

# The Chimes

February 2009

## Mission Statement

Historic St. Mary's Parish, a welcoming community of faith and stewardship, serves Christ by nurturing spiritual growth through worship, Christian education, fellowship, and service to the community.



Church Point — One of our memorable locations. As you can see we still need to worry about erosion of our shore.

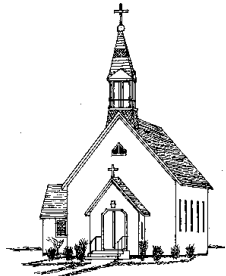
**St. Mary's Parish in the Diocese of Washington**

**Trinity Church and St. Mary's Chapel**

**St. Mary's City and Ridge, Maryland**

The Chimes  
St. Mary's Parish  
PO Box 207  
St. Mary's City, MD 20686

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MD 20686



St. Mary's Chapel

# The Chimes

St. Mary's Parish  
St. Mary's City, Maryland  
Diocese of Washington  
The Rev. John A. Ball, Rector



Trinity Church

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## Crosswinds

February 2009



Beloved,

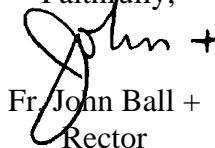
On Ash Wednesday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, we will begin our 2009 Lenten journey, which concludes the on April 5<sup>th</sup>, with Holy Week and Easter on April 12<sup>th</sup>. As the season unfolds, I urge you to enrich your Spirit by intentionally engaging in some new spiritual disciplines. I hope you find the following suggestions helpful:

- ÿ Set aside a period each day for study, reflection and prayer.
- ÿ Take time to read Scripture, The Daily Office and Lectionary, or other spiritual works.
- ÿ Pick up a copy of *Forward Day by Day* and read the daily scripture passages and meditations (available at Trinity, Chapel and Parish Hall).
- ÿ Join us at the Parish Hall on Wednesday evenings for our Lenten potluck supper programs (see the schedule included elsewhere in this issue of Chimes).
- ÿ Make it a point to come to church EVERY week.
- ÿ Involve yourself and those you love in a new ministry.
- ÿ Be generous in your giving to the Church and to others in need.

Doing these things will draw you closer to Christ, draw you deeper into the life of the Church, and strengthen your faith in God.

Keep a Holy Lent!

Faithfully,

  
Fr. John Ball +  
Rector

## Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner

Come and celebrate the night away before settling down to a solemn Lent. Our Shrove Tuesday Pancake Buffet will be held on Tuesday, February 15<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 PM – 7 PM. The menu will include pancakes, scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage, fruit, coffee, tea, orange juice and milk. The cost is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children (five and under are free).



Shrove Tuesday is the day before Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent. The purpose of the traditional pancake supper is to empty the pantry of those luxurious “fat” things (which is why it is also called FAT TUESDAY). The idea of purging all the goodies from our homes is to prevent us from being tempted to indulge ourselves during the 40 days of Lent.

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## Trinity Coffee Hour Hosts

Host/Hostesses are in short supply! Team up with someone and lighten the load! The sign up sheet is located in the parish hall to the left of the kitchen door. Remember, when two or three Episcopalians are gathered, a pot of coffee is among them!

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## St. Mary's Parish Annual Yard Sale Saturday, March 14<sup>th</sup>

Get a jump-start on spring-cleaning by donating your basement bargains and attic treasures to the indoor yard sale. Household items, jewelry, tools, furniture, etc. are welcome.

We cannot accept clothing, mattresses or computers. Contact **Lorraine Stamm** for more information.



## Completing a Vestry Term...A Note from Jenny Rust

As my 3 years on the vestry come to an end, I would like to share with you a few thoughts concerning that experience. It was an honor to be selected to serve on the vestry and to be part of such a caring group of people who truly wanted what they felt was best for our parish. Being on the vestry was definitely a learning experience for me. I learned how important it is to make a financial pledge so that a budget can be established in which programs and providers can be funded, buildings and grounds can be maintained, and salaries and bills can be paid. I learned the importance of good communication between the vestry and the members of the church so that all are informed concerning issues that affect the whole congregation. I also learned that the wardens and financial officers of our parish do an incredible amount of work behind the scenes (on their own time and before attending the meetings). I have great respect for all those who have served and are serving on the vestry; each is a talented individual who brings his or her own gifts to the table. As in all families, our church family is comprised of members with varying opinions, and compromising is sometimes a difficult task when we feel we know best. Yet I think each member has always tried to do what was best for the parish. Thank you for allowing me to learn and grow in this position of responsibility.



