

INSIDE

KEVIN'S KERYGMA by Fr. Kevin Warner +

Photo Directory Update

Pg. 3

Diocesan Convention Pg. 2

Birthdays Pg. 4

Junior Warden's View Pg. 5

New Member Sunday Pg. 6

Geraldine Buckley Bio Pg. 8

Your Chance to Take Part in a Workshop Pg. 9

Children of the King Pg. 10

Almost a Miracle on Del Webb Pg. 11

Absalom Jones Pg. 12

Lord's Lighthouse Pg. 14 I am writing this in advance of the Annual Meeting (deadlines, deadlines, deadlines . . .) but by the time you read this we will have elected four new vestry members. Some of you, even if you have been an Episcopalian a long time, may not know what the role of vestry members is, and so I thought I might take a little time to outline what being on vestry means in the hope that more of you might become interested in serving in the future.



There is very little said in the Canons of the Episcopal Church about the vestry. Primarily the vestry serves as the fiduciary agents of the corporation in its state, handle relations with its clergy, and the rector shall preside at its meetings. Outside of these three things, there is little direction. So, what is the role of the Vestry?

My inspiration for this comes from an article in <u>Renewal Works</u> by the Rev. David Roseberry, a priest in Plano, Texas. I have taken some a couple of his points and modified them, added some ideas of my own, and come up with the list below.

The Role of the Vestry

1. Seek the Will of God for the Parish.

Many people think of the parish as governed through a representative democracy. After all, vestry are elected from the membership and those who cast votes might reasonably expect that those who they vote in will represent their wants. After all, our church polity was formed by the Founding Fathers and so it would make sense that what we expect out of our church government would be the same as what we expect out of our national government.

As I write this our national government is shut down, many of my friends and thousands of good people are not getting paid, our debt is beyond comprehension, etc. I want better for our parish. If we are Christians, we believe Jesus is the head of the church. If that is true, then our primary obligation is to seek His will and not our own. I believe our Founding Fathers were very altruistic, considered serving in government a privilege and that we would always seek to do the right thing and there would be no such thing as "special interests." Unfortunately, their vision has been corrupted over time until we have a government that is responsive, not to a vision of self-sacrifice and service, but to insuring reelection and responding to lobbyists with the deepest pockets.

Thus, for the church, we seek to become a theocracy guided by no one other than Jesus. Hopefully those you elected last Saturday are people of prayer, trained in the art of listening for the "still, small voice" of Jesus and not the roar of the crowd. If seeking God's will for the parish is the goal, then it is met by people who are faithful first.

2. Enact the Vision

Once the vestry and rector determine God's will it is then necessary to see it realized in the life of the parish. Anyone can "Cast the Vision" but it is much harder to see it through and enact the vision in the life of the parish. Since God <u>never</u> calls for the status quo, making the vision a reality invariably involves change which invariably is met with resistance.

With all the attributes of the Spirit and the love of Christ, leadership must gently, patiently, lovingly move God's will forward and assist others in catching the vision. Good communication is a must, and a thick skin to absorb attacks of the fearful. Fear is the opposite of faith and often accompanies change. Being faithful is the result of doing the work of number #1 and refining the vision through continuous prayer and discussion.

3. Uphold Financial Integrity

The Vestry is also charged with protecting the financial integrity of the church. Through a designated Finance team, the Vestry should scrutinize the finances on a monthly basis. They should provide for an annual audit of all funds; approve budgets and make routine reports to the congregation. They should approve long-term financial contracts and basically act as guardians of the financial life of the parish to ensure that the church has a long-term future and is operating in a trustworthy way with all funds that have been given or borrowed.

4.Support the Rector

Supporting the Rector is the fourth key role of the Vestry. The Rector is the main agent of the Vestry to accomplish 1, 2, and 3 above. The Vestry's primary role then is to help the Rector accomplish these things. Vestry leadership is never honorary; they are not rubber stamps for what the Rector decides is best. But they are not either to be "devil's advocates" (who needs that!?), the loyal opposition, or representatives of any special interest groups or programs in the parish. The Vestry have one job in a sense: find the Rector to lead the parish in 1, 2 and 3 (above) and support him however they can.

