

E-Portion ~ May 2009



The following are edited excerpts from a Pentecost sermon I preached three years ago on June 4, 2006. For those interested in reading the unedited manuscript, it can be found on our church website at

<http://www.stfranchisholden.org/documents/Pentecost2006.pdf>

We believe in one God, revealed in three persons, traditionally referred to as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Pentecost is the feast day upon which we celebrate that third person of the Holy Trinity—perhaps the most elusive one. *We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and Son is worshiped and glorified.*

In the second chapter of Acts, Luke speaks of the Spirit as like *the rush of a violent wind*. We know how powerful the wind can be—and while the Spirit may sometimes be experienced like a cool summer breeze that's not how it's described in Acts. It stirs things up, pushes people out of their comfort zones and whirls about like a tornado, before there is a kind of United Nations' experience of many different languages being spoken. The Spirit brings understanding, breaking down walls that divide. Imagine the many different "tribes" where there is conflict in our time and you have a sense of what is happening here: think Palestinian and Israeli, North Korean and Taiwanese and Chinese and Iranian and Iraqi and American and Sudanese and Liberian and Chilean—all in one place. And then imagine a process of reconciliation where each is heard sharing his or her dreams and visions in her own native tongue, as the Spirit calls all to the dawn of a new day and new possibilities.

The Psalmist speaks in a more existential way: our very breath is of God. When that breath—that *ruah* of God is taken away—we die; it's as simple as that. (Psalm 104:30) The difference between life and death is in our breathing. And so as Anna Nalick puts it, "cradle your head in your hands [and] breathe—just breathe." The suggestion here is that if you want to find God then you don't have to look far; look within. Learn from the Buddhists who also remind us to just breathe—in and out.

That same Spirit of the living God, says the Psalmist, is at work in the creation as a whole, not just in each creature. The Spirit is unleashed and springtime comes and the face of the earth is renewed. The Spirit hovers over all things to make them new again. Wherever the face of the earth is renewed, God the Holy Spirit is present.

St. Paul reminds us that it is the Spirit who is there to help us in our weakness. (Romans 8:26) When we can't pray (or feel we can't pray) and our sighs are too deep for words: the Spirit is still there. The Spirit *intercedes*, to use the big theological word. The Spirit *intervenes* to act on our behalf, calling us back to the God who has created us in love as Abba, and redeemed us in love through Jesus.

Finally, in John's Gospel, the imagery used to speak of the Spirit is borrowed from the legal profession. The Spirit is our *Advocate*, Jesus says. (John 15:26) The Advocate leads us into the truth. Notice that Jesus is clear: while he is no doubt the Way, the Truth, and the Life we always see the Truth through a glass darkly, and the journey is a kind of never-ending story. God is not finished yet: not with us, not with the Church, not with creation. Those who claim to possess the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth (and like Joe Friday reduce that truth to "just the facts") miss this point. The suggestion here is that the Spirit keeps us moving in the right direction—holds us together in a place where we can be both loved and challenged.

So does the Spirit come as Comforter or as Un-Comforter (who pushes us out of our comfort zones? Is the Spirit a mighty wind or a gentle breath? Yes!

Peace in Christ,
Rich

Bishop's Visit and Confirmation
Sunday, May 10, 2009
10:00 a.m.



Join us as we welcome our Bishop, The Rt. Rev. Gordon P. Scruton, to celebrate with those being confirmed and received.

A reception will follow the service. Please sign up in the narthex if you would like to help with cheese and crackers, baked goods, serving punch, setting and cleaning up.

Please pray for those being confirmed and received.

Confirmed Kate Apholt, Catherine McCullough, Patrick Pope,
Jonathan Rooke, Jenna Schmidt
Received Richard Farrell

Thanks to those who served as mentors to this year's confirmands.

Robin Carlo, Beth Ann Carrigan, Laura Caswell, Bev Giarusso and Fred Lonardo



CHURCH SCHOOL

- Sunday May 31 - Pentecost: Eucharist Instruction celebration and Youth-led service: No Church School for children in 1st – 6th grade. Church School for Preschool and Kindergarten only.
- Sunday June 7: Pageant preparation during Church School. Children will be out for the whole service.
- Sunday June 14: Pageant presentation during the 10:00 AM service.
- Weekend of June 20/21 (Father's Day): Year-End Banner Parties

Eucharist Instruction

The Eucharist Instruction class will be honored at the 10:00 a.m. service on Pentecost, May 31st.

Please pray for those who have participated.

John Chisholm, Michael Clemente, Mason Deane, Tyler Fafard, Brigid Halloran, Ryan Halloran, Abigail Keagle, Ethan Kimball, Molly McDade, Josh Thibodeau, Abby Mann, Luke Miller, Ben Miller, Bobby Toning, Emily Toning, Margaret Whamond

Mission Matters



Mission Matters

This piece is written on Earth Day and is shaped by that fact. The most recent issue of *Sojourners* (May, 2009), the magazine published by the evangelical organization of the same name, is on environmental justice. It addresses our common mission to protect the planet, create new clean technologies for energy, and modernize the workforce. For more information, check out www.sajo.net. Back issues of *Sojourners* appear in the narthex; take a moment to look through them.