## Christian Education

By Christopher Wilkins



### Sunday School

Sunday School continues each Sunday morning from 9:30 - 10:20 in the Parish Hall, followed by Children's Chapel.

This the fall, the children wrote and performed a play based on the book of Esther, learned to play the tone chimes we heard at Christmas, and performed a lovely play on 1<sup>st</sup> Epiphany in which several noisy, happy animals welcomed the baby Jesus into their world. In the new year the students will follow the Episcopal Children's Curriculum and learn about our liturgies and worship spaces. In the last quarter of the year students will study women in the Bible.

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### The Circle (Christian Formation for Adults)

Our Thursday evening Christian formation program, *The Circle*, continues--and new members are always welcome! We meet from 6:00 - 8:00 PM on Tuesdays for light dinner, conversation and Bible Study in the Parish Hall.

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### Parents' Night Out

Parents' Night Out, a fun time of recreation and godly play, is open to young parishioners, friends, and any other interested children (K-8). It will be offered on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of each month. Dates for winter/spring 2009: February 13, March 13, April 10, and May 8. Time: 6:00 - 8:45 PM. Dinner and snack provided. A \$5.00 donation per child to offset costs is appreciated, but not necessary. Responsible adults and teenagers are welcome to volunteer, and encouraged to do so.

### ***Christopsomo and Beyond: A Bread-Based Lenten Parish Retreat***

Our *Lenten Parish Retreat* will be offered on Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, with events throughout the day. Morning Prayer will be sung at 10:00 AM in Trinity Church. Contemplative meditations will be offered at 2:00 PM. There will be a light lunch in the Parish Hall at noon. There will be options for the afternoon. They will include quiet time for reflection and self-guided walks around Church Point focusing on how we keep a holy Lent for God, in God, and with God. There will also be afternoon teaching sessions in the kitchen on how to make various cultures' festive Easter breads. Anyone wishing to share an Easter bread-making or related tradition is more than welcome to do so. Please sign up in the Parish Hall, Parish Office, or with **Christopher Wilkins** ([ciwilkins@juno.com](mailto:ciwilkins@juno.com))

Weather-permitting, we will hold an evening bonfire with pizzas, s'mores and a marshmallow roast at Church Point at sundown that night (3/21). Please come--and bring flashlights, candles, or other ways of lighting your path.

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### **Covenants--a Reflection**

God makes promises and keeps them. We make promises and also keep them--sometimes. One word for God's promises is the ancient Hebrew term we know as *covenant*. The first covenant God made in the Bible was with Noah. God promised never to destroy the world in a flood again, but, as the spiritual "Eyes on the Prize" puts it, to "use fire next time." God's next covenants were to make both Ishmael and Isaac, Abraham's sons, into great nations. After one of these (Israel, born of Isaac) went into slavery in Egypt, God led them out of bondage and made the most dramatic covenant yet: rules by which all of God's chosen people, as a holy nation, can live justly and faithfully in a troubled and brutal world.

These are what we now as the Ten Commandments, the 631 or so other precepts of the Mosaic law. The people of Israel promised, as they stood at the foot of a mountain wreathed the mountain in the smoke, shadow and flame of God, to do all that God commanded. In all these covenants God promised to uphold God's people in their journeys and throughout their lives--so long as they kept their word.

They did not. The ancient kingdom of Israel was destroyed because its people were not faithful and mistreated their neighbors, their servants, and their poor and needy. They were also made victims of the empires surrounding them, living as they did on some of the most contested real estate on earth. Most of the people of Israel were either scattered to the four winds or led into captivity in Babylon. A small, bitter remnant was allowed to stay in the Jewish homeland to remember and lament all that they had done wrong and all that they had lost.