5. Model Sacrificial Giving

The final role of the Vestry is to model sacrificial, tithe-based giving to the parish. The Vestry should be among the most generous and financially committed members of the church. Why? Obviously, the leadership should never ask members to give beyond their own willingness to give; their own personal level of commitment. Leaders lead in every area. That makes sense. But the Vestry should be strong givers because people who are sacrificial givers...tithers...have usually discovered in themselves a heart of generosity that will help create a parish-wide culture of generosity in the years to come.

Hopefully this gives you an idea of what a vestry is and does. It remains the only group I know of named after a room. (In England the "vestry" was a room near the worship area that leadership met in, and the room became the name of the group.)

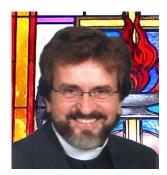
I look forward to our upcoming vestry retreat where we will begin our work together seeking the will of God. Please keep me and all the leadership in your prayers as we continue to seek and serve our Lord!

Blessings!

Kevin+

II Timothy 1:11

PHOTO DIRECTORY UPDATE



It is with much regret that I must inform you that our photo directory has been cancelled for the time being. For an explanation, let me start at the beginning.

At our Diocesan Convention, a representative of Life Touch Photography had a "booth" promoting the Church Family Directory. This year, they had something new – a pocket size directory that

could be kept up to date with a reprint for each 15 new parishioners. Churches that signed up by a specific date would also earn a cash bonus regardless of the number of persons initially photographed. This would be done at no cost to the parishioner or the church and each person photographed would receive a free 8x10 portrait with no purchase necessary. That sounded good to me and since this was the company that did our last directory (2012), I made an appointment to speak with that representative.

At the meeting, he informed me that the company would be offering a "webinar" – essentially, a seminar through the web in which he would describe, to persons I selected, the benefits of our working together to produce this new directory. Parishioners would be informed, although they need not make a purchase, doing so is what makes the directory possible and a certain amount purchased would give another cash bonus to the church. Those persons would then pass along this information to our parishioners.

Parishioners would electronically be scheduled and that information sent to the company prior to the photography session.

I let the representative know that I was unhappy with that arrangement and would not agree to a "webinar" or the sending of parishioner information prior to the session. I said I would have the sufficient number required to be photographed and I would give each person a price list for anything that might be offered. I wanted no "surprises" and no intimidation. If he would be willing to accept those conditions, I was ready to sign the contract.

I signed the contract, we set the date, and I began the sign up sheet. We collected pages of names of those ready for the photography sessions. We were ready to go.

Then, the representative called and cancelled. He refused to say why.

Father Lee

February *HAPPY* BIRTHDAY!

Dennis Accardo	2/1
Nancy Mercer	2/1
Dianne Ohlandt	2/1
Thomas Rawlings	2/2
Deborah Carlisle	2/4
Beth Weaver	2/5
Barbara Capron	2/6

Leslie Clarke	2/10
Corrin Neal	2/10
Wendy Smith	2/11
Kristen Pieper	2/12
Deborah Wigmore	2/12
Valerie Lang	2/14
Mary Mobley	2/14
Brenda Coman	2/15

Elaine Shepard	2/17
Leslie Pollard	2/19
Kathleen McNamara	2/22
W Grimm	2/23
Randell Sample	2/24
Marjorie Baker	2/25
Marlene Myrick	2/25
Sandra Powell	2/26
Marcel Butts	2/27
Jack Edison	2/27



Jim & Marjorie Moore - Pyles	2/2
Curtis & Susan Arp	2/5
Raymond & Iva Patterson	2/10
Kenneth & Linda Worachek	2/10
Mark & Annie Hunter	2/18
Frank & Mary Lynn Ray	2/23
Charles & Claudia Lieble	2/25

Junior Warden View JAN '19

Well, here we are again, as you read this we've put one month in the books. Looks like this year is gonna fly by too!

So project and church life wise, not whilst I write, but hopefully when you read, the trim on the new building will be done. Hurricane shutter brackets are on the building with the shutters at the ready when needed. Landscaping prep has been done and the actual laying on of the beauty and stone will commence soon. And the Annex has real people working in it and having meetings and singing and vesting and making



copies and (using the facilities) etc. Etc. AND....congratulations to our new vestry people, whomever you might be (the curse of mid prior month writing)! Thank you so much for volunteering in this rewarding ministry.

