



Historic St. George's United Methodist Church



NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2007; Vol. 26, No. 4



Charles Wesley, “Live” at Historic St. George’s October 14

Celebrating Charles Wesley’s 300th year, **ST Kimbrough**, acclaimed actor, singer, and President of the Charles Wesley Society brings his 2007 tour to Philadelphia on October 14th at 4 PM.

Sweet Singer, a musical performance and play, brings Charles Wesley to life and provides a moving experience that will bring a new depth to your spiritual journey. The audience will experience the drama and pertinent message behind one of the most prolific poets and writers of the Christian church. The issues Charles faced still speak loudly to our contemporary congregations: his struggle against poverty, courage in the face of violence, emphasis on inward spirituality, and social outreach ... these are the themes that ran through his life and his words. We will have a unique opportunity to explore the creativity that brought us universally loved hymns such as “O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing” and “Hark the Herald Angels Sing.”

Added Bonus

Also appearing at St. George’s that day will be a 100 voice choir from United Methodist churches across the

Conference. The choir will preview a selection from *their* Wesley Program being performed November 4 at the Asbury UMC in Norristown..

Bishop Matthews Meets Ordinands at St. George’s

Here at Historic St. George’s we talk about “bridging the past and the future.” It just keeps happening.

In the very same place where Thomas Rankin, one of John Wesley’s Methodist emissaries to America, met the American preachers for the very first conference on this side of the pond (1773), so Bishop Marcus Matthews met with the new class of seven United Methodist pastors he will ordain at the 220th session of the Eastern Pa. Conference June 13-15. Right here at St. George’s!

As part of the Ordination service, these ordinands will lay their hands on Francis Asbury’s Bible, which is housed in our museum. Asbury was the first elder ordained in America and our first bishop.

A Word of Thanks

Retired St. George’s church administrator Brian McCloskey extends his appreciation to all who contributed in any and all ways to his retirement celebration. Thank you so much for the myriad kind words and deeds that went into the celebration itself; may God bless each and every one.

“Fair Trade” Comes to the Gift Shop

Introducing “Fair Trade”: a few new items are gracing the shelves of our bookshop. They are Fair Trade crafts, produced by co-ops in developing nations under the assurance that the craftsperson is paid a living wage. We also offer a booklet explaining the concept in depth, so that visitors can look for fair trade goods in their own hometowns.

Greetings, Donna!

Note: I've asked Donna Miller, the new St. George's Administrator/Archivist to lead off this issue of the Church Newsletter. As you call and correspond with us, Donna is likely the first voice you'll hear. So, it will be good for you to get to know her. Her gifts of hospitality, grace, warmth, and patience coupled with a can-do spirit, great computer skills, efficiency, effectiveness, creativity, keen eye for detail and desk top publishing savvy make Donna just the person we hoped for. Welcome her, support her and delight in the good fortune that she works with us.
Fred Day, Pastor

Although only three months have passed, I feel deeply connected and at home at St. George's. The foundation Brian McCloskey built is providing me with a great platform from which to launch my efforts. You will most likely notice my hand in areas such as the design of the newsletter and – upcoming -- some new signage and instructional material in the museum. Meanwhile, I will continue to explore the legacy of well-organized and far-reaching resources that surround me, and I look forward to carrying on the work of my predecessor.

On a personal note, I live in Germantown and have two grown daughters: Miranda Stuart, an agent for Fish & Wildlife in Brazoria Texas, and Abby Miller, a housepainter and creative artist (www.onegreentiger.com) living in West Philadelphia. The rest of my bragging rights are reserved for my students in the After School Program for Germantown High, where I have volunteered for ten years. – Donna Miller

Check Out Our New Identity

This newsletter comes bearing gifts. (They've probably tumbled out of the envelope and onto the floor!) The gifts are marked with the new Historic St. George's logo. Ever since the first Christian made a fish symbol in the sand, churches have understood the power of a logo to convey a multifaceted message. Our logo is meant to put forth the identity and mission of St. George's for all to see in clear and welcoming ways.

Looking at the design, you see a chalice representing the communion cup we received from John Wesley in 1785. The designer also saw open hands in this shape; the welcoming, outreaching efforts of our church embodied in the theology of love and inclusion basic to our heritage. You will also see an open book representing the Asbury Bible, among the most historic pieces in our museum. This Bible represents our heritage of being guided by the scriptures; both hearing and putting God's never ending love into practice. A descending dove reminds us of the importance of the Holy Spirit in Methodist theology and practice. The shape of the dove also appears as a flame, a sign of the lively warmth, joy, and enthusiasm among

An idea for the future:
Plan a visit to St. George's with your UMW or other church group. We'll give you a tour geared to your interests and even help you arrange lunch on site. Call the office at 215-925-7788/

the Spirit's gifts to people. The logo includes both contemporary and traditional elements, echoing our church's life and ministry – a vital congregation and a historic site all at once.

