

THE FAITHFUL BELL



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,
The vestry and I have finished Chapter 2 from the book *Lasting Impact* by Carey Nieuwhof. The theme of this chapter is about engaging people as they attend Church less often. It appears to be a sign of our times that people are attending Church on a weekly basis less and less. A recent Pew study showed that for many people, they will describe themselves as regular attenders, and yet only come 2-3 times per month. A generation ago that would have been very different. There are many reasons that play into this trend. One is a 24-7 culture, another is that our children have so many more activities, another is how the culture is largely post-Christian. All of these factors add up, and attendance just isn't what it used to be.

However this doesn't mean that everything is going wrong, but that we need to adapt to this changing landscape. One concept I have always carried with me since college is that good ministry always earns the right to be heard. Since people aren't coming out of a sense of obligation anymore, we all need to be more active in engaging them. Show empathy, listen to people's concerns, be genuinely interested in what's going on in their life. Doing so builds a bridge between the source of life, which we celebrate together each Sunday, and the people outside, whom Christ desires to reach.

As Christians we have the greatest story ever told, and the greatest way to have a fulfilling, meaningful life. The good news is so good that we cannot simply keep it to ourselves. If people are not coming like they used to, it's upon us to take it out to where they are. Sometimes that happens through sharing, and sometimes it happens by living it out.

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God's Peace,
Fr. Conor+

Church Attendance

Conversation #2

Discussion Questions

Talk About It

1. Of the eleven reasons given for even committed church attenders attending less often, which are you seeing in your community and church?
2. To what extent has the trend of people attending church less often impacted your ministry over the last decade?
3. The characteristics of today's unchurched people are often indicative of a post-Christian generation. To what extent do they describe the people who live in your community?
4. What word best describes your church's attitude toward infrequent church attenders? Be honest.
5. Would you describe your church as being truly loving toward unchurched people? Why or why not?
6. Is your attitude toward infrequent attenders and unchurched people helping or hindering your mission?



LEM SCHEDULE

February 7

8:00 am - Cheryl Blyden
10:30 am - Laura Silva
(Prayers)
Terrence Cumberland
(Readings)

February 10—Ash Wednesday

12:00 pm - Twila Leavitt
7:00 pm - Susan Golden
(Prayers)
Lynn Kennedy
(Readings)



February 14

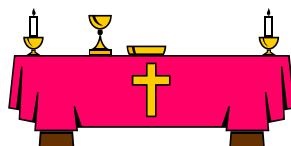
8:00 am - Cheryl Blyden
10:30 am - Clay Wise
(Prayers)
John Ickes
(Readings)

February 21

8:00am - Susan Golden
10:30 am - Laura Silva
(Prayers)
John Ickes
(Readings)

February 28

8:00 am - Cheryl Blyden
10:30 am - Terrence Cumberland
(Prayers)
Carol McCarthy
(Readings)



ACOLYTES

February 7

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



February 10---Ash Wednesday

- Bridget Borton- Crucifer
- Stephanie Borton- Gospel Bearer
- Caerdwean- Torch Bearer
- Devon- Torch Bearer
-

February 14

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

February 21

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

February 28

- Andre- Crucifer
- Selena- Gospel Bearer
- Isaiah- Torch Bearer

Altar Guild

January 30 - February 12

Tsu Fullwood

February 13 - February 26

Sara Grinnell

February 27 - March 11

Ed McCarthy

Senior Warden

Some of our Egg Hunt volunteers from 2015



“Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love.”

— Mother Teresa

St. Francis' 3rd annual Community Easter Egg Hunt is in the planning stages. Even though the weather wasn't cooperative, last year we worked together to bring joy to our neighborhood children and their families. In the grand scheme of things, this egg hunt was a small thing but it was done “with great love.”

Lately I've been praying for a few things:

- Dry, warm weather so that the egg hunt can be held outside on the church lawn.
- A spirit of generosity that will fill the hearts of our parishioners so that we have plenty of candy and trinkets to fill the 300 eggs for the hunt.
- Volunteers to help fill empty eggs
- A generous spirit that will encourage folks to bake goodies and donate picnic food & beverages for this event.
- That same spirit to will encourage volunteers to help at the egg hunt in any and all positions.
- The calming of worry, doubt, and anxiety concerning the hunt – and the knowledge that everything will be just fine if I give my worries to God.

