

The Quill

THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Williamsburg, Virginia

May 2011



Living Easter

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!!

So what?

Easter is not a one-Sunday event. The Easter season lasts into June this year. And, in fact, we celebrate the resurrection each Sunday, year-round!

How do you live Easter?

That has been the question for Jesus' followers, ever since his first followers found the tomb to be empty. Here's the first clue for the answer: in all four Gospel accounts, the witnesses to the empty tomb are sent away from the tomb. So, Easter is to be lived in the places where God sends us: in our daily lives.

Is it possible to live Easter without assembling with the community for worship? Not according to the Bible! Here are some examples of how our Sunday morning liturgy provides context and guidance for us in living Easter.

- We live Easter when we are peacemakers – building peace in the situations in which God places us. (“In peace, let us pray to the Lord...” We pray for peace four times each Sunday morning in the Kyrie and the Hymn of Praise.)
- We live Easter when we are thankful for the blessings of each day, and when our words and actions praise God. (“We worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.”)
- We live Easter when we live joyously! (“This is the feast of victory for our God, for the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign.”)
- We live Easter when we read and hear and pray over holy wisdom and word from God in spoken and printed form.
- We live Easter when our actions arise from our faith. (“I believe in God, the Father almighty,...”)

- We live Easter when we receive forgiveness, and when we offer forgiveness to others. (“Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.”)
- We live Easter when we are generous. (“Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love,...”)
- We live Easter when we are nourished by Jesus Christ, the Word of God. (“The body of Christ ,...The blood of Christ, ...”)
- We live Easter when we are servants of Christ. (“Go in peace. Serve the Lord.”)

In an important sense, you and I are no different from Jesus' first followers: those who found the tomb to be empty, and who were then sent away from the tomb! They had to take initiative and make judgments and do the best they could each day, as they encountered each life situation, as they struggled to live Easter – just like you and I do in our daily lives. Their regular gatherings in worshiping community were absolutely essential for their discipleship.

You know what? For us too!

Pastor Ballentine



Quill Musing May 2011

Now that Abby can walk, open cabinets to bang together pots, and feel confident enough to walk straight off the top of the stairs into thin air, the concerns of parenting are weighing on my mind. It was easy when she was smaller, simply change, feed, burp, lay down and repeat in three hours. The other week at one of the Lenten soup suppers, Abby had a bit of a fit over not being able to follow Mommy into the kitchen (a place of great dangers to any young child). Many people proclaimed it was the first time

that they had heard her cry at church, and that she wasn't the wonder child they all had thought she was. I realize that many of the comments were made in jest, by people who had been parents and knew the joys of the willful child, but behind the jokes is a veil of truth. What do we expect of children who we interact with in Church?

My master's degree is in education and I spent two years teaching before starting at the church. I have come to have a deep appreciation of education. Looking back at my life, growing up, in college, in the Army and through the many experiences of my life; most of the truly educational moments (the ones that stand out the most) came from things outside of a classroom. My Mom taught me a lot, mostly in the kitchen around the stove or table, but also on trips to zoos, museums and other family trips. Sitting down on the porch with my grandfather to interview him about his life and learning about his family during the depression, working to scrub the bean pots (to the fury of the cook) at the local food market and his time in Korea as an intelligence officer.

Getting yelled at for making a mistake during a field exercise, or having a "conversation" with my platoon sergeant about my role in the platoon in the middle of my first field training. So much of our learning comes from how we interact with people in life, not what is taught in a classroom. As we examine how we teach Christianity to others through faith formation, both children and adult, we need to ask, "is what we teach (the specific lessons and curriculum) as important as who teaches it and how they witness Christ's lessons?"

