

## Early Pentecost 2010

### GRIEVING ~ HEALING ~ GROWING

As we enter the summer months of 2010, I am amazed to think of all we've been through together as a parish over the past couple of years. One of the things that the Vestry and I have finally been able to identify and articulate is that many of us are suffering from a kind of Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome. This is because we were forced to leave our beloved church so suddenly, almost violently. So, no matter what bright and exciting future God may have in store for us, we realize many are full of grief. Over the next few months, we will be addressing that in several ways.

Over these two years a handful of parishioners have had reason to return to the building (with the Building Inspector's permission), and they have all found it a powerful experience. To help us process our grief and begin to heal and move forward, we will make this experience available to everyone in the parish on two different dates in June. The building will be open on **Wednesday, June 16**, and you may come from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. or from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Or you may come on **Saturday, June 26** from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. or 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Please enter at the Taconic door where Vestry members and I will greet you. In order to have the Building Inspector's permission for this, you will need to sign in and out. Weather permitting, the Vestry will offer refreshments outside for anyone who would like to stay and talk after you visit the building. Also on **Sunday, June 27** after a brief coffee hour at Crissey Farm, we will have an informal conversation for anyone who would like to stay and listen/talk about their experience of being in the building.

In a more festive mode, we would like to celebrate The Feast of St. James the Apostle on **Sunday, July 18** (actual feast day is July 25) by having our 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and a Picnic on the grounds of St. James. We plan to rent a tent and port-a-potty for the occasion, as we will not be allowed in the building that day. So plan to come, rain or shine, and bring a chair and a brown-bag picnic that's got all you need for yourself and your family.

During the month of **September**, all of us are invited to be the Artists-of-the-Month. This is an opportunity for us, in our individual ways and mediums, to express our thoughts/feelings/memories/hopes/dreams about the church building at Main and Taconic. It would be a time to express artistically your experience of visiting the building in June. As a part of this Artists-of-the-Month show, we'd like to make a collage of people's photographs of the building and/or things that have happened there. Watch for more information.

I believe God is calling us to a new time and new place as the Church in general and as St. James Church in particular. I believe all these things will help us be spiritually ready to move forward and embrace God's preferred and promised future.

--- In Christ's love and peace, **Francie**

## **GIDEON'S GARDEN...in its Second Year!**

**Pennie Curry and Francie Hills**

On Saturday June 5 about thirty young people and adults gathered on a hot morning at Gideon's Garden to bless and plant this half-acre plot of ground that Taft Farms so graciously gives St. James to use. Brendan Farnam, this year's foreman, read the opening scripture passage. Then all processed around the perimeter as young people from St. Paul's, St. James (Adam Pott), and the wider community read the prayers that blessed the bounds of the garden. Meanwhile Francie sprinkled the plants, the earth, *and* the people with holy water.

Then the planting began in earnest. Within about an hour and a half the entire garden was planted! Watch this summer for corn, carrots, string beans, tomatoes, broccoli, celery, summer squash, zucchini, lettuce, cabbage, kale, chard, spinach, pumpkins, eggplant, cucumber, butternut squash, acorn squash, Indian corn, gourds, sun flowers, zinnias and fall maze corn. Soon Brendan will organize a scarecrow-making party, and the youth plan to make three scarecrows to protect the crops. Other special activities at the garden will be scattered throughout the summer and fall.

The name "Gideon's Garden" comes from Gideon Bostwick, the first full-time rector of St. James (1770-1793). He was the real missionary founder of the Episcopal Church in Western Massachusetts. While at St. James, Rev. Bostwick was missionary to forty-seven towns, riding on horseback eighty to one hundred miles per week to spread the Christian Gospel to people in Connecticut, Vermont, New York, and Massachusetts.

In the winter of 2008 some St. James young people started dreaming, and on a bright, crisp day in June 2009 their dream became a reality. On that day, about thirty people came to bless and plant a 1/3-acre plot of earth at Taft Farms. We named the plot "Gideon's Garden". All summer and fall, young people and adults, from several churches and the wider community, tended and harvested the garden. In spite of too much rain all season, the garden seemed to thrive beyond all expectation.