A New Look Online

Many folks have their first introduction to Historic St. George's through our website, so we have invested time and thought into designing a welcoming site. Visit us online at www.historicstgeorges.org to see what's happening at the church, and to stay in tune with any new developments. Over time, more features will be added to the site, so if there is something you would like to see included, drop us a line at office@historicstgeorges.org

Building Assessment & Master Plan Delivered June 28

Progress continues towards the delivery of a church building assessment and master plan to be received June 28 at a meeting of the Historic St. Georges Board of Trustees. Chris Miller and Mary DeNadai of John Milner and Associates Architects met with the congregation and conference leaders to gather input, the finishing touches on a plan that will address immediate needs and vision for the future.

Moving forward, all agree we must do so with an eye for preserving the historic integrity of this landmark building and with excellence, serving the multi-faceted ministry of a shrine church and growing congregation in resurgent Old City Philadelphia.

There is broad agreement among the stakeholder about improving

accessibility, entry ways, gathering space, climate control, museum exhibitions, library, archival and office space, bathroom and kitchen facilities.

With the adoption of the master plan will come exploration of various funding avenues – public, denominational, church membership – phasing the plan to reality.

Rejoice, get enthused about where the Spirit is leading us and above all pray that the resources will come together for us to undertake this adventure.

Look What the Wind Blew In!

Historic St. George's received 70 visitors from 18 states, the District of Columbia and 4 countries since April 1. Guests included **Juan de Dios Pena Gallegos**, the President of the Methodist Church in El Salvador, (The Methodist Church of the Caribbean and the Americas)... **Jonathan P Gosser**, pastor of 1st UMC of Hobart IN who was doing preliminary research on a documentary.

Along with sharing the story of St. George's, we received wonderful tales in return. One of our many visitors from Texas told us of their **San Antonio** church's healing gesture for race relations: a plaque in their church honoring a man who was revealed to be a KKK officer was melted down and made into a chalice, which they then presented to the AME church. Another visitor from **West Philadelphia**, looked at the cobbler's bench in our museum and was reminded of the anvil that Richard Allen used as a symbol of independence and self-reliance.

Nosing-Around:

Visitors to our Library, Museum & Archives



Long-time St. George's friends Dennis Williams, Chuck Yrigoyen and John McElhenney join Pastor Fred Day in identifying photographic gems in our archives.

Historic St. George's welcomes these folk who came to us for research... **Deborah Lubken**, a University of Pennsylvania student doing doctoral research about liturgical architecture, church bells (and in our case, the absence of them!)... **Peyton Dixon**, an actor researching the development of a character in the National Park's "Once Upon a Nation" program. The character is a member of a colonial Methodist Society meeting here and who gains the confidence to preach by attending class meetings...we asked that he send any converts our way. We also spent a delightful afternoon with **Al Short** who was looking for information on former trustees John W. Watson and Frederick Augustus King. One of Al's fond memories is a picture of his grandmother standing by the baptismal font in our rear garden. **Rich Price** had a fruitful day of research on one of the hottest

afternoons we've had, and **Bruce Eiler** was rewarded long-distance with some information about the Laughead family of Pottstown.

Another long-distance request came from **Brian Pilmoor** in England, who is seeking information on an organized tour of the Joseph Pilmoor trail. So far, no one has uncovered information on that, but we think it would be an interesting trip (by auto, not horseback!).

Partners for Sacred Places

St. George's has begun an intensive program run by this national non-sectarian non-profit organization. The goal is to sharpen our skills and identify resources to broaden our base of support and strengthen our presence as a vital Philadelphia spiritual and community center. Our

team completed 2 days of training in June and will be working on their "homework" until the next training in October.

We are very excited to be working with Partners. They were founded in 1989; since then, they have helped several thousand congregations and other local organizations to more effectively serve their locales. We urge you to explore their website at www.sacredplaces.org or call us for more information about our participation.

Thanks, St George's!