I have looked at a lot of curriculums for the children's faith formation classes and all of them promise to revolutionize how children learn, make it easy for adults to teach, and transform children into spiritual beings who will follow Christ in every way for the rest of their lives. This is, of course, more than a little ludicrous. If a child attends church service and faith formation every week for a year, this would be roughly 120 hours of their year receiving a message about God, out of an available 8,736 hours in a year. This compares to 900 hours mandated school time, 2912 hours of sleeping (8 hours a night), and the many other activities that occupy their lives. So, they are surrounded by the message of Christ a little over one percent of their year, if they come every week. No curriculum can overcome that difference.

The only way that spiritually aware children come into being is if the message is delivered outside of church. In the kitchen, on the porch, in the car, wherever there is a "teachable moment" and we have the courage to talk about faith. I am not saying we must

bombard them about it, only that we need to make talking to children about faith part of our everyday lives. This doesn't only go to parents, but also to grandparents, and children we see in church. We are called to witness our faith, not just to strangers, but also each other. There are many ways to do this, and while Sunday faith formation is important, it isn't the only way to mentor kids. The most important thing is just to talk to them! Paying serious attention to a seven-year-old can be a life changing event for them, even if it takes years to register. It may not be a conversation of depth regarding the theology of Luther, but it could be equally important to a young mind that will forever associate church with a loving, caring, and listening community.

Doug Cummings Ministry Associate



Interfaith Dialogue with Temple Beth-el

Doug Cummings and Rabbi David Katz of Temple Beth-el have put together a holy text study program for Sunday, June 5 in the Fellowship Hall from 4:00 to 6:00 PM. Each participant will bring a passage of scripture that has meaning to them, then they will share that passage with a person from the other congregation. Each passage will be studied using the Jewish method of text study (as demonstrated by Doug and Rabbi Katz) between the pairs of people. This will be the first of a series of gatherings between the two faiths that will hopefully be expanded to other faith traditions as format and content are ironed out.



2012 National Youth Gathering in New Orleans

In July of 2012, the ELCA National Youth Gathering will be taking place in New Orleans. This massive (roughly 35,000 people) gathering is a great opportunity for the youth to meet and worship with youth from all around the country! In addition to worship, music and large gatherings, there is a servant project where the youth will spend one of the days assisting in projects to benefit the people of New Orleans. More about the event will be forthcoming, and the youth will be fundraising throughout the next year in order to help with the costs of the event,

housing and travel. Keep your eyes open for more about this exciting event!

In addition to the youth, there are opportunities for young adults to go and volunteer at the event. Anyone who is over 19 years old and a graduate of high school can volunteer for a number of positions. Volunteers will have to pay for transportation to the event and some meals while there, all other costs will be covered. If you, or a young adult you know, is interested, go the ELCA website <http://www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Ministry/Youth-Ministry/Youth-Gathering/Volunteering.aspx> for more information.



From the Director of Music

Thank you to all who gave of their time and talents to enrich our Easter liturgies. I was delighted to see some new “seasonal members” for our choirs, and I especially wish to thank the college students who were very faithful, and most appreciated. The essence of a successful liturgy is a communal effort where many come together as one in the name of the Risen Lord. Alleluia!

On a temporal note, I am pleased with the new development in our lighting construction that will accomplish the desired result of a brighter Sanctuary, without having to go through the ceiling. Our fine pipe organ has informed me, (we do speak...), that it too is breathing a bit easier without all the excess plaster dust. We are still taking every precaution to ensure the safety of the organ, but there is certainly much less risk for damage.

Recently I have had several folks attend my Sunday Evening Capitol Concert at Colonial Williamsburg who have attended our church in the morning. I wish you could hear their comments about the joys they find joining us for worship. I think it is always good to have a reminder from a “third party” just how blessed we are in this congregation. One couple said they forgot what “Church” should be, and wished they lived closer as they would love to be a part of this branch of the Body of Christ. What joy...

Your Brother in Christ,
Michael Monaco



United Lutheran Appeal - Making a Difference Today

We've been told this since our days in Sunday school: “We want to give and we need to give gladly.” A spirit of generosity isn't enough to guide us in our decisions. What does Scripture say?