Of course, that doesn't mean I won't be talking and bugging YOU to help. This is a paraphrase but “It takes a church to put on an Easter Egg Hunt.” Especially a small church like St. Francis. **Let us do this small thing with great love.**

The Sunday bulletin has a list of requested donations and volunteer sign-up. It seems like we have lots of time but it will go really fast – like an Easter bunny.

Always keeping you all in my prayers,
Susan

**COMMUNITY EASTER EGG HUNT
SATURDAY, MARCH 19 - 1:00-3:00 PM**

Announcements and Upcoming Events

Community Outreach 2016

Saturday, March 19

Easter Egg Hunt

1:00-3:00 pm



DONATIONS NEEDED TO FILL 300 EGGS:

- Small, individually wrapped candies: (Kisses, snack-sized candies, etc)
- Trinkets and toys small enough to fit in an egg for boys & girls (such as small cars, insects, jewelry items, etc)
(Take an egg to see if your prize will fit.)

ITEMS NEEDED FOR SMALL PRIZES:

- Small stuffed rabbits and other Easter-type animals (check dollar & thrift stores for gently-used, clean toys)
- Stuffed animals and other toys suitable for medium prizes (such as jump ropes, hula hoop, lg frisbee, etc - check dollar stores)

EXTRA LARGE ITEMS FOR GRAND PRIZES:

It would be great to have at least 6 prizes such as mentioned here to award at the end of the hunt:

- New or gently-used bicycle
 - 1 - 36"+ stuffed rabbit
 - fishing pole & reel
 - kid's/family games like Monopoly
 - large doll
 - bike helmet
 - baseball glove
 - other large prizes
- (Try the \$5 and under store, watch for sales)

Monetary donations gratefully accepted.

Egg Hunt Coordinators:

Susan Moore

Sr. Warden

cleverinc65@cox.net

287-6849

Flavel Blyden

Vestry - Outreach

cfblyden@gmail.com

636-6753

**EGG HUNT COMMITTEE MEETING - SUNDAY,
9:15 AM, FEBRUARY 14, CRIGGER ROOM**

WE DON'T NEED EMPTY EGGS!

Indoors/outside weather permitting.

3rd Annual Community Easter Egg Hunt with Lunch

Sponsored by St. Francis Episcopal Church

Saturday, March 19 • 1-3:00 pm

FREE to ALL children to age 10

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

(Please print clearly. Give form to
Flavel Blyden or Susan Moore)

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

**EGG HUNT COMMITTEE MEETING - SUNDAY,
9:15 AM, FEBRUARY 14, CRIGGER ROOM**

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

- ☐ food setup/kitchen helpers (youth and adults)
- ☐ grill hotdog/hamburgers (adults only)
- ☐ egg hunt supervisors (adults only)
- ☐ mark-off egg hunt areas (outside hunt only)
- ☐ egg distribution (outside hunt only)
- ☐ face painters (youth and adults)
- ☐ Easter bunny suit volunteers (adults only)
- ☐ registration takers (adults only)
- ☐ prize coordinators (before and during event)
- ☐ Egg stuffers

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP:

- ☐ donate home-baked sweets
- ☐ donate cut up fruits, veggies
- ☐ donate beverages (hot chocolate, soda, other)
- ☐ donate items (listed on other side)
- ☐ monetary donations for hot dogs and buns and other miscellaneous stuff

Please pray for the success of this event!

**Disciples Making Disciples
Community Outreach 2016**

Christian Formation

Dear Parish Family:

Why Lent?

When speaking of Lent, this brings up the church calendar in general, which is not fixed in scripture but has developed into the common worship life of both our Episcopal church and many other Christian churches!

So if it is not in the Bible, why do we use it?

Thomas Aquinas, the 13th century preacher and theologian, liked to say, “Every action of Christ is for our instruction.” Thus to grow as disciples of Christ we need to contemplate and reflect on all aspects of his life, not just his birth and resurrection, and Lent allows us the opportunity to dig a little deeper into Jesus’ life.

The season of Lent is a time of preparation for the coming of Easter. During Lent we remember the 40 days that Jesus was fasting in the desert, tempted by the Devil. Unlike Adam and Eve who gave in to the sin of temptation, Jesus is victorious amid all the temptations thrown at him!