Gideon's Garden is not just any garden. The young people who first dreamed about it wanted it to help feed hungry people. The generous harvest of Gideon's Garden supplies meals and table decorations for the Breaking Bread Kitchen and the Stockbridge Open Table. Vegetables go to the People's Pantry and to several families who like to work in the garden and teach their children about eating healthy food.

*Gideon's Garden is a place where young people plant, tend, and harvest food for local food pantries and community-meal programs. Gideon's Garden is a place where people of all ages are welcome. Gideon's Garden is a place where people go to pray...as families, as individuals. Gideon's Garden is a place where all kinds of people come together for a common cause. Gideon's Garden is a safe place where souls are nourished. Gideon's Garden is a place where not only the ground, but also people and even animals are blessed. Gideon's Garden is a place where "the Spirit moves where it will", and we know it! By the grace of God, Gideon's Garden IS!*

The youth germinated the idea, and St. James' parishioner Pennie Curry nurtured it. For the second year, Taft Farms owners Dan and Martha Tawczynski have graciously contributed plants and let the youth use over half an acre (one-third acre last year) of land. Taft Farms also helped us decide what should be planted and prepared the ground for the garden, which is just across from Taft Farms on Division St. Others have made generous donations to this ministry, including significant gifts in 2008 and 2009 from Nic and Mary Cooper, who wanted it to be used "for something special for the youth." This year we have purchased weed barrier to go between the rows, so we do not have to use chemicals. We have also acquired gloves, watering cans, 150

feet of watering hose, and garden tools.

Pennie and Brendan will be speaking to various groups over the summer to raise the community's awareness of the garden. They have already begun a conversation with the Railroad Street Youth Project board about the possibility of involvement of several youth. Watch for new ways in which the garden may become a bridge to other youth and people in the community.

### **A letter from Lillian**

Dear St. James Family,

*In January of 2008, in the midst of a heat wave (a full 34°!!!), my mom and I made a short trip to Great Barrington, Massachusetts to see Simon's Rock before I submitted my application. I distinctly remember some of my first impressions of the Berkshires, gained from a drive down Route 7. Some of these first thoughts seem insignificant after spending two years here, such as my initial shock at the number of yellow houses and the obvious lack of white houses with green or black shutters. Other initial thoughts have reverberated in my mind throughout my time here.*

*On that day, my mom and I drove slowly through downtown Great Barrington, surrounded on either side by mountains and stores. The road began to open up on the left, and to my right I saw a beautiful large building and that familiar sign demarcating an Episcopal church. I remember turning to my mom as we took a right onto Taconic and saying, "Simon's Rock could turn out to be less than expected when I tour tomorrow, but I'm sure I would find a home in the Episcopal Church of Great Barrington."*

*Simon's Rock turned out to be everything I expected and more, but when I set out for Great Barrington again in August of that year, I was still filled with the normal freshman fears. On our trip across the country, my mom reminded me of what I had said to her months before, when I first turned onto Taconic Avenue, and I was somehow comforted by the thought that no matter what happened, I would find some friends at St. James.*

*Now, I'm sitting on a train, making my trek across the country, from the Berkshires to the flatlands of south-central Wisconsin. Long train rides offer good opportunities for reflection, so, inevitably, I have spent considerable time thinking about my experience over the past two years. Coming to Great Barrington, I had expectations of finding a home with St. James, but I found much more than that. I found a home, a family, and a place for new growth and learning that I will carry with me for the rest of my life.*

*Truly, I could never find the right words to express how grateful I am for my time with you. I am honored to have been a part of your choir, your congregation, and your communion with God. I am thankful to have been a part of the discernment process as St. James faced tough decisions over its building. I am thankful for the artists that have shared their work with me. I am thankful for the parishioners that have shared their life lessons with me. I am thankful for the friends that have opened their homes, hearts, and extra car seats to me. I am thankful for the bible study that some of you have shared with me. I am thankful to have been a part of such an impressive music ministry. I am thankful for the kindness each of you has shown. I am thankful for the person that I have become during my time with St. James. My time with St. James has allowed me to discern more deeply over how I see myself as a Christian. I believe I have come closer to Christ, with you. During my time with St. James I have grown in faith and in love as a single person, but, also, as a part of your whole.*

