be on our mailing list.