

March 2016

The Faithful Bell

St. Francis Episcopal Church

STAFF

The Rev. Conor Alexander, *Rector*
Tina Lassiter, *Administrative Assistant*
Bennett Card, *Christian Formation*
John Ickes, *Music Director*
Roland Nave, *Accompanist*
Mia Hurd, *Nursery Attendant*

Vestry

Susan Moore, *Senior Warden*
Ed Silva, *Junior Warden*
Lynn Kennedy, *Registrar*
Roxanne Taylor, *Treasurer*
Susan Golden, *Finance*
Ken Clarke, *Stewardship*
Kevin Kennedy, *Communications*
Twila Leavitt, *Christian Formation*
Flavel Blyden, *Outreach*

Parish Ministry Leaders

Jackie Clarke, *Acolytes*
Tsu Fullwood, *Altar Guild*
Maureen Fuster, *ECW*
Bob Fullwood, *Men's Group*
Ken Clarke, *Ushers*

Dear Friends in Christ,

This month I feel like I need to make something clear on the topic of same-sex marriage within the Church. It seems as though that several people think that the decision to perform a same-sex marriage is entirely mine as the priest in the congregation. That is simply not true. The Bishop has made it abundantly clear that no clergy may perform same-sex marriages without his express permission. Furthermore, he is not going to give that permission without a serious discussion between the rector, vestry, and congregation. Now that doesn't mean that a discussion is meant to get us from point A to a predesignated point - it is a way to understand where a congregation is on the subject. Some of the questions that the vestry would need to answer are how this will further the mission of the congregation and if they believe in good faith that the congregation is willing to support this decision. The Bishop has been very clear that he would like every congregation to at least talk about it, and if the answer is yes he is willing to give permission, and if the answer is no then that is fine with him as well. However he has indicated to the clergy that if we are part of a congregation that does not do same-sex marriages, that we refer couples out to somewhere that does if they want to get married.

I can appreciate that this can be a stressful time while this discussion is taking place. Many people have expressed a desire to have an answer right away. Of course some have told me that they think we should absolutely do it no matter what, and others have indicated that a same-sex marriage would be a huge problem for them. As a priest and a follower of Christ I can truly say that I love both sides dearly, and I am still deciding myself because I feel strongly that we need a decision that everybody can live with - maybe not one where everyone is 100% happy, but one that everybody can live with. If we choose not to do same-sex marriages, what can we do to care for those who are affected by that decision so that they still feel welcomed and loved as Christ loves all of us? Or if we decide to do these marriages, how can we love and care for those who feel that it is morally wrong in a way that they still feel like they can fully be a part of St. Francis? These are difficult questions but they need to be answered.

One of the reasons why I believe this decision needs to proceed so slowly is that St. Francis is a very special place. One of our defining features is our racial diversity at a time when many places of worship are still separated. If we can serve as a Godly example in this area, why not one on the marriage issue? Despite the differences of positions that exist, we can find a way that works for everyone. If we prayerfully work on this together, we will find the right solution.

God's Peace,
Fr. Conor+

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LEADING UP TO EASTER



**PALM
SUNDAY
services:
8 & 10:30 am**



**MAUNDY
THURSDAY
Services:
noon & 7 pm**



Holy Week



**EASTER VIGIL -
Saturday,
Service at 7 pm**



**GOOD
FRIDAY -
Services:
noon
& 7 pm**



**EASTER SUNDAY -
Services:
8 & 10:30 am**

**The Easter Cross - Bring flowers to
decorate the cross on Sunday morning.**

Christian Formation

Dear Parish Family:

Why Easter?

Last month I dealt with the importance of Lent in our church teaching and theology. Since Easter is only a few weeks away, in this article I bring up the question of Easter and its importance. It is safe to say that most if not all Episcopalians regard Easter as the central part of our Christian Faith. Each week our church sets each Sunday aside as a celebration of the resurrection and Christ's giving of himself freely and unselfishly for each of us!

The story is engrained in each of us how Jesus was executed on a Friday, but on the following Sunday, he rose from the dead! He walked and talked to his followers and they saw and believed! Thus because of this unique resurrection, Christ's divine nature is proved and the claims, his teachings and all that he stood for is validated by the Easter event.

Easter Day is the yearly commemoration of this event and without it; the Christian faith would not exist at all. It is the one thing all Christians share and it is what links each of us together.

Thus the evidence is crystal clear:

Christ has died!