More locally, the issue of environmental justice is raised up by the Regional Environmental Council in Worcester, a non-profit that operates community gardens throughout the city and this summer expects to have a farmers market this summer. They also monitor, advocate action on, and organize residents around issues of toxic dumping and toxins in at-risk neighborhoods. You can learn about upcoming events and seedling sales at www.recworcester.org.

Finally, the Mission Committee looks forward to hearing the results of St. Francis' Discerning the Future effort. We will have met at the end of April and hope to implement any goals they set for mission and outreach.

Jim Bourque for the Mission Committee.



Prayer Shawl Ministry

I wish to once again thank everyone for the remarkable work each month. Truly outstanding. I look forward to seeing you all at our gathering in May. Remember knitting means prayer and meditation.

PS4FS (Prayer Shawls for Fallen Soldiers)

We now feel we are in a 'maintenance' stage with this Ministry. I urge you to go to the website (<http://webpages.charter.net/ps4fs/shawls/>) and read for yourself the touching letters from family members of fallen servicemen and women

Beryl Turner

Mission to El Salvador

Members of the El Salvador Mission Team will speak on the weekend of June 6th and 7th about their most recent visit to El Salvador.

Nancy Brunelle will speak at the 5:00 p.m. service, which will be followed by a potluck supper and presentation of slides and reflections. They'll also answer any questions.

MaryAnn DiPinto will speak at the 8:00 a.m. service and Nancy will speak again at the 10:00 a.m. service, which will be followed by coffee, baked goods, pastries and presentation of slides and reflections.

A sign up sheet will be put out for the potluck soon.

We thank you for all your support and we look forward to seeing you there.

Our Capital Campaign began on January 1, 2006, with a goal of \$325,000. We have substantially met that goal, being shy of that number by \$11,000. The donors have been very faithful in continuing pledged payments, which has allowed us to proceed with our projects and deferred maintenance.



Accomplishments:

- Complete renovation of worship space including refinishing pews, installation of wallboard, painting, new altar table, new clear windows for beauty and efficiency, new flooring, accessible spacing and furnishings
- Expansion and renovation of Memorial Garden, correction of significant drainage issues, paved walkways for beauty and accessibility, complete landscape design for simplicity and ease of care, sitting wall, plantings
- Roof repairs on all buildings
- Exterior painting of rectory and church
- Gutter installation
- Exterior bell stabilized and refurbished
- Parish mission trip to El Salvador, contribution of funds and development of ongoing supportive relationship with *Fundacion Cristosal*
- Renovations to St. Clare House

Additional gifts were the grand piano (\$8,600) and new sound system (\$8,836)

We would appreciate meeting our stated goal, especially as we uncover more maintenance projects as we proceed. Any of you who have not donated or pledged are welcome to do so. There are forms available in the office or from Kathleen O'Connor (508-829-2407).

Kathleen E. O'Connor, Capital Campaign Chair

Between Jobs Ministry of the Episcopal Churches of Greater Worcester

The Episcopal Churches of Greater Worcester are launching a Between Jobs Ministry and are pleased to announce a first offering of a series of six free Monday evening workshops open to the public to assist with your job search—facilitated by career counselors Terry Chapman, PhD and Sam Davenport, therapists Jennifer Berton, PhD and Ray Demers, LICSW, and clergy, Lise Hildebrandt and Kevin Bean. These will run six Mondays beginning May 4, from 7-8:30 p.m. at All Saints:

May 4	Developing an Effective Resume
May 11	Workshop on Successful Networking
May 18	How to Succeed at Interviewing
May 25	Life in the Wilderness
June 1	Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction
June 8	What in God's Name are You Doing: Discerning Call, Gifts and Vision



Thanks to all for your cards, loving thoughts and expressions of support following my accident last month. I've missed joining you for Lent but look forward to being with you to continue to celebrate Easter.

God Bless, Gloria Goewey



The deadline for the next Little Portion is Thursday, May 21st

Please have all information to the office by this date. You can leave it in the Office mailbox or email it to stfran@verizon.net. The Little Portion will be mailed on Thursday, May 28th

Senior Luncheon

You are cordially invited to attend a luncheon in honor of you, our Senior members of the parish, on Wednesday, May 20th, from 11:00 am to 1:30 pm at St. Francis Episcopal Church. You are welcome to bring your spouse or a guest.

Come and join the fellowship!

Wednesday, May 20th

*Eucharist at 11:00 am
Reception at 11:30 am
Luncheon at Noon*

Please R.S.V. P. by May 6th by returning the enclosed form, signing up in the narthex, or by calling Karen Heath at 508-829-3344.

We look forward to seeing you.

*Many volunteers are needed to help with the luncheon.
Please sign up in the narthex or contact Kathleen O'Connor
(508-829-2407 or KEOMARSAR@aol.com)*