James 2:14-17 — “What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, ‘Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.”

Congregations that have positioned themselves to have a vital role in the community, that have a focus beyond themselves, and that foster a healthy spirit in the congregation through strong relationships with the broader church are poised for healthy stewardship. We have a chance to show our generosity and our action through the Virginia synod and its church-wide ministries by supporting the United Lutheran Appeal.

St Stephen will devote the five Sundays from **May 1 – May 29** to the United Lutheran Appeal. Envelopes will be distributed for you to return by May 29 to the church to support the nine Virginia Synod agencies and institutions that educate and minister to the needs of more than 100,000 people every year.

Each Sunday in May we will hear the stories of our Synod agencies through Temple Talks, Special Visitors and bulletin inserts. As a special treat, Roanoke College President, Mike Maxey, 11th President of Roanoke College, Salem, VA, will join us for worship on **May 22**. Roanoke College is one of the United Lutheran Appeal agencies.

The theme this year is *Making a Difference Today*. You can make a difference by listening and studying the way the Virginia Synod carries out its ministries to the sick, the aged, prisoners, families in trouble, colleges, seminarians, and counselors. At the end of the appeal, make a difference by making a generous gift to the 2011 United Lutheran Appeal.

Lou Rossiter for Social Ministry

News from the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy



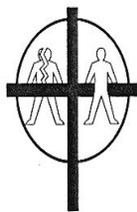
Before the Veto Session of the General Assembly in late April, Governor Bob McDonnell took action on bills of interest to people of faith.

- **Car Lending.** With the stroke of his pen the Governor expanded car title lending to out of state borrowers, effectively exporting predatory debt to every surrounding state except Tennessee -- the only border state not yet limiting car title lending.
- **Physical Education in Public Schools.** The Governor vetoed a bill that would have mandated physical education for children, an issue near and dear to the Interfaith Center for Public Policy given the last three years of anti-obesity work they have engaged in around the state. But local school districts, counties and cities objected to the unfunded mandate to the state's schools, and he listened to their needs in this tough economy.
- **Child Abuse Survivors.** He signed several bills the Interfaith Center has supported including expanding the civil statute of limitations for child abuse survivors from 2 years to 20, a bill that divided the faith community along institutional lines but remains a strong message about our belief that survivors should not be denied access to the civil courts.
- **Environment.** He signed a bill to set up a voluntary solar trust fund.

Through the support of churches such as St. Stephen and directly with many individual members, the Interfaith Center was in the thick of the debates this session. You can read their entire General Assembly Summary to see how we fared on issues like ABC Store Expansion, Immigration, At-Risk Children, and Health Care. See: <http://act.virginiainterfaithcenter.org>

You can join (www.virginiainterfaithcenter.org) as an individual member and "learn, pray and act" with one of the best faith-based organizations in Virginia.

Lou Rossiter for Social Ministry



A Journey With (and Without) Stephen Ministry

I watched her hunch over in tears due to the pain of her progressive disease. She sat up when she saw me, told me not to worry. "It hurts, but I know there are many people worse off than me." A person recently expressed how overwhelmed they'd gotten. "I'd like to talk to a Stephen Minister, but my troubles are so small compared to others, I would not want to take up someone's time just for me." Stephen Ministers are there for all who are in need, for a few weeks or a few years. Jesus said, "Come to me all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." Matt. 11:28

Cindy Gibbs for Stephen Ministry



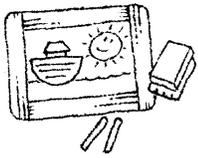
On **Sunday, May 1**, **Al Kuhn** will begin a three-week Sunday morning series for adults: "Jonah 'Laugh Out Loud'" - the story of a very reluctant and very successful prophet!

Let's get beyond the fish and the worm and hear what Jonah has to say about the mercy of God to our day.



