

# *The Epistle of St. Paul's, Bristol Parish* *Petersburg, Virginia*

June 2011

Dear St. Paul's Friends,

June is often a month involving transitions: a graduation from high school or college, the change from an academic schedule to the freedom of summer hours, or the movement towards more outdoor activities. June can be that specific point in the future about which we find ourselves wishing, "When I have a little bit more time on my hands, I will..." We always hope that we will make good use of the "extra" when we finally discover it in our hands or at our disposal. I would like to suggest some spiritual practices that might help each of us benefit from the slower pace of our lives in the summer months.

Those who enjoy reading the short meditations found in the *Forward Day by Day* may find it most convenient as the first thing they do in the morning or as the last thing they do at night before turning out the light. A refreshing change and perhaps even a new perspective might be gained by finding a quiet moment at mid-morning with a cup of coffee at the kitchen table or a cool glass of ice tea on the front porch or maybe even with a sparkling pink slice of watermelon after dinner. If you don't normally read the lessons for the day, it may very well be rewarding for you to add the reading of at least the gospel lesson to your routine. I am actually not suggesting that these slight variations on a successful practice be maintained year round, but could just be something different undertaken for the summer.

Another way to stretch your spiritual legs in June would be to get up fifteen minutes earlier than your usual time for arising and spend some time strolling about the yard or taking a different route about the neighborhood. "Not all who wander are lost" is a favorite T-shirt slogan and bumper sticker of mine. Often spiritual inspiration comes as a result of allowing God the opportunity to speak to our hearts. Before our minds are cluttered with the many tasks of the day, we can walk "in the cool of the day" with our Lord and ask him to direct our steps.

While working outside at dusk a few nights ago, my attention was diverted from the watering of the flowers by the flicker of the first fireflies under the tall oak trees. Though not quite as startling as the burning bush in the desert, I was reminded of Moses' encounter with God. My understanding is that the male fireflies are advertising their suitability as mates to their female counterparts, but I was swiftly filled with childhood memories of summer evenings chasing lightening bugs with mayonnaise jar in hand. My sister and I would always compete with one another to see who would catch the greater number. I also thought of God gently calling from the shadows, "Come, fall in love with me!"

One last thought about the spiritual benefits of summer. Perhaps there has been a bench or a chair or a quiet spot in the yard that has beckoned to you all winter long through a kitchen window. While letting warm tap water run over your hands and rinse a plate or a glass, you may have thought to yourself, "Oh, on an evening in June, I will sit there and read or meditate or even take a nap..." Go to that spot now and take a Bible with you. Read one of the parables that Jesus taught. He often spoke outside from a hillside or by the edge of the lake. Listen to the sound of the wind in the trees. Hear the songs of the birds, the croaking of the frogs and toads, the chirping of the insects. Take in the noisome surroundings and discern the voice of Jesus saying, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven." Spend a moment each day contemplating how heaven can be found on earth.

Peace, Rick

## *Strawberry Moon Celebration*

St. Paul's always creative Hospitality Committee continues with a monthly celebration on Wednesday evening. Last month Cinco de Mayo was observed with delicious Mexican fare. This month we celebrate the full moon—the "Strawberry Moon"—on June fifteenth.

Native Americans gave names to each full moon. It was a way to keep track of time and the seasons. Most people are aware of the autumn "Harvest Moon", a time when crops were gathered. The "Corn Moon" is in September and the howling of wolves on cold January nights supplied a name for that month.

While the strawberry season in Virginia is over by the middle of June, it is hitting its peak in New England. The Hospitality Committee will help us celebrate the occasion with a strawberry dessert. Let us be grateful the Committee has chosen to celebrate the full moon in June rather than in March. The March moon is the "Worm Moon", attributed to the spring thaw and new activity by earthworms.

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### *EGODS Progressive Dinner*

*~ Episcopalians Gathering Over Dinner & Socializing  
Saturday, June 11th*

Everyone is invited to this wonderful event, so mark your calendars! Please call the church office to make your reservation. The price per person is \$15. Those attending are asked to bring an appetizer or a dessert. When making your reservation, please let the office know what you plan to bring.

*Please RSVP no later than Wednesday, June 8th.*

Cocktails: 6:30 – 7:30 pm

Gordon & Barbara Finney's home

Dinner: 7:30 – 8:30 pm

Ted & Mary Stewart Ruhnke's home

Dessert: 8:30 pm

Jim Clements' home

#### *The Dinner Menu*

Beef Tenderloin, Spinach Salad, Asparagus,

Twice-Baked Potatoes and Rolls

Wine will be served with dinner

*To have the evening run more smoothly, we ask that those planning to attend please pay in advance.*