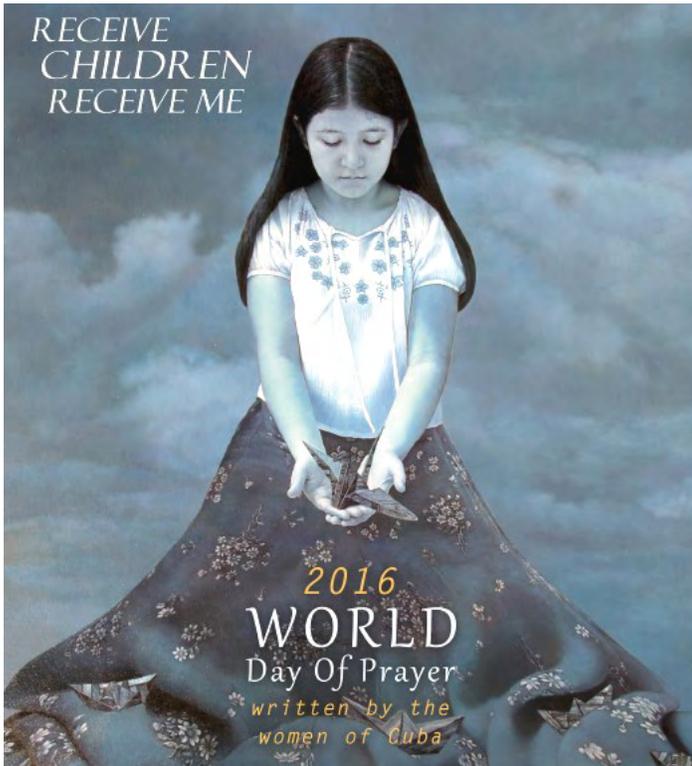
Christ is risen!

Christ will come again!

A blessed Easter to each of you and remember, join us for a Sunday Christian Formation class, for there is more to the story and we can't wait to share it with you!

Alleluia! Christ is Risen! Alleluia
Bennett

March Events



Service written by the women of Cuba

St. Francis Episcopal Church
Sunday, March 6, at 3 pm
refreshments following
Service sponsored by
CUMLEGO for Christian Unity

3rd ANNUAL COMMUNITY SATURDAY
EASTER MARCH 19
EGG HUNT 1-3 PM
WITH REFRESHMENTS

A FREE EVENT FOR CHILDREN TO AGE 10.
Registration required at event for participation in activities. Parent or guardian must be present.

ACTIVITIES FOR AGES 10 AND UNDER INCLUDE:

- Age-appropriate egg hunts w/prizes
- Face Painting
- Easter Bunny Photos (Emailed to your address)
- Easter Crafts
- Story Telling - *The Easter Journey*

ST. FRANCIS EPISCOPAL CHURCH
509 S. Rosemont Rd.,
Virginia Beach
757-340-6884
Fr. Conor Alexander, Rector

RAIN OR SHINE!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!! To set up & clean up, kitchen & cooking help, egg hunt helpers, face painters, registration takers, prize distributors, roving photographers, and other tasks associated with the hunt.
SIGN UP SHEET IN THE COMMONS!



ECW

Monthly meeting will be
Saturday, March 12, at
10:00 in the Crigger room.



Spring Ahead

Daylight Saving Time
March 13

Turn clocks ahead one
hour or be late to church
next Sunday morning!

The 7th Annual Acolyte Festival

April 29-30, 2016

St. Andrew's By the Sea, Nags Head



Regular REGISTRATION
Ends April 1st

Only those who return their registration forms by this date will be guaranteed a Festival T-Shirt. Late registrations will be accepted through the day of the event but t-shirts may not be available. A sign-up sheet is in the commons.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!

Cursillo Men's Weekend - April 14-17
Cursillo Women's Weekend - April 28-May 1

Held at Chanco on the James. Cursillo is defined as a movement within the Episcopal Church designed to help us grow closer to Jesus Christ.

Ask St. Francis' newest cursillistas, Maureen Fuster and Barbara Drori, how much they enjoyed their weekend at Cursillo.

For more information and application go to www.cursillodsv.org.



Mark the date now, July 18-22, **Vacation Bible School**, for all ages at St. Francis. We will be meeting each evening at the Surf Shack! Look for more details to follow but mark your calendar now so you won't miss out!



Coffee Hour sign-up sheets for February through June NOW available in the Commons!!

An edible treat following the worship service is very popular. Why not sign up to bring something to share? Check the box on the sign-up sheet, include your contact info and someone will call to remind you. If you eat coffee hour treats - bring some - children count, too! Don't forget the box for coffee donations. Thanks!

HOLY WEEK



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

March 20 - Palm Sunday

Services at 8:00 am and 10:30 am

March 24 - Maundy Thursday

Services at Noon and 7:00 pm

March 25 - Good Friday

Services at Noon and 7:00 pm

March 26 - Easter Vigil

Service at 7:00 pm

March 27 - Easter Sunday

Services at 8:00 am and 10:30 am

LEM SCHEDULE



March 6

8:00 am - Susan Golden
10:30 am - John Ickes
(Prayers)
Clay Wise
(Readings)

March 13

8:00 am - Susan Golden
10:30 am - Carol McCarthy
(Prayers)
Lynn Kennedy
(Readings)

March 20

8:00am - Cheryl Blyden
10:30 am - Barbara Taylor
(Prayers)
Terrence Cumberland
(Readings)

March 27

8:00 am - Cheryl Blyden
10:30 am - Terrence Cumberland
(Prayers)
Barbara Taylor
(Readings)