Later in Lent during Holy Week and especially on Good Friday, we remember Jesus’ suffering and death to save us. The light of the resurrection is just a little bit brighter when we have gone through the darkness of the entire Holy Week experience. Thus as we look at Jesus’ self control, patience, and never-ending faith even in the midst of suffering, hopefully we can gain a better understanding of what it takes to truly be his disciples.

Many people give up something during Lent such as candy, or meat on Fridays, as a means of self-denial. Others may increase their study of scripture or prayers as a means to become closer to Jesus. Prayer and fasting are opportunities to remember Jesus and who he was and is for each of us; Lent is basically a waste of our time if we don’t seize the opportunity to know and grow closer to Jesus.

So as part of your Lenten emphasis, take advantage of what Christian Formation has to offer you. Plan on attending Sunday School; classes are available for children through adults. Father Conor will be offering a special class on the 3 Colors of Spirituality on Mondays during the 5 Sundays of Lent; both day and evening classes are available. Last but not least, consider the Tuesday evening Bible study, Footsteps in Faith, meeting at 7 pm. St Francis Christian Formation has much to offer you during Lent and I pray that each of you will consider prayerfully these offerings to enrich your own Lenten spiritual practices.

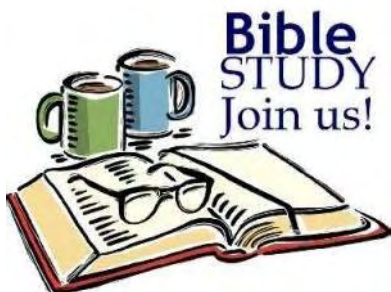
Faithfully yours,
Bennett



| | | | | | | |
|--------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|

Easter Study • 3 Colors of Love • 6 week study
Mondays beginning April 11 at NOON & 7:00 pm

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.

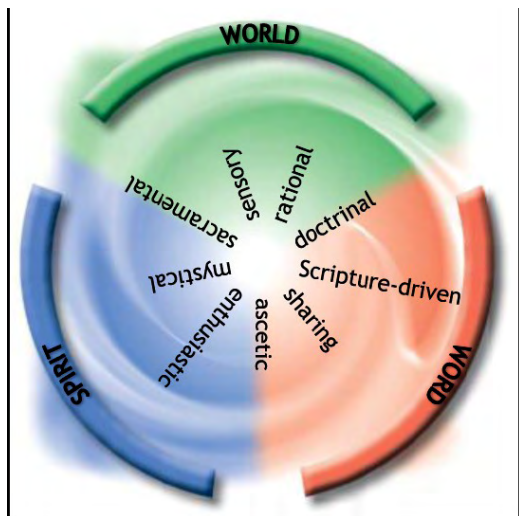
Thank you in advance, Doris Naugle & Elinor Ruth



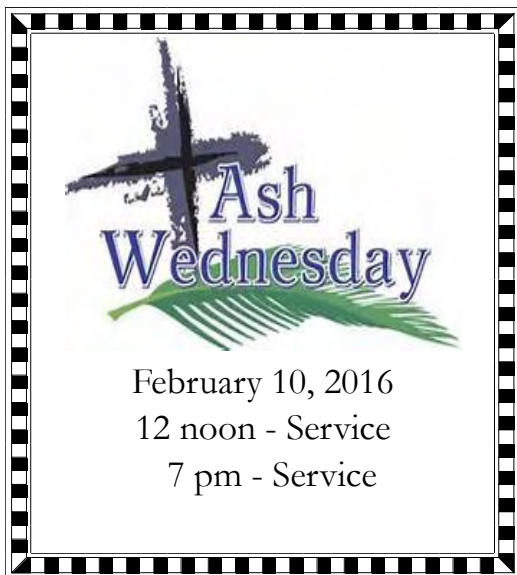
Upcoming Events

Lenten Series:

The 3 Colors of Your Spirituality



Learn how you most naturally connect with God. Fr. Conor will continue the 3 Colors series with *The 3 Colors of Your Spirituality*. In this class you will learn about nine distinct spiritual styles, which one you find the most natural, and how you can best grow closer to God. The class will begin on February 22 and run for 5 Mondays in Lent. Daytime and evening classes are available. The cost is \$12 for the materials, and sign-up sheets are in the Commons.