*As I think about the year ahead, once again, I'm filled with the fear and excitement that accompanies new beginnings; however, my experiences at Simon's Rock and with St. James, have left me with the confidence that I will be successful. I know that wherever I go I have friends that I can call on, and I know that I'm also capable of making new friends in places where I know no one. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for making my two years in Great Barrington, Massachusetts a truly wonderful time that I will never forget. Love and Best Wishes, **Lillian***

## **The Artist of the Month** **Charlene Peet**

During the month of May we enjoyed a wonderful exhibit of watercolors by Carolyn Becker. **Carolyn Lee Becker** was born and raised in the Coachella Valley in southern California. Her father was a teacher/principal/superintendent of the schools in the Valley, and the family lived on the grounds of the high school.

Faith has always played an important role in Carolyn's life. She remembers her baptism in the Salton Sea at age twelve during an Easter Sunrise Service of the Thermal Baptist Church. An early test of faith occurred when her mother suffered a severe depression after Carolyn's sister was born. During the long year her mother was away, Carolyn prayed for her mother's healing, never losing confidence Jesus would hear her prayer and heal her, which indeed occurred.

Carolyn mentions another threshold of growing in faith. Years later, while a student at the University of California, Berkeley, a friend invited her to attend First Presbyterian Church. It was there, she states, that an early fear of God became transformed into a love for God.

Her involvement in art began later in life at a time when it became apparent her children were less in need of her dedicated hands-on parenting. She began working in oils, painting in her teacher's back yard. Despite her father's opinion that art was for "dumb people who couldn't do anything else", Carolyn persisted and found her art lifting her up over her own depression. She began to see the world through God's eyes, and it was beautiful.

Today Carolyn is a member of St. James' and lives in Great Barrington. She loves living in the Berkshires and is grateful for her gift to experience so much of the beauty God has created. She studies with a group of water colorists here. As Artist of the Month, she has been exhibiting landscapes, seascapes and a floral piece, all in watercolor, her current medium.

**FOR JUNE** we are celebrating the myriad ways our youth have developed their unique gifts from our Creator, particularly (but not precisely limited to) The Art of Academic Achievement, The Art of Artistic Expression, and The Art of Athletic Excellence. This will include all kinds of "postables" on the art boards and musical offerings as well. Late submissions are welcomed throughout June.

**FOR JULY** the Artist of the Month will be Jake Pinkston - "The Art of Mission in Honduras".

**AUGUST** – To be announced.

**SEPTEMBER** - All of us are invited to be the artists-of-the-month. This is an opportunity for us, in our individual ways and mediums, to express our thoughts/feelings/memories/hopes/dreams about the church building at Main and Taconic. It would be a time to express artistically your experience of visiting the building in June. As a part of this artists-of-the-month show, we'd like to make a collage of people's photographs of the building and/or things that have happened there. Watch for more information.

## **Walking the Mourner's Path: Transforming Grief into Joyful Living** **Susan Happ**

A new and exciting program is coming this October. With the guidance of a trained facilitator and our clergy, this program's goal is to help those who have faced the death of a loved one to be able to transform their grief into joyful living. Participants are encouraged to find a new relationship with their loved one by inviting Jesus Christ into their pain and asking our Lord to comfort and heal them...And He will!

On Monday evenings, starting in October, members will meet for eight ninety- minute sessions. There is a workbook that offers questions for reflection, as well as many exercises that will help you to define a new relationship with your loved one. You are not required to share, but are given the opportunity in a safe environment to express as little or as much as you need. We will explore the three main phases of grief, the four tasks of mourning, and reactions to grief.

This program was developed by the clergy of All Saints Episcopal Church in Winter Park, Florida. After 9/11 many people were trained as facilitators in the New York City area, including myself. Since I have been involved in teaching about death and dying during my nursing career, I was familiar with this process. I can honestly say that this is the best program I have ever seen. Anyone who believes in God may participate. It does not matter how long ago your loved one died, as long as it was not too recently (say, less than six months). The number of participants is limited to twelve, and we have invited the people and clergy of Christ Church-Trinity to join us, so please enroll early. There is a nominal fee to cover the cost of workbooks.