## *Vestry Highlights*

- Sr. Warden report - The Short-term Mission Trip to the Dominican Republic trip was a success. St. Paul's Petersburg is now known in the DR as "the painting church!"
- Jr. Warden report - The Wine Festival at Battersea was fun. The goal was to expose the church to more people. Each committee can spend up to its approved budget without Vestry approval. Windows in the rectory need replacing. Chris will get prices for the next meeting for replacing all of them or replacing only the most critical ones. The roof had new leaks and they have been repaired.
- Treasurer's report - Explained the budget. It is still unclear. Treasurer will e-mail Excel spreadsheet form of budget since it is easier to read. After the November Vestry elections, there should be a class for new vestry members on understanding the budget.
- Rector's report - Rick will have two children in college next year which will make his budget tight. Rick has asked for the Vestry to consider some creative ways to allow for more money such as a Rector's scholarship fund. Rick also needs to begin planning for his sabbatical in February or March of 2012. Rick is looking for input on what he should study, for example marketing or church growth. Rick gave some ideas to grow the church through liturgy such as Vacation Bible School or children's service. Rick will start the "Grow My Church!" video workshop soon. Rick also suggested spending money to hire a college student to start a youth group to appeal to more children.
- Committee Reports:
  - Hospitality- EGODS will be held Saturday, June 11th. Chris will start a rotation of Wednesday night dinners with a list of nine families to fill in the meal board. The June theme for dinner is "The Strawberry Moon" which is June 15th. Several families will bring a strawberry dessert.
  - ECW - ECW's latest outreach is "Stitches from the Heart". They will be knitting or crocheting hats and booties for newborns and preemies.
  - Membership - The Progress-Index has a Newcomer's Guide and St. Paul's will be listed.

**First Summer Wednesday Concert  
at St Paul's, Bristol Parish**

**Wednesday, June 22, 2011  
at 7:00 pm.**

Victoria I. Williams, Soprano  
Charles Lindsey, Jr., Piano & Organ  
Program of Classical, Sacred and Light Fare

The \$5 admission price will benefit  
the Joseph Whittle Music & Arts Fund



**Victoria Williams**, soprano, was born, raised, and is currently residing in Richmond, Virginia. Victoria humbly began her journey into performance at the age of thirteen, performing as a chorus member in various choirs and organizations in the Richmond metro area. Victoria made her amateur solo debut at fourteen with the Richmond Symphony in 2001, and through the course of her early career, she has performed in many national and international festivals in Verona, Italy; the Bahamas; Niagara, Canada; Myrtle Beach, SC; and right here in Richmond, VA. Victoria began her formal training at Virginia Commonwealth University, under the tutelage of L. Wayne Batty and the coaching of Melanie Kohn Day. While at VCU, Victoria was an active recitalist, as well as a member of VCU Opera Theater, with her most notable role being "Katisha" in Gilbert & Sullivan's "The Mikado". Victoria completed her first course of study in Graz, Austria in the American Institute of Musical Studies in 2010. In the 2011 vocal competition season, Victoria was a semifinalist in the Virginia Opera Bravissimo Society Competition, and was a national finalist in the Classical Singer Competition. This summer, Victoria will be making her international solo debut in Tuscany, Italy with Three Oaks Opera Company. When she isn't singing, Victoria takes much pleasure in linguistics, reading, writing, being outdoors with her dog, ViVi, and spending time with her absolutely wonderful family. Many thanks, peace, and blessings to all!

**Stewardship Notes**

Please remember that the operating expenses of the church do not go on vacation for the summer. Your continued efforts to keep up with your pledges and regular contributions to St. Paul's will be greatly appreciated by the Treasurer and our Parish Administrator. God loves a cheerful giver!

**Save the Date!**

Since we all had so much fun going up to Richmond for a Flying Squirrels baseball game last year, we have planned another outing for Tuesday, July 5th at 7 p.m. at the Diamond. Fireworks will be an additional treat for those who attend this game. For groups of 20 or more people, tickets are discounted \$1, so we good purchase \$7 Silver tickets (like last year) or \$10 Diamond tickets. More info to come!

**Little Notes from You**

Dear Friends at St. Paul's,

Thank you all so much for all the great things for Baby Keeler! We can't wait for another angel to join St. Paul's!

Love,

*Vanessa, Justin and Jack*

*(Holden Gray Keeler was born on May 17<sup>th</sup> at 12:17 a.m.)*

**June Birthdays**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Elizabeth McKain
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Ben Parks
- 5<sup>th</sup> Wayne Thompson
- 19<sup>th</sup> Kelly Nelson
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Margee Whittle
- 27<sup>th</sup> William Hatcher
- 28<sup>th</sup> Dollie Belangia
- 30<sup>th</sup> Chris McCarney

**June Anniversaries**

- 4<sup>th</sup> Bob and Carla Odom
- 7<sup>th</sup> Jim and Pat Ryan
- 8<sup>th</sup> Craig and Susie Parrish
- 29<sup>th</sup> Joe and Pat Aldrich
- 29<sup>th</sup> Scott and Karen Guthrie

**Did we miss your birthday or anniversary?**

Please forgive us! If we did, let us know. We may not have had the information. As a parish family, we really do want to remember each person's birthday and anniversary.