In response to all this, God made a new covenant. It was written, along with God's most precious commandments on the people's heart so that it would never stop being a part of them. These two commandments, which Jesus explained sum up the law and the prophets both, are to love God with all your heart, soul and mind and to love your neighbor as yourself. Inscribed on our hearts, they are nothing so much as a deep desire to live according to them, and a sense that we will never be at peace or flourish as human beings until we do. In making this kind of covenant, God did not only make a promise. God made a relationship. It lives in each of us whether we recognize it or not. In placing a law of love into our hearts, and sealing it there with the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God gave us a hunger for love, justice, and Christ that is never at rest until we rest in God. Let us keep a blessed Epiphany and a holy Lent with this on our minds, and in our hearts, with God.

**All-Parish Eucharist  
Annual Parish Meeting  
and Lunch  
Sunday, March 8, 2009**



All-Parish Eucharist at 9:30 AM at Trinity Church

Annual Meeting at 10:45 AM at Parish Hall

Covered Dish Luncheon at 12:30 PM

Our All-Parish Eucharist (a joint service) will be held at Trinity Church at 9:30 AM. Immediately after the service, we will move to the parish hall for our annual parish meeting. During that time we will recognize and celebrate the ministries of our retiring vestry members and elect some new ones. We will also reflect on the past year and discuss future plans for our congregation. A simple lunch of sandwiches will be provided for a small donation. Please call the church office 301-862-4597, and let us know if you will be there and want to order lunch.

## Lenten Programs and Services 2009

Tuesday, February 24  
5:30 PM– 7:00 PM  
Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper  
in the Parish Hall

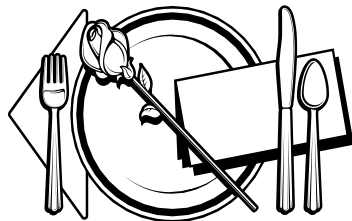


Wednesday, February 25  
Ash Wednesday



Service of Holy Eucharist & Imposition of Ashes  
7:00 AM ~ Trinity Church, St. Mary's City  
7:00 PM ~ St. Mary's Chapel, Ridge

Wednesdays, March 4, 11, 18, 25 and April 1 ~  
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM ~  
Covered Dish Supper and Program  
"Live Faithfully, Interpret Carefully:  
Jewish and Christian Approaches to  
Scripture, Tradition and Community." Lead  
By Dr. Celia Rabinowitz and Dr. Christopher Wilkins  
Location: Parish Hall



Sunday, March 8<sup>th</sup>

# CONGREGATIONAL MEETING



9:30 AM – All Parish Eucharist at Trinity  
10:45 AM – Annual Meeting in the Parish Hall  
12:30 PM –Lunch in the Parish Hall

Saturday, March 21<sup>st</sup>

Parish Retreat and Kitchen Fun  
Pasta and Sauce-Making, Bread-Baking



Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup>

Maryland Day Activities



Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup> ~ Palm Sunday

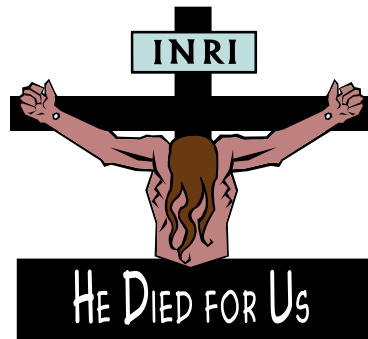
8:00 AM Holy Eucharist at St. Mary's Chapel  
8:30 AM Sunday School in the Parish Hall  
10:30 AM Holy Eucharist at Trinity Church



Thursday, April 9<sup>th</sup>  
Maundy Services  
Time and location  
to be announced



Friday, April 10<sup>th</sup>  
Good Friday Services  
7:00 PM Good Friday Service  
at Trinity Church



Sunday, April 12<sup>th</sup>  
Easter Sunday  
5:30 AM ~ Great Vigil of Easter  
and Holy Eucharist  
at St. Mary's Chapel, Ridge  
7:30 AM ~ Easter Brunch at  
Courtney's Restaurant  
(Reservations required)  
10:30 AM ~ Holy Eucharist at Trinity Church\*  
\*Easter Egg Hunt Following Service



## From the Senior Warden



I want to thank you for taking the time to read this issue of *The Chimes*. This is the time of the year when we start looking for parishioners who might be interested in using their gifts as a member of the Vestry. In 2009, we will be looking for four individuals who possess the gift of leadership and feel called to serve as a member of the Vestry. While the bylaws of the constitution of the Vestry of Trinity allow for nominations from the floor of the annual meeting, we are asking that individuals who are interested in serving on the Vestry identify themselves early, so the nominating committee can ensure that those who want to serve are informed of the responsibilities and expectations of being a Vestry member.

