



Cross & Crown

News of the Ministry and Mission of R. E. Lee Memorial Church, Lexington, Virginia

March 2006

123 W. Washington St.
Lexington, VA 24450
(540) 463-4981
e-mail:

hornerk@releechurch.org

Keeping the Faith in the Interim Time: Thoughts, Views and Opinions from an Interim Pastor

“Why can’t we just go out and hire a permanent priest?!”

I imagine this question and some of the following ones have been asked by many of you since Tom O’Dell left R. E. Lee last year.

“Why do we have to go through all of this ‘interim stuff’? Where I work when somebody leaves there is usually a new person to replace him or her within a few weeks!”

“Why will it take a year until we have our new rector?”

And some of you may already be thinking, “As far as I am concerned all we need to do is hire someone who is just like (or someone who is not like) Fr. So and So!”

I hope to answer these and other questions you may have about our transition time here at R.E. Lee Memorial during the coming months in the newsletter articles I will be writing.

First, let me give you a little background on how this “process” started in the first place.

(continued on next page)



The Infallible Sign of the Presence of God

JOY. We have all experienced happiness in the love we share with family and friends or the great pleasure of offering our gifts for the well-being of others or the delight we will have as we welcome The Rev. Barry Miller and The Rev. Nancy Miller into our parish family next month.

But what about the joy that can’t be named; that feeling that surges through us as we experience a beautiful sunset, watch a loving exchange between two strangers, or as we are reconciled with a good friend after an argument?

In a recent *Forward Day by Day* passage, the author quoted the words on a banner by Sister Corita a graphic artist from the 1960s, that reads:

JOY, the infallible sign of the presence of God.

God’s joyful surprise is that we are loved by Him. Jesus said, *I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.* We are drawn into the unending circle of love that was first shown to Him by His father. As He spent forty days in the wilderness, Jesus was supported by the promised love and presence of his heavenly father and was filled with the power of the Spirit. So, too, are we, as we encounter the many struggles in the wilderness of our earthly life. We are not alone.

Joy and delight are cited 349 times in Holy Scriptures, beginning in Genesis. God’s people throughout history have felt His loving presence. Though written by Isaiah about Israel, early Christian writers applied this passage to Jesus: *Here is my servant whom I have chosen, the one I love, in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will proclaim justice to the nations,* We can embrace it joyfully for ourselves, sure in the knowledge that we are chosen by God and empowered to bear witness to Christ and his redeeming love. Mary was selected to be the God-bearer and her joy was clear as she sang: *My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.*

This month we will commemorate the life of Jonathan Daniels. His singing of the Magnificat, Mary’s Song, grew more significant to him, when in March 1965 upon singing it, he felt compelled to join Dr. Martin Luther King and others in Selma to demonstrate support for the civil rights program. He returned to Alabama in late summer and was killed as he protected a young girl from a bullet. Ruby Sales grew up, was ordained an Episcopal priest and will be our guest preacher at the 5 p.m. Eucharist on March 26 celebrating his witness of reconciliation. His joy was made complete.

Just prior to His death, Jesus prays for himself, for his disciples and for us, all so that we may have the fullness of joy within us. Our Lenten worship services and educational offerings provide opportunities to deepen our relationship with the source of joy. That joy, the peace that passes understanding, is ours to accept this day and every day.

Melissa

Melissa Cox, Senior Warden

See the inside pages for our schedule of Lenten and Holy Week services and offerings.

(Miller column, continued from cover)

Almost 30 years ago, people in the Church (not just the Episcopal Church, but other mainline denominations, also) began to notice that many bad matches were occurring between newly called clergy and the congregations they were serving. Some of the wise people who were aware of this phenomenon began to gather statistics and information from unhappy clergy and unhappy parish leaders as to why the failure rate was so high. One of the facts they uncovered was that parishes who rushed out to find a new vicar/rector/pastor/minister were not doing the hard work of determining their own identity as a congregation before calling an ordained person to lead them. Often the new pastor found himself or herself being compared unfavorably to the previous pastor or the new pastor found the congregation to be quite different in reality from the very positive spin they had received when they were being considered for the position.

Well, as a result of all this, some clergy and lay leaders began to develop a process for helping parishes to be more successful in calling new pastors. These leaders also found that it would be a great idea to identify pastors who had a real interest in serving congregations in transition and provide them with the training and skill sets to make the "in-between time" a time for congregational self-awareness, growth (especially spiritual growth) and development.

Out of all this several organizations were born including the Interim Ministry Network, an ecumenical organization dedicated to training competent transitional pastoral leaders for the Church with a capital "C." The IMN working with professional adult educators and church leaders have trained hundreds of clergy to lead congregations as interim pastors and to help them as they work through the tasks necessary for calling a new clergy person who will stay for more than a few years as the congregation's pastor and spiritual leader.