Ahhhhh, volunteerism; Volunteerism is the practice of *providing time and skills for the benefit of other people and causes* rather than for financial benefit. We have a bunch of really good people who do really good things for this really good church. And I applaud and thank you for using your time and skills for SJD. All y'all are too numerous to name, but I hope to change that in the near future. I think it's way time to give credit where credit is due! (which reminds me my bank gives me credit but the bill comes due...but I digress.) And we could really use more people to give time and talent for SJD. It really can be enjoyable and rewarding. So I ask you to think about what appeals to you and how you could assist. And let me or any vestry person know.

Well I guess that's all I got for ya this time. GOD only knows what'll fall out my head next time... GOD Bless

Greg Diehl







NEW MEMBER SUNDAY DECEMBER 30, 2019

The last Sunday of each month is designated New Member Sunday at St. John Divine. On December 30 we welcomed 10 new members to our church: Phil Bethea, Gene and Francis Doyle, Dan and Ann Gifford, June Lohren, Donna Lohren, Marietta Morgan, Vivian Smalls and Denise Smalls. New Member Sunday is follow by a New

Member Party which is held at the home of one of our Welcome Ministry members and at which the new member is provided with the opportunity to meet clergy, vestry members and other members of our church.

The St. John Divine Welcoming Ministry is very active in recognizing and greeting visitors to our church. Members are at each service and are available to assist guests with information about our services, introduce them to our clergy and other members of SJD and to invite them to join us at coffee hour. An information packet is provided as well as a small loaf of bread which has a tag on it which says: "Thank you for breaking bread with us".



8:00 a.m. Donna Lohren, June Lohren, Phil Bethea



9:15 a.m. Francis & Gene Doyle, absent Mariet ta Morgan



11:00 a.m. Denise Smalls, Vivian Smalls, Dan and Ann Gifford



Norma Collins, Cheryl and Berne Clary, Susan Detweiler, Fr. Kevin, Leah Richardson

We have a wonderful group of the Welcome Member Ministry who welcome the new faces that God has led through our doors. BUT, we would also love to have more members join us! If you feel you would like to join the Membership Ministry, please let us know! Joel's cell is 727 643-8971 and Brooke's is 727 643-8970. We would welcome you with open arms and guide you in this lovely ministry!

In Christ's Love, Brooke and Joel Taliaferro

Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious

Father Lee and Yoniece Miller's granddaughter, Sage Miller, scheduled to perform as "Jane" in Manatee County Performing Arts Center Broadway series presentation of Mary Poppins the musical.

This February may very well prove to be Supercalifragilistic expialidocious for fans of Mary Poppins the musical. Set in 1910 London, we're introduced to the Banks family, where the children have gone through numerous nannies. Luckily, Mary Poppins flies in to bring whimsy, magic and commonsense discipline for both the children and grownups. Sage Miller plays Jane, the high-spirited daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Banks. Another familiar face to our congregation, Ellen Zwieg Kleinschmidt, will play Mrs. Corry, a magical and mysterious gingerbread shop owner. Sage Miller will appear on stage as Jane on the following dates: Feb 14, 7:30, Feb 17, 2:00, Feb 21 7:30, Feb 23, 8:00, Feb 27, 7:30, March 1, 8:00, March 2, 8:00. Tickets on sale now at www.manateeperformingartscenter.com



Geraldine Buckley Bio www.geraldinebuckley.com info@geraldinebuckley.com c. 240 344 7479

With her trademark wit, warmth and humor, internationally known, award-winning storyteller and educator Geraldine Buckley has been involved in storytelling, speaking, conducting workshops, and coaching for over thirty years in the US, Canada, England, Holland, South

Africa, Spain and New Zealand.

Known primarily for personal stories that make people laugh and think, Geraldine teaches workshops, and performs in conferences, colleges, schools, corporations, and house-concerts. She has appeared as a featured teller in festivals throughout the US, including twice at the National Storytelling Festival, in Jonesborough, TN., and the Timpanogos Storytelling Festival in Orem, Utah.