So what are the requirements, responsibilities and expectations of being a Vestry member? Our bylaws state that a candidate for membership on the Vestry shall be:

- 1) 15 years of age or older (Note: A vestry member who is under the age of 21 cannot vote on any motions that legally bind the Church.
- 2) A member of the Episcopal Church ("the Church"), as defined in the Canons of The General Convention.
- 3) A regular financial contributor of record to the support of the Parish (as used herein the term "regular financial contributor of record" shall mean one who has made regular, periodic monetary contributions to the Parish as shown by the records of the Treasurer or one of the Assistant Treasurers of the Parish), and,
- 4) A stated worshipper in St. Mary's Parish. As used herein, the term "stated worshipper" shall mean one who regularly attends church services and who is recorded in the Parish Register.

5) *In compliance with the above requirements for at least six months prior to nomination as a candidate*

Those are the requirements for membership on the Vestry, but what are the expectations? What does it mean to be a leader in the Church in general?

While many of us may know what it is to be a leader in business, the community or in government, most would not necessarily make a distinction between those types of leadership positions and one of a Christian leader. Many of us have been leaders in our workplaces, and some of us have also time as a Christian leader, including me. Over the years, I've realized that there is a distinction between Christian leaders and other types of leaders. The biggest difference, I've noticed, is in our relationship with those we are leading, and in our relationship with God, from whom we receive our guidance. As a Christian leader, we are asked to lead not necessarily where we might want to go as an individual, but where we are being asked to go by God. In many cases, the two are not the same place! As a Christian leader, it is important that we learn to make the distinction between the two so that we are able to lead one another to where God is calling us, while treating one another in a Christ-like manner.

In the spring, the Vestry discussed and approved its own document called the "Vestry Covenant", which deals with expectations. In that document (available on line at [www.olg.com/trinitysmcmd](http://www.olg.com/trinitysmcmd) under the Vestry Information Tab), we outlined the expectations we have for one another in our spiritual lives and our behavior. Why are these expectations important? In his book *Creating Congregations of Generous People*, Michael Durall notes that studies have shown that when we expect more from others, they give more of themselves, their time and their money. You have probably seen this phenomenon in your own life. When we expect more from people, in almost all cases, they meet, or at least try to

meet, those expectations. That's one of the reasons why it's important to set clear expectations. Another reason we set expectations upfront is so we will know what is expected of us in dealing with one another, especially in times of conflict. Having a scriptural basis for dealing one another will go far in helping to maintain a healthy relationship with one another and ensure a healthy productive Vestry.

It's important we don't confuse expectations with rules. The expectations discussed in the Vestry Covenant are behaviors and goals we agree to continually strive for. It is not a list of rules to be enforced. No one is going to police anybody's bible reading habits. No one will be removed from the membership roles because they missed a few Sunday worship services. We know that no one is perfect, but we should all be constantly striving to challenge ourselves in our spiritual lives. For example, when we talk about sacrificial giving or tithing, we are talking about something we should be intentional to work toward, something that is a journey. In both cases, though, you start with expectations. If you expect poor conflict resolution or a minimal level of giving in your church, then that's exactly what you will get.

I hope everyone who calls St Mary's Parish their spiritual home and place of worship will set high expectations for themselves in the coming year in all aspects of their spiritual life. Make 2009 the year you finally unwrap those spiritual gifts that have sat around unused. Consider becoming a Vestry member, or serving on some other ministry team, and help make God's vision for his Church that much closer to becoming a reality.