ACOLYTES



March 6

- Emerson- Crucifer
- Spencer- Gospel Bearer
- Brady- Torch Bearer
- Anna- Torch Bearer

March 13

- Andre- Crucifer
- Emerson- Gospel Bearer
- Selena- Torch Bearer
- Spencer- Torch Bearer

March 20

- Spencer- Crucifer
- Brady- Gospel Bearer
- Caerdwean- Torch Bearer
- Devon- Torch Bearer

March 27

- Andre- Crucifer
- Spencer- Gospel Bearer
- Anna- Torch Bearer
- Selena- Torch Bearer

Altar Guild

February 27 - March 11

Ed McCarthy

March 12 - March 25

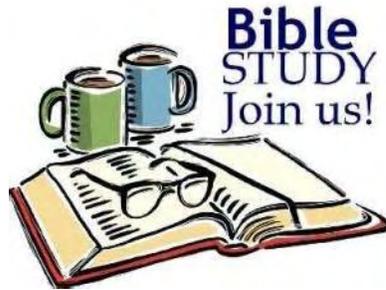
Roxanne Taylor

March 26 - April 8

Jean Rudy

Footsteps in Faith

Please join us on Tuesdays at
7 pm!



Outreach: Parish Food Closet

Yes, we still operate our food closet. We are maintained by referrals from Virginia Beach Social Services every five weeks, and church open door Monday through Thursday.

We are in need of food supplies:

Canned meats	Canned fruits	Pancake mix (complete)
Boxed potatoes	Peanut butter	Soups
Pasta	Jelly	Rice
Spaghetti sauce	Cereal	Canned vegetables
Dry beans	Dry milk (small pkgs)	
Boxed cornbread mix	Boxed muffin mix	
Boxed biscuit mix		

We do not have facilities for anything but non-perishable items.

**Bring items with you to church and place in the basket in the rear of the Nave.

Thank you in advance, Doris Naugle & Elinor Ruth



Vestry Meeting Summary of Action

Vestry Meeting—February 17, 2016

Summary of Action

Finance Report--Susan Golden: The accounts at Towne Bank are in good shape to start the year. Total income for January appears in the report not to be as much as projected, since we missed a Sunday due to weather and the last deposit was made on Monday, February 2. The bottom line therefore is a deficit, but it's actually a better start than the last 3-4 years. Susan will present the budget to the congregation after each service on Sunday.

Several initiatives such as an ad on Craigslist are being undertaken to increase rentals of the Parish Hall to generate income.

Ministry Area Reports

- **Senior Warden**--Susan Moore: Planning is proceeding on the Third Annual Easter Egg Hunt. Bennett will tell the Easter story, and Twila will provide crafts. The food was greatly appreciated last year, and we will offer hot dogs and more this year. The committee is stuffing eggs now. They need little toys and trinkets to go into the eggs and also need big prizes. The hunt will be advertised on the Princess Anne Plaza Civic League "community board" in its newsletter and on our marquee.
- **Junior Warden**--Ed Silva: The lawnmowers are being prepared for use in the spring. More people to mow the lawn are needed.
- **Communications**—Kevin Kennedy: Kevin rated, reviewed, and added pictures to Yelp's entry for St. Francis, and he asked that more people leave reviews of the church to generate buzz. He is also posting and working on the Facebook page to try to make it more visible. He plans to post the Faithful Bell on Facebook.
- **Outreach**—Flavel: A fun activity like the Souper Bowl Sunday competition to donate soup to the Food Pantry is in the works for the start of baseball season.
- **Stewardship**—Ken Clarke: Another fundraiser will be planned to follow the successful meatball sub fundraiser on Super Bowl Sunday, which raised \$270 for the 20-40-60 Plan.
- **Christian Formation**—Twila Leavitt: Bennett reported plans to offer an invitation to Sunday School at the Easter Egg Hunt. A hunt for the Sunday School children on Easter is being planned as well. He and others are taking an in-depth look at interest in Youth activities, with input from our youth and their parents.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Kennedy, Registrar

St. Francis Episcopal Church Financial Update

As of January 31, 2016

	Actual	Budget YTD	Difference
Total Contributions	10,626.32	12,992.17	2,365.85
Total Operating Expenses	14,515.32	13,696.00	(819.32)
Net Income	(3,889.00)	(703.44)	

Grass Cutters

Lawn service will resume in the spring.

Altar Flowers

March 6

The flowers on the Altar are given to the Glory of God in celebration of Ken Clarke's birthday.

March 13

The flowers on the Altar are given to the Glory of God in thanksgiving.

March 20

The flowers on the Altar are given to the Glory of God in thanksgiving.

March 27

The flowers on the Altar are given to the Glory of God in memory of Jim & Patti Leavitt by Pete & Twila Leavitt.

Vestry Lock-Up

March 6

Susan Moore

March 13

Dosh Jackson

March 20

Kevin Kennedy

March 27

Ken Clarke

Building Usage

The Building Coordinator schedules and monitors all use of the church building. To volunteer, reserve space, or ask questions, contact Victor Rice at (757) 471-7471.