

The Archangel

St. Michael's Episcopal Church

April 2011

A Key to a Meaningful Lent

Broken Sinners Needing Mercy

Rend your hearts and not your garments.
Return to the Lord, your God, for he is
gracious and merciful, slow to anger,
and abounding in steadfast love...
Joel 2:13

Putting this verse another way; "Wear smudges of ashes on your hearts and not your forehead. Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful..."

In other words, to wear smudges of ashes on your forehead would amount to nothing but pious ceremony, unpleasing to God, if we did not at the same time wear smudges of ashes on the heart.

It's easy to wear ashes and other outward signs of religious emotion, but to feel true repentance is the mark of a genuine Christian.

Years ago, I was asked to speak to a group of children about prayer. St. Paul's exhortation in Philippians was my text: "Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God" (4:6). I encouraged the children to pray with me, making their requests be made known to God. We heard the usual wonderful stuff: healing for pets, friends, teachers. One little girl prayed: "Help me God to know my sins...". It was like the Lord sent this eleven-year-old girl to speak to me!

"Help me to know my sins." Who among us this day has not grievously departed from God's ways? During the Litany of Penitence, we pray for specific sins. To truly know our sins to

know, see, and feel the power of sin turning us inward to self is indeed the soul-moving work of the Holy Spirit. It is powerfully humiliating, yes, but completely sin-purging for "the Lord, your God is gracious and merciful."

I took a walk with a woman years ago on a damp, chilly, winter Sunday afternoon to the marsh-side grave of her son, who had been killed in Vietnam. She had many memories of her son and freely talked about them: Phi Beta Kappa at an Ivy League school where he also lettered in football as a place kicker and defensive back and held various honors across the board.

As she was fondly reminiscing, she told me if she could have five minutes of her son's life again, it would be the day he disobeyed her and ran into her garden an angry, rebellious little boy and trampled some of her flowers. Then, in a little while, with a broken flower in his hand he came back and threw himself into her arms, asking forgiveness. She said, "You know, I don't think he was afraid of punishment, he was sorry he hurt me, and if I could have him back for just five minutes, I would want to take him back as that mercy-seeking little boy." I was struck by that not wearing an honor's gown, not kicking the winning field goal to win an Ivy League game, not war hero, but mercy-seeking little boy.

The key to a meaningful Lent, indeed, the key to a meaningful Christianity and understanding the Christian gospel is to see ourselves as we really are, much like that little boy disobedient, rebellious wicked from my mother's womb and to see God as he really is, much like that loving mother. A broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

- The Very Rev. Frank Limehouse,
Dean, Cathedral Church of the Advent,
Birmingham, Alabama

From: *The Anglican Digest*, Spring A.D. 2011



Choir Notes

Hi,,, The St. Michael's Choir is really in need of some soprano's If you like to sing, enjoy fellowship, and share a laugh, then we welcome you with open arms.

Please pray about singing with us, and when the Lord says "yes, yes, yes"!!! we will see you on Thursday evenings at 7:15.



Joyfully singing.
Sue and Debbie

Steve Hood's Good News

The Virginia Supreme Court made its second and final decision to uphold the lower court's ruling that will ultimately grant Steve's release or retrial. It's realistic that he could be back with us as a free man before this month is over, or at least back in the Richmond jail awaiting retrial (which he would welcome).

There's still no decision from his July Parole Board interview. When I called the Board recently, I was told his case was "stuck" due to a computer glitch and that a decision would be made soon, now that they knew about the problem. This is less important with the good news from the Court.

As Hank reported to the congregation recently, Steve's medical issues have been diagnosed (thyroid failure) and resolved with medication. Thank you for your continued prayers for him.

Lynnice Randolph



Arbor Day

The City of Colonial Heights will celebrate "Arbor Day" on Friday, April 29, 2011. This year's ceremony will be held at Lakeview Park, Lake Avenue, 10:00 a.m. This will be a special Arbor Day for me as the tree that will be planted, a "Corkscrew Willow", will be in memory of my granddaughter, Cassidy Hahn. I would like to invite you to attend this special ceremony. It is always a nice event, with children from one of the elementary schools invited to sing, a couple of guest speakers, and refreshments to follow. It would be special to have some of my St. Michael's family to be present.

Phyllis Cheely

Thoughts from the Altar Guild

Last month I suggested that you might follow the offerings in our Lenten displays having to do with God's Spoken Word and our call as the Lord's servants. Some of your questions may be like some of mine – How do I serve, Lord? How do I know what you have specifically for me? Am I able? Do I really qualify to be in your service? How do I prepare myself?

First, I need daily and sometimes hourly to cross that bridge of prayer that brings me into your presence. I need that time to visit with you and listen to your heart of love singing to me. That amazing love that soothes and forgives life's problems and encourages me to walk the walk of servanthood. As I asked the questions of how to get started you brought to my mind a poem written by our dear friend Jeanne Henry some twenty five or thirty years ago. I'd like to share that with you now:

Is It I?