ECW News

Annual Souper Bowl Sunday February 7

Bring your donations of soup and other non-perishables and place them in the basket of your team! It's a win-win!

Annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper February 9, 5pm-7pm

Monetary donations for purchase of supplies are being accepted by Jerry Hawkins or Pat Osmunson.

Monthly Meeting

Saturday February 13
10 am in the
Crigger Room

Saint Francis Super Bowl Fund Raiser

Sunday, February 7
(after 10:30 Service)



One Meatball Sub
w/Fruit Punch—\$4.00

Supporting 20-40-60 Plan
Sign-up Sheet in Commons
For information: Ken Clarke

Happy
Valentine's Day!

Vestry Meeting Summary of Action

Vestry Meeting—January 20, 2016

Summary of Action

Book Discussion on Facebook: *Lasting Impact: 7 Powerful Conversations That Will Help Your Church Grow*, by Carey Nieuwhof. The Vestry and any interested parishioners will discuss the book in a new group on Facebook; those who would like to participate may contact Susan Moore or Kevin Kennedy to request an invitation.

Finance Report—Susan Golden: The financial outcome at the end of 2015 was very good. Due to fundraising and awareness as a parish, we spent less than had been budgeted and came out just \$784 short of the budget.

2016 Budget: To date, 52 pledges have been turned in, as opposed to 62 last year. Most budget items are the same in 2016 as in 2015. The budget was accepted and will be presented at each church service on Sunday, January 24. [Note: January 24 services were cancelled due to weather, so the budget will be presented at another time.] A major goal is to increase revenue by advertising and increasing rentals of the Parish Hall.

LGBT Discussion Task Force: The group has met to consider the message from the Primates of the Anglican Communion suspending the Episcopal Church (USA) for three years due to the 2015 General Convention's approval of same-sex marriages; such weddings would take place only in parishes that have decided to do so. Presiding Bishop Michael Curry's response was also discussed. The Task Force will follow up on the fall Bible Study on Romans in order to further the discernment process. The goal is for St. Francis to go into this process as a family and to come out of it as a family.

Strategic Planning Team: The SPT is reforming and restarting soon.

New Vestry Members and Roles: New members Kevin Kennedy and Twila Leavitt were welcomed, areas of responsibility were announced, and the Vestry accepted the slate of officers:

Senior Warden: Susan Moore

Junior Warden: Ed Silva

Treasurer: Roxanne Taylor

Registrar: Lynn Kennedy

Christian Formation: Twila Leavitt

Communication: Kevin Kennedy

Finance: Susan Golden

Outreach: Flavel Blyden

Stewardship: Ken Clarke

Ministry Area Reports

- **Senior Warden**—Susan Moore: Plans are under way for the Easter Egg Hunt on March 19. Donations of treats and trinkets to stuff eggs—as well as larger prizes—are being accepted. Christian Formation will also hold an Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Sunday.
- **Communications**—Kevin Kennedy: Kevin is being made an administrator for the website and Facebook page. He will also get Twitter info and has rated St. Francis on Yelp. He would like feedback on any communication.
- **Outreach**—Flavel Blyden: Outreach ideas are being sought. Flavel will serve as liaison between the Vestry and ecumenical group CUMLEGO, to which we belong.
- **Stewardship**—Ken Clarke: The 20-40-50 Campaign has raised \$4,300 so far. More fundraising is planned.

Respectfully submitted,
Lynn Kennedy, Registrar



St. Francis Episcopal Church Financial Update

As of November 30, 2015

| | Actual | Budget YTD | Difference |
|---------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Total Contributions | 147,257.76 | 150,758.67 | (3,500.91) |
| Total Operating Expenses | 148,006.85 | 151,477.33 | (3,470.48) |
| Net Income | (749.09) | (747.94) | |

Grass Cutters



Lawn service will resume in the spring.

Altar Flowers

February 7

The flowers on the Altar are given to the Glory of God in celebration of Heather's birthday by John & Vonja Ickes.

February 14

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

February 21

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

February 28

The flowers on the Altar are given to the Glory of God by Susan Golden for the blessings of her sons, Edward & Eric Golden.



Vestry Lock-Up

February 7

Susan Moore

February 14

Ken Clarke

February 21

Susan Moore

February 28

Ed Silva



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.