To enroll or for more information, please contact me, Susan Happ (413-644-9745) or at [dwhapp@att.net](mailto:dwhapp@att.net) Faithfully, **Susan Happ**, Facilitator

## **Our Newest Service Music** □

**Charles Olegar**

The extent to which Episcopal church music has diversified over the several decades since Liturgical Renewal became a transformative force in the 1970's becomes abundantly evident upon perusal of the indices of our denomination's present Hymnal 1982, along with its several substantial companion publications, including Lift Every Voice and Sing, Wonder, Love, and Praise, Songs for Celebration, and Voices Found. Ignited by the Catholic Church in America's creative, horizon-widening response to music and liturgy directives emanating from the Second Vatican Council of the early 1960's, most liturgical Protestant denominations soon followed suit, producing an ever-growing compendium of new compositions joined to a regularly-expanding palette of music from numerous other worship traditions, producing a variety of choice unimaginable at the time the Hymnal 1982's distinguished predecessor, the Hymnal 1940, appeared.

Among the most dramatic aspects of musical diversification in Episcopal music has been the welcoming of African-American gospel music and spirituals, as represented in Lift Every Voice and Sing, published in the late 1990's under the editorial direction of Dr. Carl Haywood and the late Dr. Horace Clarence Boyer, who was active in our own diocese (in Amherst). Our parish of St. James, Great Barrington, has by no means eschewed such progressive developments as they have unfolded over the past several decades. Over nearly two decades at the close of the twentieth century, Paul Hamill, himself a widely-known composer, proved ever a strong advocate of new music, his ministry at SJC establishing our continuing commitment to exploring differing expressions as a prominent characteristic of our musical worship. With the commencement of my own ministry at our parish in 2004, I was encouraged not only to continue Paul's commitment to new worship music, but also to include more spirituals with our regular fare, and have to date worked more than two dozen of this genre into our regular congregational and choral repertoire.

This month (beginning June 13th), with the addition to St. James' congregational repertoire of service music taken from Lift Every Voice and Sing -- including Carl Haywood's lively setting of "Glory to God", we yet further deepen our relationship with music from the African-American tradition. Haywood's exciting "Glory" deliberately juxtaposes two styles that in Black worship were initially regarded as disparate if not antagonistic -- the "boogieing" of the refrain "Glory, glory, hallelujah..." with the smoother "Eurocentric" style of the verses. G.W. Brown's "Holy", from "A Mass for a Soulful People", recalls the slow, deliberate, if not weighed-down, motion of the Negro work song, while Lena McKin's "Christ Our Passover", from "Eucharist of the Soul", is based on the call-response pattern found in so many spirituals.

Acknowledging that many stylistic aspects of African-American music are inimitable, one principal reason why spirituals can transcend stylistic particularism to become fitting in even so Anglo-Eurocentric a tradition as ours, is to be found in their course of development. Similar to the English Christmas Carol as it has been known since Victorian times, spirituals (compiled around the same time, interestingly) assumed a more classic, if not abstract, personality at around

the same point in the nineteenth century. Like English carols, spirituals experienced a lengthy gestation in aural form prior to being written down, by that juncture having already been through at least several stages of refinement. It was not until the mid-1800's that the first anthology of "Jubilee Songs", as spirituals were first known, was published. Through a touring group -- the Jubilee Singers -- based at Fisk University, a fountainhead of spiritual research, this genre rapidly came to reach a wide international audience. Further impetus for cementing the legitimacy of African-American music was imparted during the 1890's, when the great Czech composer Antonin Dvorak, brought to America to establish a national school of composition in New York, proclaimed this genre as America's greatest, most authentic music, providing more than ample material for what he hoped would become a true American school. Unfortunately America's prevailing mix of Eurocentrism and racism produced too formidable an obstacle, and it was not until the 1930's that momentum again grew for developing indigenous national art music in the classical realm, albeit again failing to embrace African-American music. One remarkable paradox, if not irony, attending this reluctance on the part of practitioners of American "serious" musical art is that as American composers became increasingly Eurocentric, European composers, especially the French, were flocking to Harlem on pilgrimage. Highly representative of this intriguing twist is Maurice Ravel's telling George Gershwin, who had journeyed to Paris in the early twentieth century to study with that master, that it should really be the other way around!