Bible Reader's Class

Join **Pastor Ballentine** the **Wednesdays of May through June 15** at Harbour Coffee, at the corner of Casey Boulevard and Discovery Park Boulevard in New Town from 2:00 to 3:00 PM. On May 4, the group will begin with Genesis 1:1, read for a while and then stop and talk about what has been read. Sign up on the blue sheet.



Preschool News

Wow! It is already May, the last month of this school semester and the end of another class year!. The students have been wonderful and the staff was great.

Children in the Extended Day program were visited by a ranger from York River State Park and "Jake" the Parrot in March. Jake is owned and trained by a local resident, Judy Brown, and is always a class favorite!

The Preschool students in the PreK and M/W/F program will honor their Mothers with the annual Mother's Day Luncheon at Rocco's Smokehouse Grill (formerly Mirabella's) on **Wednesday, May 4**. The children will help prepare their Mother's lunches and have made beautiful table decorations and gifts for them.

We will have water play days on **Monday, May 23** for the PreK and the M/W/F programs, and on **Tuesday May 24**, for the T/TH program.

Our end of the year picnic for the T/TH program will take place on **Thursday, May 26** at Kidsburg. The graduation ceremony and picnic for the Pre K and M/W/F programs will be on **Friday, May 27** also at Kidsburg. The rain location is St. Stephen Preschool.

We are almost full for next fall with only a few spaces left. But, please keep spreading the word about our wonderful Preschool program.

Thank you for your continued support of our Preschool. We are building our scholarship fund and any donations will be greatly appreciated. Have a safe and happy summer season!

For the Preschool, Rudy Stegmann

The Church Mouse hears



Jamestown social studies teacher, **Molly Sandling**, was named high school teacher of the year for 2011. Besides teaching Advanced Placement courses, Molly has coached swim teams, sponsored the *Equalize Our Earth* club, and sponsors the Social Studies Honor Society. Molly has also taught courses in the William and Mary Gifted Education summer program. Molly was a Phi Beta Kappa magna cum laude undergraduate

student at William and Mary and has master's degrees from both Yale University and William and Mary. "Her passion for her profession, the excellence she displays in her work, and her genuine enjoyment sharing social studies with her students are evident to all," wrote her nominator" Cheers to W&M student **Meredith Howard**, who as a Fulbright scholar, will be teaching English in South Korea. Wow!. . . We're also so proud of **Erika Rinehimer**, who is a member of the Planning Group for the Synod's week-long spiritual formation event for youth, Kairos. The Planning Group, made up of youth and two adults, sets the theme and the progression for the event. Good going, Erika!. . . **Heather MacDonald**, the Chancellor Professor of Geology at William & Mary, was recognized for her excellence in teaching by being named as a finalist for Baylor University's Robert Foster Cherry Award for Great Teaching. She is one of three finalists for the honor, to be announced in spring of 2012. Each finalist will receive \$15,000 and will be invited to present a series of lectures at Baylor University in the fall. MacDonald also will present a Cherry Award Lecture on her home campus of William & Mary. In addition, the home department of all finalists will receive \$10,000 to foster the development of teaching skills. The winner of the Cherry Award will receive a prize of \$250,000 and will teach in residence at Baylor during the 2012 fall or 2013 spring semester. The home department of the winner will receive an additional \$25,000. MacDonald has been teaching geology at William & Mary since 1983. MacDonald says, "I've always been interested in teaching and getting others excited about the things that I am passionate about." How special this is, Heather!