I do not need to ask the question, Lord,
That You were asked that night when death was nigh
When Your friends heard that one would be betrayer
And asked, each in turn, "Oh, Master, is it I?"

Now, the query's Yours, "Who doth betray me?"
"Who shouts anew that dread word CRUCIFY?"
Here I stand, convicted by my living,
And, shamed, confess, "Oh, Master, it is I!"

Lord, I have betrayed You by the idols
I have placed upon the altar of my heart,
Idols of the flesh and self-indulgence,
Impious things in which You have no part.

There are so many things I've put before You,
Finite possessions money has to buy;
House and clothes and costly entertainment
All distract me while Your hungry children die.

I have betrayed You by my timid silence
When words stayed locked securely in my mind
Which should have urged the sacrifice and service
That Your example left for humankind.

I have betrayed You by the closing of
My eyes and ears to sights and sounds of pain,
But the anguish of the world seethes deep inside me
And I long to feel Your cleansing touch again.

You walk with love across my sea of guilt, Lord,
Such matchless love! I feel it strong and deep,
I hear You say, "Your sin is all forgiven,
Now go, My child, and feed my hungry sheep!"

I believe that's all that needs to be said. As I am freed from all this baggage I will hear my Lord's direction for feeding His sheep.

May the blessing of this Lenten season bring you into the light of the life-giving resurrection our Lord brings to us. -Carolyn Mason

Youth Ministry News

I want to thank everyone who came out and supported the EYC at our annual Pancake Supper. We made \$230 for the evening. The youth did a great job. I want to give a special thanks to Frank Ditri.

The meeting this month will be led Kate Parsio.

This years Blackstone Convention was attended by Joseph Gay, Nikki Gay, Kate Parsio, Guy Allen, Megan Parsio, Kristia Vasiloff, Nick Anderson, Chris Anderson, Jordan Johnson, Liz Elliott and myself.

Spring yard work, the EYC is fundraising and they would like to know if anyone needs any yard work done. Please contact me by phone or email if interested.

Thanks be to God,
Michael



Maundy Thursday

April 21st, 7:00pm

Foot Washing, Holy Communion and Stripping of the Altar

Good Friday

April 22nd, 7:00pm

Stations of the Cross

Easter Sunday

April 24th, 8:00 and 10:30am

Easter Celebration and Holy Communion

Pinwheels for Prevention...

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month! Did you know that for every \$1.00 invested in prevention, \$4.00 is saved in the cost of treating an abused or neglected child? Research shows that advocacy, education and collaboration give parents and caregivers the support they need to raise children in healthy, violence-free environment.

During April, "Prevent Child Abuse Virginia" will partner with other organizations throughout the state as Pinwheel Partners by distributing pinwheels and planting pinwheel gardens. The C.H. Juvenile & Domestic Violence Task Force will plant their Pinwheel Garden at the C.H. Public Library on Wednesday, April 6. The Daisy Troop 80, who was present on Sunday will be some of our "garden planters".

If you would like to celebrate children by purchasing a pinwheel for planting, please contact Phyllis Cheely at Office on Youth & Human Services, 520-9287. Pinwheels cost \$1.00 and can be in memory or in honor of a child, grandchild, niece, nephew, or friend. They also can be for adults or organizations who work with abused or neglected children.

Come by the library after April 6 to see the festive entry-way of blue and silver pinwheels. Names will be posted inside the library with dedications and donor names. There also will be a resource table with free information on abuse/neglect issues. You can be part of the solution by participating in this outreach program. Please look for pinwheel forms in the parish hall on Sunday. And, thank you for your donation!!

Phyllis Cheely, Chair
Juvenile & Domestic Violence Task Force

Easter Flowers



We will be using an assortment of Spring flowers in the sanctuary on Easter morning. You may donate a flower offering for \$11.50 with a dedication. Please make checks payable to St. Michael's with

notation "Easter flowers." All flower orders, dedications and monies need to be in by April 10th. **Please note:** Every order needs to include a flower form and payment. Thanks.

Easter Flower Form

Deadline: April 10, 2011

Ordered by _____

Amount Enclosed _____ [] Cash [] Check

Dedication _____



April birthday party will be on
April 17th
after the 10:30am worship service .

APRIL

- 3 Helen Wagner
- 5 Sabine Allen
- 6 Dale Williams
- 15 Connie Lewis
- 16 Penny McCulloch
- 20 Heidi McMurdo
Woody Stafford
- 26 Karen Murphy
- 27 Hannah Roberts

Anniversaries

APRIL

- 21 Henry and Jeannette Koster
- 24 Peter and Cindy Devereaux
- 25 Jay and Lisa Horne
- 27 Paul and Maria Gardner

Pot Luck Lunch

Sunday, April 3rd

Plan to stay after worship for good food and fellowship.
Bring a hearty dish to share. Beverages will be furnished.