Small wonder, then, that the only Spirituals to be included in the estimable Episcopal Hymnal 1940 were "Were You There" and a tune called McKee, to which is sung "In Christ there is no east or west". But what wonderful things it says for our evolving Episcopal Church that a half century later we are blessed with a magnificent increase of African-American music, not to mention so many other expressions, often from folk traditions, among our present-day worship resources -- music that at one time was deemed extraneous to Episcopal worship.

In his forward to the important 1940 publication American Negro Songs: 230 Folk Songs and Spirituals, Religious and Secular (exactly contemporaneous with the Episcopal Hymnal 1940), the Black musicologist Dr. John W. Work explains that the Fisk Jubilee Singers cultivated a highly refined, precise way of singing Spirituals, much as an English cathedral choir renders its Christmas carols. Several years ago, visiting a service at Atlanta's Ebenezer Baptist Church of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King fame, I encountered this very thing from its highly-disciplined choir.

Dr. Work tells us that as a "classical" expression, spirituals should not be unnaturally distorted by super-imposed stylistic elements, which would include singers' striving to imitate an African American dialect. To be sure, one of the major debates in Black churches as the Jazz Age waxed in the 1920's was the extent to which blues, boogie-woogie, New Orleans music, and other popular idioms, should be admitted into their church music. The performance tradition of spirituals established by the Fisk Jubilee Singers advocates a pure, refined, "classical" approach: thus for us, the most appropriate way of rendering the African-American music we sing at St. James would be in a solid, spirited American hymn style, striving for expressive tempos be they faster or slower, well-defined, pulsating rhythm, and above all, heartfelt, soulful singing. Yet, if it is incorrect to try to make a Spiritual overly infused with popular elements. It would be equally incorrect to attempt to take our interpretation in the opposite direction -- for example, toward the English style of singing Victorian hymns. This great music stands on its own as source of immense spirituality, and is most effective when sung as naturally as possible.

## Vestry Notes

**March 25, 2010**

**Present:** Doreen Hutchinson, Senior Warden; Doug Happ, Junior Warden; Dindy Anderson, Nancy Cobden, Class of 2011; Geoff Perkins, Class of 2012; Susan Frantz, Dutch Pinkston, Class of 2013; The Rev. Frances Hills, Rector. **Away:** Elizabeth Holland, Treasurer;

Lee Cheek, Clerk; Sally Harris, Class of 2012. The minutes for February 25 were approved as submitted.

**Vestry Hand Book Conversation:** Doreen gave a brief overview of Chapters 1-4 covering what it means to be on the Vestry and how to manage conflict. The Emergency Call List will continue to be used for emergency calls and as a prayer list.

**Rector's Report:** The Rector thanked the Executive Committee for the many hours of work with the CDC and the insurance company. Parishioners have been invited to the Journey to Adulthood (J2A) and Stewardship workshops to be held in April. The Outreach Committee will be asked to extend their work into Stewardship.

There was positive feedback for the Season of Common Worship and another "Common Worship" was suggested. The conversation will continue among Clergy, Wardens, and parishioners and suggestions for rotating churches and alternate times for services were made.

**Approval for PMC MET invitations:** The Partnership for Missional Church Committee drafted list of names for consideration for the Missional Engagement Team (MET) and the list was accepted by the vestry.

**Insurance Update:** A meeting was held with Willis Insurance Brokers and St James Representative; George Marion, Attorney; Steve Abdow, Diocese; The Rev. Frances Hills, Rector; Doreen Hutchinson, Senior Warden; Doug Happ, Junior Warden, to review our claim strategy and coverage challenges. A full written report was submitted by Doug Happ, Junior Warden.

**Non-Profit Proposal:** Considerations for the sale/leaseback agreement were presented by Doug Happ, Junior Warden. The CDC has made it clear we would have first rights in planning for space and times for building use. We would have to define what space and what times we need. The fixed costs for building use would become predictable and St. James could rent as needed for 1 to 99 years. It was suggested to engage a different attorney to deal with the sale/lease agreement. A commercial realty firm has been engaged to do an appraisal of the property.

Sally Harris will be sending a press release to The Berkshire Record revealing herself as the non-profit. Francie will send out an e-mail to the parish on Friday, March 26, 2010. Vestry members will call parishioners who do not have e-mail.