New Addresses

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May Birthdays

1	Elizabeth Bosworth	Landry Bosworth
	Jessica Harms	Jane Mazur
2	Betty McKee	Melissa Rieg
4	Dorothy Hinders	
5	Lindsay Fisher	Jackson Sidebottom
6	Karen West	
8	Kristina Finch	
9	Eric Conradi	
10	Chris Black	
11	Jon Lund	
13	Joshua Cosby	Jennifer Henning
15	Tom Harris	Jane Holcombe
17	Ward Bourn	Gill DeMari
19	Robert Floyd	Jeanne Lubbs
20	John Olson	Barbara Weekes
21	Heather Alpino	
23	Michael Monaco	
24	Regina Root	
29	Ron Laign	
31	Cindy Bouschek	Jackie Locke

Is your name missing? Is your date wrong? Please let us know immediately!
Rev. April 19, 2011

Prayers

Pray to know God's will for healing **Jo Austin, Martha Clements, Pat Fretz, Caitlyn Lucy, Mel Melhorn, Carole Meyer, Barbara Morris, Dick Reeves, Judie Schrag, Dan Stimson, James Wiers.**



Prayers of Peace and comfort to **Carolee Bush, Birdie Burton, and their families** on the death of their sister, Geraldine; to **Phyllis Spencer and her family** on the death of her sister-in-law, Eleanore; and to **family and friends of Pat Chandler.**

Pray for those who are physically unable to get to worship: **Bill Dickerson, Elsa Englert, Bernice Fahncke, Bob Groom, Elsie Hall, Willetta Heising, Anna Lou Hobday, Jean Kircheis, Helen Lenox, Christine Pugh, Chuck and Jo Schumacher, John Warner, Dot Wright, and Earl and Lois Wysong**

Pray for these loved ones of our congregation: Laura Barnes, Frances Boitnott-Schluter, Lois Bomba, Ed Borg, Jim Burkle, Preston Burton, Jr., Ron Campana, Joanne Carlson, Jane Cattermole, Melissa Cavezza, Donna Cherel, Dave Culler, Pat Daly, Janice and Walter DeGree, Paul Derin, Bubba Drury, Lucy Eyler, Mae Failoni, Manoel Falcoa, Jim Fenstermaker, Nick Finley, Lonna Gibson, Nancy Gottschalk, Jesse Hall, Clay Henson, Gail Henson, Mary Jo Hill, Kyle Id-dings, Denise Jones, Gloria Kochenour, Marnah Lund, Brian McDonald, Ruth McReynolds, Caitlin Meehan, Rick Meyer, Roy Nester, James Ogborn, Sr., Janet Overdorf, Barbara Owens, Sampson, Atticus, and Evelyn Parsons, Bill and Joyce Pate, Janet Pendergast, Lisa Rivolta, Lisa and Acacia Rizzo, Don Romig, Don Scanlan, Gilene Seege, Gary Sloan, Gail Swann, Connie Testerman, Melissa Villarreal, Cassidy Weekes, Rus Willette, Bonnie Wolf, Peggy Wood, Jim Yankovich



Thank you letters from our members

Thank you so much for the many calls, cards, flowers, visits, and dishes received during my recuperation from hip replacement surgery. St. Stephen is certainly a wonderfully loving congregation.

Pat Fretz



Thank you letters to our members

The Williamsburg Area Alliance for the Mentally Ill (WAAMI) wrote thanking us for the use of our space for their programs and for the relationship with St. Stephen. One of their members has even offered his handyman services to St. Stephen. Hospice House thanked us for the \$600 we gave them from St. Stephen and said, "Your support is very important to us – many thanks from all of us." Lutheran World Relief thanked us for the 16 quilts and 128 health kits donated by St. Stephen in April.

*We are more than grateful for all the people who help
behind-the-scenes*



**Thank you for the teams assembling the
Quill, bulletins and other mailings**



**Yea for all those wonderful pies for the
Ballentine anniversary celebration and
the regular work of the kitchen crew!**



**Keeping our dogwood safe for re-
planting after the renovation**



And all was certainly enjoyed



**Trimming, watering, planting, sweeping and all kinds of yard work
keeping our church beautiful**



**Housing Partnership workers are always there to help
those in need**

**And much much more!
Thank you**

