



The Wider Circle

"Shape a circle ever wider and a people ever free"

Volume 15 Number 2

February 2017

Letter from the Rector

February Dates:

- 5; Annual meeting, ONE 9AM SERVICE
- 12, 19; Sunday School
- 12, 19, 26; Adult Education
- 25, Mardi Gras

Upcoming Dates:

- March 2; Lenten Prayer Program begins

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are

for the healing of the nations.

- Revelation 22:1-2

Dear Friends,

Recently Terry Doyle and I did a joint sermon with the theme of healing, taking our inspiration from the gospel of Matthew chapter 4, which talks about Jesus' healing as an es-

sential part of his ministry, along with teaching and proclaiming the good news.

Two points that Terry made are worth repeating here, the first one being that as Jesus proclaims and envisions the kingdom of God, that kingdom is a place of healing. A question *(continued on page 2)*

February 25th: Mardi Gras Party Coming Soon!

February 25th is practically around the corner and St. George's needs you to participate in our annual Mardi Gras Party!

There are several things you can do to help with this event. The most important thing to do is to attend the party and silent auction from 6 pm – 10 pm on Saturday night,

February 25th.

The next most important thing is to invite others to come – this is a great event to ask friends, family, or neighbors to attend.

Also, and something you can do in conjunction with attending the event, consider donating items for the auction or asking others to

donate.

Finally, you can volunteer to help with decorating and set up, with clean up, or with the auction itself. Helping out is a great way to get involved and have a good time while you're at it!

The Silent Auction

Please consider *(continued on page 4)*

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Letter from the Rector (cont.)

(continued from page 1)
worth reflecting on is how we in our own lives and in the life of St. George's manifest that healing that Jesus both promises and brings about.

Are my actions in any given moment bringing healing to others, or not?

What could I be doing differently that might make my presence more of a healing one? are things we might ask ourselves.

The second point Terry made in that sermon was in sharing that the root word that Matthew uses for 'healing' in the gospel, *therapeuo*, also means to

serve. This certainly makes sense when we think of Jesus, the one who came 'not to be served but to serve' – but is also part of our calling as followers of Jesus.

If to heal is to serve, and to serve is to heal, than another question we can be asking of ourselves is how we are serving – and healing – others in this particular time for our community and our nation.

The final chapter of the Revelation to John shares with us a vision of what John calls 'the river of the water of life' flowing

through the city, watering the tree of life. The leaves of this tree are for the healing of the nations, John tells us.

Jesus brings this healing, and we ourselves can participate in it through our words and actions. I encourage all of us to examine what we say and do by the light of whether we are bringing healing and wholeness to those whom we encounter. It is the challenge of our time, and our calling as people of faith and followers of Jesus.

Blessings,
Connie+

Sunday School Schedule in February

Sunday School dates in February are **February 12 at 19.**

Class begins at 9:00 am in

the downstairs classroom area of the church.

Hope to see you there!



Adult Education

Starting February 12, Jeffrey Williams will lead

adult education in three sessions on the Trini-

ty. We meet in Miller Hall at 9:00.

March 1: Ash Wednesday

This year's Ash Wednesday services are on March 1 at 7 am and 12 noon in the Chapel, and 7:30 pm

in the main church.

All services include Holy Eucharist and imposition of ashes.



Rekindling the Flame

Please join me for a six week Lenten program focused around personal intention, prayer and opening to God. We will meet on Thursdays at 7pm in the church sanctuary starting March 2nd (the day after Ash Wednesday).

My intention is for our group to support one another as we move through prayer, silence, reflection and sharing from the heart.

The theme for this Lenten program is: “rekindling the flame.” Amid this year’s difficult current events, I have found myself focused on light as a symbol of hope and spiritual sustenance.

While in the news and in my Facebook feed expressions of anxiety and anger have in some cases exceeded my ability to absorb them, I am also noticing something remarkable. This remarkable thing is a growing flame of loving kindness and faith.

People are coming together to be trained in non-violent intervention when witnessing racism and harassment. Communities are publicly welcoming and committing to support immigrants, members of the LGBT

community and other groups that feel threatened in the current climate of our country. People are joyfully knitting hats for marches and making food to support people travelling to attend marches.

We have seen this at St. George’s. People are, in essence, participating and coming together. The altogether useful, mobilizing energy of anger is being channeled into peaceful actions. People are lighting one another’s flames in unexpected, unanticipated ways. This is subversive to darkness, because where our lights live, darkness does not. In this I find potential, hope, strength and a renewed faith.

What is more peaceful and serene than the eye of a flame? Have you ever noticed it, the flame’s center all white and blue and still? That is where I find God. That is where prayer comes alive in my life. It is the inner stillness beyond all the hubbub and layers of sounds and distraction, anger and “should” and plans and stuff that distract me. It is the “hello.” It is God speaking.

During this Lenten program, I hope to create a

safe and supportive space for us to rekindle our flames, whatever that means for each of us, through contemplative prayer.

There is no right way to pray. I will introduce a variety of prayer forms to help us become quiet. My hope is that in this stillness we may each come to more clarity and rest in God while also holding one another with love and kindness. We all experience God differently; I very much look forward to learning what rekindles your flame.