*Respectfully Submitted, Susan Frantz, Acting Clerk*

#### **April 15, 2010**

**Present:** Doreen Hutchinson, Senior Warden; Doug Happ, Junior Warden; Elizabeth Holland, Treasurer; Lee Cheek, Clerk; Nancy Cobden, Class of 2011; Geoff Perkins, David Hamill, Class of 2012; Susan Frantz, Dutch Pinkston, Class of 2013; The Rev. Frances Hills, Rector. **Away:** Dindy Anderson, Class of 2011. The minutes of the March 25, 2010 meeting were approved as distributed.

**New Vestry Members:** David Hamill was welcomed to the vestry to fill the place of Sally Harris, now chair of the non-profit St. James Place which is seeking to purchase the building and property at 352 Main St. According to diocesan canons David will serve until the Annual Meeting January 2011.

**CDC Meeting:** Doug Happ reported that the Executive Committee met with Community Development Corporation April 9 regarding the status of the non-profit. The corporation will not become a federally recognized entity until the fall. Legal counsel for St. James Place believes that insurance assignment to the non-profit may be possible under the current policy with Lexington. The vestry has been asked to pass a motion assuring the non-profit of our intent to pursue the purchase-lease plan as currently understood and engage a firm to appraise the property. The non-profit will provide financial statements and a summary of their intent.

**Property Appraisal:** Doug Happ met at 352 Main St. with Carolyn Murphy of Crowley Associates of Springfield April 13. Schematics for the building provided by Frank Garretson and

copies of the three engineering studies were given to Ms. Murphy as well as quotes for repairs from Allegrone and Guarducci. She cautioned that they may not be able to find comparable sales for an “as is” appraisal and that the value of the lot may only be able to be assessed in cleared condition, from which must be deducted the cost for demolition. We have requested a summary report within 5-6 weeks.

**Terms of Agreement Review:** More specific information about the lease agreement will be available after ad hoc committees for Space Needs and Inventory are formed and have provided more information. Doreen will contact potential members of the Space Needs Committee that will also continue to work with the non-profit. Lee Cheek will organize members of an Inventory Committee.

**Motion from Executive Committee:** The following motion recommended by the Executive Committee as well as Diocesan legal counsel was passed unanimously by the vestry: *The Vestry, as the agent and legal representative of St. James' Episcopal Church, supports the discussions of the Executive Committee with the Community Development Corporation ("CDC") and representatives of the non-profit corporation to be formed and named "St. James Place", which have developed into the draft Initial Terms of Agreement dated April 14, 2010 presented to this meeting, and authorizes the Executive Committee to continue to negotiate such terms and additional terms, with a view to the development of a Purchase and Sale Agreement, Lease and related legal agreements with CDC and "St. James Place", which shall all be subject to review and approval by the Vestry and by the Bishop and Standing Committee of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts.*

**Treasurer's Report:** The Treasurer's Quarterly Report was accepted as presented by Elizabeth Holland. Sarah Sieber has agreed to serve as assistant treasurer.

**Other Reports/Discussions:** The Vestry opened a conversation about what might happen if the Sale/Lease plan fails. No direction for an alternate plan is clear at this point. Francie Hills will contact attorney Emil George of Pittsfield to represent St. James in real estate transactions.

The responses from parishioners of St. George, Good Shepherd, and St. Paul who experienced the Season of Common Worship were enthusiastic. Members of St. James vestry felt that while gains had been made in opening the church's wider mission and in establishing new relationships with other Episcopalians in South County, we lost touch with our own parishioners during a crucial time.

The Stewardship and Outreach Committees may be combined. Margaret Layton and Lynn Walker will be attending a workshop led by Bruce Rockwell and others at St. Stephen's April 17. Lee Cheek and either David or Alix Pott will attend the Journey to Adulthood training in Lenox April 16 and 17.

Elizabeth Holland reported on the status of the Partnership for Missional Church process.

The announcements at Sunday morning worship will occur after the peace and before the Eucharist.

The Bishop will visit May 2 and will meet for dinner with the vestry on April 22.

*Respectfully submitted, Lee Cheek, Clerk to the Vestry*

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