Pass It On

Saturday, April 2, 2011

Condon Hall, St. Ann Catholic Church, 17111 Jefferson
Davis Hwy, Colonial Heights

This is a local ministry to benefit those most in need in our community. Our event is "by invitation" for the first few hours (8-11am). After 11am, we open the event to the public. Each family is given two huge bags to fill. Everything is given away for free and is all organized and run by volunteers.

You must have a ticket with you to enter between 8 & 11am.
Please see Fr. Tige or contact the church office to get your ticket.

Volunteers are needed:

Please call Linda Biles, 768-2268, to let her know what hours you can volunteer your time.

Donations accepted

Episcopal Church Women

The ECW will meet on Thursday, April 21st, at 11:00am in the Fowler Room. We will be finishing lesson 4 in our study book (questions on page 39). There will be a brief business meeting, followed by lunch at a local restaurant. All women of St. Michael's are invited to attend.

Bereavement Support Groups

Crater Community Hospice is sponsoring a new series of Bereavement Support Groups for adults. These groups are open to the public and free of charge, though registration is recommended. We will meet for 6 Thursday evenings, to share stories, learn and share coping skills, discuss ways to honor our loved ones and our own healing process.

Groups will meet at Crater Community Hospice 3916 S. Crater Rd. Petersburg VA 23805 on Thursday nights from 6:30 to 8:00 pm from April 21--May 26, 2011. For more information please contact group facilitator Karla Helbert, LPC, email karlamarie@verizon.net or call 804-892-2782

Summary of Vestry Minutes

- The Vestry approved Guy Allen's Eagle Scout project to replace the church's old playground equipment. The EYC supports the project and will offer assistance.
- The EYC sought approval to build a GaGa pit near the pine trees outside the Fowler Room. Approved.
- The Treasurer reported that the internal audit was completed on March 6, 2011.
- David Noakes reported a good Cursillo weekend.
- Catherine Noakes has set up a Facebook page for the church.
- Bob Wilson, Jr. Warden, presented estimates for roof repairs. The Vestry approved having J. D. Witt do the flashing now and not the valleys.
- Michael Cole will maintain the church lawn, using a mower provided by Bob Wilson.
- Thanks were expressed to Hank and Peggy Graeser for cleaning and refurbishing the Fowler Room.
- Fr. Tige and Lynnice Randolph attended Annual Council.
- Darnley Hodge is a new Lay Reader/Chalicer. More are needed.
- David Noakes volunteered to attend the New Wine Project at St. John's, Chester.
- Hank and Peggy Graeser will be participating in a two-week mission to Uganda with Stony Point Presbyterian Church. They asked permission to address the congregation about their trip.
- Next meeting, Monday, April 4th, 7:00pm, Fowler Room.

St. Michael's Episcopal Church

April 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
Pot Luck 3 8:00am-Holy Euch. I 9:15am-Adult Ed. 10:30am-Holy Euch. II w. Sun. Sch.	4 1:00-Cursillo Gr. 7:00-Vestry	5 1:00-Bible Study 7:00-Cursillo Gr.	6 10:30-Al-Anon 6:30-Lenten Supper and Program	7	8	9 10:00-Al-Anon
10 8:00am-Holy Euch. I 9:15am-Adult Ed. 10:30am-Holy Euch. II w. Sun. Sch. 5:00pm-EYC	11 1:00-Cursillo Gr.	12 1:00-Bible Study 7:00-Cursillo Gr.	13 10:30-Al-Anon 6:30-Lenten Supper and Program	14	15 7:00-Cursillo Ultreya	16
Palm Sun. 17 8:00am-Holy Euch. I 9:15am-Adult Ed. 10:30am-Holy Euch. II w. Sun. Sch. 5:00pm-EYC	18 12:00-Garden Cl. 1:00-Cursillo Gr.	19 1:00-Bible Study 7:00-Cursillo Gr.	20 10:00-A.A.R.P. 10:30-Al-Anon	Maundy Thursday 21 11:00-ECW 7:00-Worship	Good Friday 22 7:00-Worship Office Closed	23
Easter 24 8:00am-Holy Euch. I 9:15am-Adult Ed. 10:30am-Holy Euch. II w. Sun. Sch.	25 1:00-Cursillo Gr. Archangel Deadline Office Closed	26 1:00-Bible Study 7:00-Cursillo Gr.	27 10:30-Al-Anon	28	29	30

*The Common Purpose of St. Michael's Episcopal Church:
 We're growing to be who Jesus wants us to be and do what He wants us to do.*