There are five developmental tasks which a congregation in transition needs to address in order to make the calling of a new pastor successful for both the pastor and the parish. These developmental tasks are:

- ◆ *Coming to Terms with History ("Learning from the Past")*
- ◆ *Discovering a New Identity ("How are we different now as a congregation?")*
- ◆ *Leadership Changes during the Interim Time ("New tasks often require new duties and new leaders")*
- ◆ *Renewing Denominational Ties ("How can our diocese best serve us in our transition and vice-versa?")*
- ◆ *Commitment to New Directions in Ministry ("Now that we have clarity on our goals, who can we call to help us get there?")*

The first of these tasks, "Learning from the Past," will be addressed at a parish-wide meeting sometime in the coming months. We hope you all can be there to share in recalling how R. E. Lee Memorial Episcopal Church in Lexington, Virginia got to be the wonderful place it is. It is also a time to learn how we have lived as the people of God in this community. We hope you will come and share your memories and stories when we gather to officially begin our transition journey.

Your faithful servant in the Lord,

The Rev. Barry W. Miller

Brush Strokes for the Babies!



Erika and Merce Brooke are our new Nursery Coordinators. We are grateful to them for their commitment and energy. They will be scheduling the Nursery Core Team volunteers who assist during the 10:30 Holy Eucharist.

They are also interested in painting the nursery, with some help from some of you! If you can lend a strong arm and a flair with a brush, please e-mail Erika at epbrooke@yahoo.com. Paint will be provided and we'll get a date scheduled.

The painting will be a part of our nursery face lift. Be in touch with Erika if you can donate toys or books.

Thank you for your support of our children's ministry.

The St. Francis Choir

will resume its normal
Wednesday rehearsal
schedule in April!
Rest your voices
and we'll see you then!



Kids Night Out

*For more information
on this month's KNO
and to sign up see
Susan Lawrence*

lawrences@rockbridge.net

Memorial Gifts

In January and February, 15 friends of this parish offered gifts to the glory of God and in loving memory of G. Francis Drake, Donald McCoy (Melissa Cox's father), and to honor Alta Fowler on her birthday.

These gifts are a wonderful way to remember departed friends and family and to honor friends and family who continue to bless our lives.

A Sunday Parking Reminder!

Our handicapped parking spaces at the church are limited, so we ask that parishioners who are able to walk the distance leave the spaces around the Parish House for those who need to be closer in.

100% Chance of Rain

A Musical for Children Sunday, March 19 at 10:30

The children's choirs of our church, Lexington Presbyterian, and Trinity Methodist will present this jazzy cantata for young voices based on Noah's Ark as a "musical sermon" here on March 19 at 10:30. A family potluck dinner will follow in the Parish Hall with viewing of the performance on video!

In the season of Lent, the 40 days on the ark become a metaphor for our Lenten journey, ending with the sign of the rainbow and the promise of God's love. Join in for this lively and inspiring presentation of this classic Old Testament story.

(See the C&C Calendar for March rehearsal times.)

The Handbell Choir has reached a new all-time high in members! There are now 10 of us who practice every Wednesday. The handbell choir played an arrangement of "Kum Ba Yah" at the 5 p.m. service on Feb. 26 and will play at a 10:30 service soon. If you would like to try your hand at playing, join us on Wednesdays from 6:30 to 7:30.



Instruments for Evening Prayer
During Lent, we have Evening Prayer on Wednesdays at 5:30. It's especially nice to have vocal or instrumental music for these services. Please contact Daniel if you're interested in participating!

Bits 'n Pieces

Holmes Irving Remembered

Word has been received here that Trinity Church, Mobile, AL has named its parish hall for its former rector, The Rev. D. Holmes Irving, who also served our parish from 1964 to 1983. In a letter to Irving's widow, Pat, the Trinity rector wrote, "Everyone here remembers Holmes as a man of the people, and it seems appropriate that the hall where people gather be named for him." He continued, "As you remember this parish house was built during his rectorship, and Trinity knew some of its strongest years ever during this time."

Books Needed for Mission Trip

Sharon Humphreys will be going to St. Vincent of the Grenadines July 16-23 as part of a mission trip organized by Susan and Scott Dittman. Sharon will be setting up a library for Kingstown Evangelical Church. If you have books appropriate for a church library, place them in the box in the Narthex. Donations to cover cost of library supplies and shipping would also be appreciated. Books and supplies must be shipped by April 1. Make checks payable to Caribbean Encounters, Inc. and mail to Sharon at 24 Edgewood Dr., Lexington. Call her for more information at 464-4218. You may also visit the website, <http://home.wlu.edu/~sdittman/>.

For the RARA Pantry

RARA Food of the Month is pork and beans and canned beans. Leave the groceries on the main floor of the Parish House under the hall table. This is a particularly difficult time of year for many of our county's residents and the ministry of the food pantry is vital in meeting human need.