The recent workshops Geraldine has taught include a cross-denominational workshop for pastors at the International Storytelling Center in Jonesborough, TN, and was asked to repeat the same workshop as a precursor to the 2018 National Storytelling Festival; a three day workshop for hospital chaplains from Louisville, KY; and a storytelling workshop for ordained ministers at the prestigious Festival of Homiletics in Washington, DC.

Until January 2010, Geraldine was the Protestant Chaplain at the largest men's prison in Maryland, an adventure that gave her many stories. Since then she has conducted storytelling workshops in prisons in the US, and also in Rimutaka, New Zealand's largest men's prison. She often does her prison stories in university criminal justice departments, and well as giving workshops for public defenders and criminal social workers.

However Geraldine doesn't just have stories about prisons. Indeed not! In her eclectic past she has been, among other things, a minister in a large London Church, a radio DJ, a television newsreader, an events director, a ghostwriter, a food critic, a magazine editor, and an award winning performance poet. She has a habit of stumbling into inadvertent adventures, and her stories leave listeners both entertained and moved.

Geraldine is frequently heard on Sirius radio, and is the recipient of three gold awards from Storytelling World as well as many other accolades. Geraldine is an ordained minister, has as an MA in Communication and Christian Ministry from Regent University, and lives in Frederick, Maryland, 45 minutes from Washington DC. Find out more on her website www.geraldinebuckley.com

"Rocking the Flock with Stories" Workshop

Geraldine is bringing her talents to St. John Divine for a one off workshop that is designed for preachers, business people, grandparents, counselors, Sunday School teachers, prison chapel volunteers, and anyone who wants to change people's lives through story. It explores:

The power of personal stories in communicating with an audience

Using humor to transform lives

Using stories as an outreach tool

Shaping a personal story.

Part lecture and part group discussion with an interactive element, you will be telling stories before the time is through!

Workshop details are as follows:

The storytelling workshop will take place on Saturday February 23rd from 10am to 3pm, and there will be a performance by Geraldine from 7-9pm. The cost is \$15 for the concert, \$35 for the workshop - which includes lunch - or \$40 for the two combined.

Some Feedback on Geraldine:

"An outstanding, well-crafted workshop."

"Awesome! Fun, inspiring, packed with activity and information."

"Great audience participation. Fabulous exercises that brought out the creativity of each member of the workshop."

Aren't We All Children of the King?

Aren't we all children of the King –Sons and Daughters? Of course, but what sets our chapter of St John the Divine's parish women is a vow of service, prayer and evangelism that we try to incorporate into our Rule of Life. It is not easy and it is always evolving but we remain committed to it.

This past December the chapter took on a Reverse Advent project. Instead of receiving a gift each day before Christmas, as traditional Advent calendars do, we each set up boxes and placed an item *into* them each day. The items were food, clothing, toys, games, etc. On December 19th we filled three cars with items from our boxes and delivered them to the Lord's Lighthouse. What a joyous way to celebrate the season!

This winter and spring we have started a spiritual formation study that is published by our Order called Continuing the Journey. We will be reading, studying and discussing a chapter a month at our meetings held on the second Friday of each month. Our meetings are open to any woman of the parish and we invite you to come see what this is about.

Finally, as you may be aware of, our chapter makes its presence known at funerals and memorials as we lead the Compassionate Friends ministry. The chapter was asked to take the lead by Fr Kevin when the need arose a few years ago. However, it was never intentioned that the Compassionate Friends be exclusively Daughters of the King. We would very much like to invite anyone who has been a part of this ministry before or has a desire to start to let me know so you can be added to the email list and get notified when a service is planned. We also invite the men of the church to participate..those coffee urns are HEAVY!

As Daughters of the King we start each day asking "Lord, what would you have me do?"

Wendy Smith

Almost A Miracle on Del Webb

Around the middle of December 2018, Yoniece Miller approached me and asked whether a workshop for our Lectors would be a good idea. Once we cleared the date January 19th was selected. So, on a sleepy Saturday morning January 19th., a group of saints assembled at St. John Divine to stage a Lector Workshop. Prior, an Invitation to this workshop was extended to the entire congregation with the targeted audience being Lectors and Lay Eucharistic Ministers.