What Rumi said about fire speaks deeply to me. Rumi said that “a candle loses none of its light by lighting another.” A flame is strong, loving, firm and true. It doesn’t yield to darkness. It doesn’t hesitate to share of itself. It can seem dangerous to those that don’t care for it and tend it. In that flame I see God and I see potential. I am eager to hear and know what you see in God’s light and in the quiet of prayer, reflection and supportive sharing.

Join us for a six week Lenten prayer program focused on personal intention, prayer, and opening to God, starting March 2nd.





Mardi Gras is February 25! Tickets are \$28 in advance or \$35 at the door. Invite your friends and family, donate to the silent auction, volunteer, dress up—but most important of all, join us!



Mardi Gras (cont.)

(continued from pg. 1) making something (such as a craft item), donating a service or making something to order (such as lessons like knitting or music; baked goods, a portrait sitting, a tour of an interesting place you are knowledgeable about) or creating a gift basket of food and/or gift items.

If you work someplace or volunteer with an organization that would be willing to donate an item for the auction, please ask them on behalf of St. George's and thank them for their generosity!

Popular items in years past have been tickets to sporting events and arts performances, films or the theatre. Gift certificates to restaurants are always a top draw as are weekend getaways at nearby hotels or resort properties.

Think of asking your hairstylist or massage therapist if they would be willing to donate a coupon for a haircut or massage. The only way

to find out if they will donate is to ask them...don't be shy!

All items you or others donate are tax deductible to the value of the item. Any auction items can be dropped off at the church on Friday evening before the party, or the Saturday of the event between 12 noon and 4 pm.

Dinner and Theme

Besides the exciting things to bid on at the silent auction, there will be a wonderful dinner! There will be music! There will be costumes! (You need to wear one to make this part happen).

The theme for Mardi Gras 2017 is **Fat Tuesday Fun!** Dress in your favorite Mardi Gras costume, which could be in the traditional colors of Gold, Green and Purple. Anything French would fit in as well since Mardi Gras is influenced by the settlers from France in New Orleans and surrounding areas.

Ideas could be an enormous Pancake, be covered in beads, big feathered masks and headdresses, or French Kings and Queens! Use your imagination and come in a wonderful costume! There will be a prize for the best one, so be creative and bold.

If you don't want to dress in costume, then fancy dress is encouraged!

There will be babysitting available for children, so there is no reason not to come!

Tickets

Advance tickets are \$28.00 and are on sale starting Sunday, February 5, 2017 right after our annual meeting! They can also be purchased at the door for \$35.00. Children 10 years and under are free.

We look forward to seeing you all at this year's biggest fundraising event and a really wonderful party!

Letter from the Vestry

This month's Vestry contribution comes from Jay Tobias, in the form of a letter to his son Benjamin as he turns three this month.

Dear Bug,

I never in my wildest dreams imagined three years going so fast. Each day I see your face and feel renewed to the joy and innocence that the world can possess. The world is a scary place, but we will always be here to guide and assist with all the new adventures your will encounter every day.

Being an African-American male has always been a double-edged sword. I have been able to accomplish things in my life and career your Great-Grandparents shed many tears to see.

Being the first person to graduate from college in our immediate family is still an achievement that your granddaddy says "makes me pop a button". I know the work of others

have allowed me to become the man that I am today, but I would be remiss to believe my work, or our work is complete.

Bug always remember hard work is never done, there is always a chance to improve. I say that because I have seen us a country move in ways that jumble the feelings in my heart to painstaking tremors.

We are now in a world where difference is being targeted on such scales never before seen. This not the world anybody would want a child to experience because in your eyes is pure love.

I have seen police take the lives of unarmed young black men in situations that did not warrant the use of violence. In the new times with the internet and advanced technology some people are more educated to the fears your grandmother experienced every day we went to play basketball.

their guns. Or your Uncle breaking up a fight and being kicked in his surgery repaired knee because the officer thought he was being disrespectful for not following directions.

Even after some of these experiences I have never lost faith in our people or this country. We are always better than the belief that America is in "carnage". We have the greatest country in the world but we have not always had great behavior, but know only in America can an overweight black man, marry a mixed Indian-White woman and adopt a beautiful baby and then attend a church where we teach Sunday school to two other adoptive kids of same-sex marriages with other children of different backgrounds.

This is what makes St. Georges special and this is what makes our Country great: inclusion.

Remember hard work is never done, always smile, and be respectful. Happy Birthday!

Love,
Daddy

A letter to Vestry member, Jay Tobias, son on his third birthday—on the reality, and promise, of this moment in our country's history..



I remember vividly one day, the officers lining us up while we were waiting to go play and pulling

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Mission Statement:

The mission of St. George's is to build a Christian community of love and support that actively seeks and includes all people.

We commit ourselves to spiritual growth through worship and education that empowers us to follow Christ's example in the world.

St. George's Annual Meeting: Sunday February 5th after 9:00 Service

The St. George's Annual Meeting will be Sunday, February 5th immediately following our **one 9:00am service** that day.

At the annual meeting we report and reflect on the past year in the life of the parish, thank outgoing vestry members, and elect new members to serve on the vestry in 2017. There are four vestry slots open and the bios are available for you to read about the candidates who are running.

Please plan to come to the 9:00 service on the 5th and to stay for the meeting afterwards.