Youth News from Nick

Sr. High Ski Trip: Overnight to Snowshoe Mountain, W. VA, March 3-5. Participants need only bring money for lift tickets and rentals. Food, lodging, and transportation are provided. You must RSVP with Nick in order to go. Spots are limited and preference goes to those senior high students who have been most active this year in EYC. Hope you can make it. See you on the slopes!

UVA vs. Johns Hopkins Men's Lacrosse Clash of the Titans: Join the R. E. Lee Youth for a road trip to Charlottesville to see two of the nation's top Lacrosse teams play on March 25. Only 25 tickets are available. RSVP NOW with Nick. Help with transportation will be appreciated. We leave the church at 10:30 a.m., return around 4 p.m. You won't want to miss the game!

EYC: Youth group will continue to meet weekly through March. Junior high students meet Sunday nights in the Parish Hall at 6:30 for dinner and fun to follow. Senior High students meet on Tuesday nights at 6:30 for dinner and fellowship. Tutoring is available in math and science on Tuesday afternoons.

Welcome the Millers on Sunday, April 2

The Welcoming Committee and Parish Life Guild are planning a reception after the 10:30 service on April 2 to welcome our interim rector, The Rev. Barry W. Miller, and his wife, The Rev. Nancy Miller.

Spiral ham, sliced turkey, sliced cheese, condiments and drinks will be provided by the committee. Each family attending is asked to bring finger food such as vegetable trays with dip, fruit trays with dip, crackers, chips, cheeses, rolls, fancy breads, and sweet treats.

Please arrange items in your best china and silver so that we can make a beautiful presentation. Also remember that this is a stand-up social time, but it is also the lunch hour. (There will be a few tables and chairs for our seniors.)

We invite you all to join us for this gala affair welcoming The Millers.

Cross and Crown is the monthly newsletter of R. E. Lee Memorial Episcopal Church in Lexington, VA. The editor is Kay Horner. C&C is prepared for mailing with great efficiency by Episcopalians at Kendal at Lexington. The deadline for C&C is the 15th of the month. Articles and items of interest may be e-mailed to hornerk@releechurch.org or dropped in the C&C box in the resource room in the Parish House. Include contact information on all submissions.

Bishop of the Diocese

The Rt. Rev. F. Neff Powell

Director, Christian Education

The Rev. Rhonda E. Wheeler

Director of Music: Daniel Brinson

Youth Minister/College Chaplain: Nick Gorham

Parish Administrator: Kay Horner

Treasurer: Buddy Atkins

Financial Secretary: Anita Ramp

Volunteer Coordinator: Lynne Lorrier

Sexton: Connie Bryant

Clergy Associates: The Rev. John A. Furgerson;

The Rev. Dr. Thomas V. Litzenburg; The Rev. Dr.

Jackson P. Hershbell; The Rev. Dr. Robert

Crewdson

Vestry 2006

Buddy Atkins

John Bureson

Melissa Cox

Roger Crockett

Libby Cumming

Paula Cushman

Bob de Maria

Bob Glidden

Gerry Locher

Cindy Mullen

Jerry Nay

David Partlett

Brian Shaw

Gretchen Walden

Jonathan Webster

Celebrating the life of Jonathan Myrick Daniels Seminarian & Witness for Civil Rights

On March 26 at 5 p.m., the Canterbury Club of our church will be privileged to host a celebration of the life of Episcopal martyr Jonathan Myrick Daniels. A former Canterbury student at R. E. Lee, VMI valedictorian for the class of 1961, and Episcopal seminarian, Daniels was given a feast day by the Episcopal Church in recognition of his work for civil rights and human justice as well as for his ultimate sacrifice to save the life of then 16-year-old Ruby Sales in Alabama.

In August 1965, upon being released from jail for attempting to register black voters in Fort Deposit, Daniels jumped in front of a shotgun blast, saving Ruby. "One of the most heroic Christian deeds of which I have heard in my entire ministry was performed by Jonathan Daniels," The Rev. Martin Luther King said at the time. "Certainly there are no incidents more beautiful in the annals of church history, and though we are grieved at this time, our grief should give way to a sense of Christian honor and nobility."

Our celebration of Jonathan's life will feature a sermon by The Rev. Ruby Sales, who is now an Episcopal minister and director of the Spirit House in Washington, D.C. The Rt. Rev. Neff Powell, bishop of the Diocese of Southwestern Virginia, will celebrate and music will be performed by the Washington and Lee Joyful Noise Gospel Choir. Please come and join us for this joyous occasion as well as the parish potluck dinner to follow.

Note: VMI will be presenting the Jonathan Daniels award on March 23 to former U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young. Please contact VMI for more details.

March Cross and Crown

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Lexington, VA
Permit No. 46

R. E. Lee Memorial Church
123 W. Washington St.
Lexington, VA 24450