Sign up sheets were placed at the back of the church and at the close of the day, January 18th, there were 16 prospective attendees.

Initially the session was scheduled to be held in the Sanctuary, but on Saturday Yoniece suggested utilizing the Music Room in the annex given the anticipated small size of the attendance.

As 10:00 a.m. approached, the numbers just started increasing. From an initial number of sixteen, it swelled to 26. (The week's Gospel, John 2: 1-11 became so ironic) Thank God Yoniece our lecturer had prepared 30 folders.

The session was started with a prayer. Yoniece then informed the participants that they would be using the week's readings as a case study. Participants were invited to read the similar verses in "The Message" to get the gist of the reading.

Topics explored were:

Why study and practice interpretive reading
What is interpretive reading
Analyzing of reading material.
Improvement of delivery and reading with confidence.

At the end of Session 1, there was a slight break for refreshments in the Fellowship Hall after which participants broke off into smaller groups to do exercises in reading and critiquing,

At noon, the session ended and the participants all left expressing their pleasure at the time well spent.

Aubrey V. Thompson

Head Verger



Absalom Jones by Aubrey V. Thompson

Absalom Jones, the first ordained priest of African descent in the United States was born into slavery in Sussex, Delaware in 1776. He taught himself to read in his early teens from books he purchased by saving pennies given to him by visitors to his master's home. At the age of sixteen, Jones' family was separated when his immediate family members were sold and he was taken to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania by his owner. Jones worked as a clerk in his owner's store by day and was allowed to attend an all-black school at night.

In 1770, Jones married a fellow slave, and through hard work and the help of friends and his father-in-law, he was able to buy his wife's freedom. Jones saved enough to purchase his freedom in 1784. He was an active member of St. George's Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia and served as lay preacher for the black members of the congregation. In 1786, Richard Allen joined Jones at the church and their futures would forever be intertwined. The black membership at St. George's increased tenfold as a result of the evangelistic efforts of Jones and Allen. But this increase was not welcome by the white members of the congregation. Instead of praising their efforts, church officials responded by attempting to separate the black congregants. During a Sunday service in November 1786, ushers attempted to remove all blacks, including Jones, from the main floor of the church to the balcony. Jones, Allen and the black members of the congregation promptly left the church as a group.

Jones and Allen subsequently founded the Free African Society on April 12, 1787. Members of this organization met regularly and paid dues which were used to benefit those in need. This organization was crucial in caring for the sick and dying of Philadelphia when a yellow fever epidemic swept the city in 1793. Out of this society grew the African Church, organized on July 7, 1791. Both Jones and Allen wanted to remain affiliated with the Methodist Church, but their followers voted overwhelmingly to affiliate with the Episcopal Church as a result of their persecution by the Methodists at St. George's. Allen disagreed with the decision and withdrew from the African Church taking a small number of members with him.

Jones remained as the leader of the African Church which was formerly received into the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania on October 17, 1794 and renamed St. Thomas African Episcopal Church. St. Thomas was the first black Episcopal parish in the United States. Bishop William White (bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania) ordained Jones a deacon in the Episcopal Church 1795 and a priest in 1804. Jones became the first ordained priest of African descent in the United States.

Jones died at his home in Philadelphia in 1818. He first appeared on the Episcopal calendar of saints in the Book of Common Prayer in 1979.

Collect for Absalom Jones

Set us free, heavenly Father, from every bond of prejudice and fear; that, honoring the steadfast courage of your servant Absalom Jones, we may show forth in our lives the reconciling love and true freedom of the children of God, which you have given us in your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen ("Holy Women, Holy Men," p.221)

THE WOMEN OF SJD

The Fall Festival and Rummage Sale events have been completed. The monies available for distribution from the Rummage Sale will be printed in the March Revelations. The Men of SJD were extremely helpful in making these events so successful...and in making them so much fun for the Church Family. Thank you to everyone who graciously volunteered their time and talents

Prayers for our recently departed

Thom Brown April 27, 1937 – January 5, 2019

Carole Del Castillo December 2, 1942 – January 5, 2019

The Lord's Lighthouse Ministry

The Lord's Lighthouse Ministry, located at 5603 State Road 674, Wimauma (across from the post office), is dedicated to helping local families. Through the ACCESS program authorized by Hillsborough County, the Mission helps people acquire aid to which they are entitled. Services offered include job searches, spiritual counseling, translation, and crisis intervention. People in need receive food, clothing, and other essentials.