In Christ,  
Paul Koch  
Senior Warden

## Here's YOUR Chance to Become Part of Maryland History

Recently, we had the windows in Trinity's sacristy evaluated by experts in stained glass, and the verdict is in. All three windows in the sacristy of Trinity Church need to be replaced. The glass in the existing windows is not of significant historical value, much of the baked on stenciling is faded and some glass is broken. It would be far too expensive to repair and restore the windows that are not very attractive or historically valuable. So here is a chance to become part of the history of this sacred space by purchasing a new stained glass window and dedicating it to the honor and glory of God in memory of someone you love. The designs will be fabricated by Meredith Glass Specialties, the same stained glass company that made the windows for St. Mary's Chapel. Each window will cost \$5,000. For more information, talk with **Fr. John**.

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## Education for Ministry (EFM)

EFM will re-convene in early 2009 for those continuing with the program. If at least five new people wish to start the three-year EFM program, we can offer a new session at Trinity / St. Mary's. Those whose schedules make the weekly sessions difficult to attend may wish to join an online EFM group. Please contact **Julia Bates** or **Christopher Wilkins** for more information.

## Our Church Journey

by Julia Bates



I am so happy to be back in our lovely Parish after a five months research leave from St. Mary's College. Robin and I have had a fascinating journey over the past five months. We attended church in Maine, Iowa, Wisconsin, Tennessee, and Chicago. We sat in buildings much the size of the chapel in Ridge and in an immense church built for the state capital of Wisconsin that was even bigger than the church for the seminary in Sewanee. What did we learn? I am gaining some perspective on the church life I value and my own spiritual nature now that I'm back and have come full circle.

We had the chance to attend Episcopal, Presbyterian, Unitarian, and Congregational services. All of them were meaningful. What I noticed about my own response was how much I valued the ritual of the Eucharist. I think David Deaderick mentioned this some years back at one of those church vision building workshops we've done. Having said that, I realized that I like a bit of variation in my Eucharist rituals. The small church we visited in Lewiston, Maine, had the most imagination, even in a small summer service. The service at the Unitarian Universalist church included a 'returning waters' ritual which was very nice. People brought small vials of water from places they had visited that summer. The samples came from all over the world. They were poured into a big stone urn. I think the water will be used on the plants in the new gardens around the building.

Some threads ran through all the services. Every church, even the small Methodist church in Iowa, was immersed in the issues and troubles of its

community. The Maine pastor talked of receiving a call from someone who wanted to dicker about the issue of gays in the Episcopal church. She told the caller that she had parishioners who might have to do without heat that winter. In Maine that's a very serious issue. One project in that church was to organize a canning brigade to can food from people's gardens that could then be shared through out the parish. Heat and hunger were much more important to that church than the issue of ordaining gay priests or gay marriage.

My brother's tiny church in Iowa, attendance about 40, was providing support to a community organization for young families or to grandparents who suddenly had to deal with an infant abandoned by an addicted young mother. These problems were not what I expected to find in my home town!

I grew up in a Moravian church that was started by my great, great, grandfather. In Madison I went to a Moravian church twice, just to see what my cultural heritage was up to. I felt at home with the hymns I remembered from childhood. The church was a well built stone structure created in the 1950s when more than 300 children attended the Sunday school. Now only two families with children attend. The neighborhood has changed to include minorities, immigrants, and single parents. The elderly members of the church haven't found a way to reach out to their potential new members. Church attendance was an issue at all but the Universalist church.

Mostly we attended a large church right on the main square in Madison, built in about 1840. That church is in a painful transition. Their previous priest left under a cloud of suspicion. That rupture was painful for everyone and split the congregation. The church brought in counselors to work with individual members on their grief over the misadventures and

their issues about returning to the congregation. The vestry, headed by a wise 82 year old woman, was redrawing the church mission to include relationship as a key term. Their interim priest was a young man who had served as interim at several churches in Madison. He was gently guiding the vestry toward a job description that would bring them the priest that they needed. The starting salary was just over \$40,000.

In spite of their discord, that church had started a new Spanish service on Sunday evenings and had continued to support an extensive homeless shelter, soup kitchen, and food pantry that was well known all over Madison. As we continued to attend, the congregation increased in size and diversity. Dedication to those in need will draw people together to serve.

My first Sunday back at St. Mary's , I must say I was struck by just how small our church is. I mean in physical size and number of members. But I also realize just how big our church is in its willingness to serve its surrounding community, to provide thoughtful worship opportunities, and to nurture our relationships one to another. We are a place for God to take root in hearts. Thank you for being my home congregation.