The Mission provides worship with a church service and Sunday School at the SDA Church in Wimauma. Many children and youth are ministered to and learn about Jesus.

NEWS FROM THE MISSION

As an Advent outreach project, the Daughters of the King donated bags of nonperishable food and toys to the Lord's Lighthouse. The SJD outreach committee donated \$1,500.00 to the Mission, and the Women of St. John the Divine donated \$553.00 from the Fall Festival profits.

NEEDS RIGHT NOW INCLUDE:

MONEY to purchase perishable foods and to meet people's emergency needs NONPERISHABLE FOOD, especially Maseca flour, flour tortillas, pinto beans, oil, cereal, peanut butter, macaroni and cheese

BLANKETS AND WARM CLOTHING

Shoes, clothing for men, women, and children (from newborn sizes up). All shoes and clothing donated must be clean and in good shape.

Baby food, formula, diapers

Personal hygiene items

Wal-Mart gift certificates (to buy shoes and clothes for the children)

COULD YOU HELP?

Any contribution, no matter how small, is needed and gratefully appreciated. Checks may be made out to St. John the Divine, earmarked The Lord's Lighthouse. People who wish to volunteer or obtain services may call 813-641-7100 or 813-641-7114. The Mission is open Wednesdays from 12-4 p.m. Thank you for helping!

Jack Edison Band Blues & Jazz Concert February 22 At SJD

The Jack Edison band presents, Rebirth of the Blues X and Big Band Era Jazz, with soloists Lisa Velasco and Troy Coman, Friday, February 22 at 7:00 p.m., here at SJD. The band's tune list includes, "Take the 'A' Train," "Satin Doll," handled in high-scat fashion by vocalist Lisa Velasco, "Here's That Rainy Day," "String Of Pearls," and other jazz and blues favorites, along with an R&B classic, "Kansas City," featuring vocalist, Troy Coman. \$10 tickets are available online at www.stjohndivine.com/box-office, also at the SJD box office Wednesdays and Sundays, in February from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., and at the door prior to the performance, if available.

Harry Stanton, who heads The South Shore Brass, is the concert's narrator. The Edison band members are Ken Easton, trumpet, Neil Theriault, tenor sax, Dave Evans, baritone sax, Dave Wolf, drums, Dave Brown, bass, Gary Tatlock, piano and Jack Edison, trombone. One big band musician, hearing the Edison band for the first time, exclaimed, "Amazing, how seven guys sound like seventeen."

FEBRUARY OUTREACH FOCUS: PARISH DISCRETIONARY FUND

Did you know that the Outreach Committee has a **Parish Discretionary Fund**? This fund was established to assist our own parishioners who have emergency financial needs. Requests are made to an Outreach Committee member or the rector. After review funds may be disbursed to pay specific bills but cannot be given directly to the person.

For instance: we had a person who was temporarily unemployed and could not make their car payment. A check to the car companies finance division was cut and the car payment made. Anyone may contribute to the fund and you will have an opportunity to hear more about it later this month.



St John Divine Episcopal Church 1015 E. Del Webb Blvd. Sun City Center, FL 33573

813-633-3970

sjd-office@stjohndivine.com

www.stjohndivine.com

Vestry

Katie Arp Curt Arp Aubrey Thompson Coretta Butts Isabel De Tringo Liz Hood Walter Powell Jim Smith Linda Burmeister

Vestry Officers

Don Fisher Sr. Warden Greg Diehl Jr. Warden Barbara Gingrich Clerk Susan Arp Treasurer

Clergy and Staff

The Rt. Rev. Dabney T. Smith
Bishop of the Diocese of Southwest Florida
The Rev. Kevin Warner, Rector
The Rev. Lee Miller, Associate
Paulette Carney, Deacon
Howard Roshaven, Praise Leader
Joan Frankel, Organist & Choir Director
Dean Crawford, Media Specialist
Jane Hollis, Office Administrator
Candy Allman, Parish Life Administrator