...acknowledgements were received from... **Danielle Hoffman**, Coordinator of Grace Café, for the devoted volunteers from St. Georges who cooked and served breakfasts to homeless guests at Arch St. UMC...with special thanks to our own **Evelyn Leidy** who was our chief cook and bottle-washer... **the confirmation class of Vineland UMC**, who enjoyed their tour but want to see what's in the vault next time... **Fr. Martini Shaw and the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas** (Absalom Jones Church), for our gift of flowers presented when members of St. George's attended their Easter Vigil... **Rev. Colleen Butler, Campbell AME Church, Phila. New Members Class**: "you have sparked a brighter flame in our hearts with your insights into our history"... **Kay Mitchell**, for the flowers and remembrances. "See ya soon"... **Valerie Gillispie**, archivist at Wesleyan University, remarking on a volume we presented to their library: "We have not seen such a reunion book before, so it is especially wonderful to add it to our collection."

Church Tid-Bits



Mayor John Street and Police Commissioner Johnson led a community meeting at St. George's on June 16 to review city initiatives and strategies for increasing neighborhood safety. **The Midweek Study Group** completed its spring session on Judaism by visiting the Society Hill Synagogue, session led by Rabbi Avi Winokur... **Betsy Plummer**, church member and Council Chair, delivered a paper at the annual *Mercy Works* conference of The Sisters of Mercy in Ireland. Betsy is a teacher and staffer at Gwynned Mercy College...It was great to hear from Associate Members **John & Sandra O'Neal**, now living in Florida and sailing this summer... **Liz Henshaw** who is settled into life in Houston...and **Bob and Mary Powell** who keep up with us by e-mail... **Cristine Kremer** dropped us a line from Michigan...it was great to see **Myrtle Langford** back in Philly from California for a few days... member **John Goldberg** was featured in ABC's *Extreme Makeover Home Edition*. He and the East Falls Glassworks staff made the kitchen/great room chandelier. Thanks to **Donna Miller** and **Bruce Gallup**

joining Vicki Lock and Pastor Day in leading church tours... We were busy at **Annual Conference** again this year with a church display inviting churches from around the conference to come and visit us. The **Wesley Chalice** and **Asbury Bible** were used in the worship services.

The Parish Register

Congratulations, College Grads!

Carly Day, Haub School of Business, St. Joseph's University

Bill Moffat, Temple School of Dentistry, moving to practice in Hershey, PA

Lindsay Reber, Drexel University, Industrial Engineering

Weddings

Naana Florence Kittoe & Francis A. Manful on June 7, 2007. Pastor Day presiding.

Meredith Sofka & Brian McMullen on July 21, 2007. Pastor Day presiding.

Shannon Walker & Justin Morgan on August 24, 2007. Rev. Al Walker, father of the bride, presiding.

Relocations

Long-time members **Bob & Mary Powell** have transferred to a new church home at the Bluffton UMC in SC, and **Myrtle Langford** has transferred to San Diego, CA. We miss them all, but know they will always keep a spot for St. George's in their hearts and prayers, as they remain in ours.

Looking for Birthday & Flower announcements? They've moved to the Weekly Bulletin. If you would like a copy, drop us a line.

New Associates

Welcome **Dan Dailey** of PA...**Bob & Joann Barden** of SD (our first in that state!)...and the **Hulehan Family** of NJ. *Envelopes are included for membership renewal.*

Wish List

One of the volumes on our shelves is a 1919 "City Survey of Downtown Problems" by Charles Carroll. About St. George's, he says "St. George's is well adapted to the needs of the neighborhood. The property is in need of considerable improvement and repair. The roof must be replaced. The heating plant is antiquated and distressingly inadequate."

Well, as they say: "the more things change, the more they stay the same..." This month, the roofers made extensive repairs to our structure, and we have received the estimate to replace our failing boiler, which has begun spewing carbon monoxide in lieu of heat.

While we address these basics, other tasks sit patiently in the wings, waiting for their chance. We thought we would share a few of these with our readers. If you are searching for a memorial, or would like to undertake a project in support of St. George's through your church, here are a few thought-starters:

- Cleaning and restoring the excellent portraits of Joseph Pilmoor and Francis Asbury displayed in the sanctuary. Estimated at ~\$7,500 each.
- Planting additional rosebushes along our New Street side: Estimated at \$50 each.
- Repairing the wrought iron railing leading to the museum entrance. Estimated at \$1,000.

Gifts that Keep on Giving

St. George's has been blessed in the past by faithful supporters who have included this institution in their estate planning. These gifts have been instrumental in helping us accomplish our mission of historic preservation, education, and vital community development. If you would like to join these gracious and generous folks, we will work with you to help develop your bequest to reflect your wishes (there are also tax advantages for your estate). Please contact Pastor Day at (215) 925-7788 or email him at pastor@historicstgeorges.org.

New IRA Tax-Free Gift Provision Remains in Effect Until December 31, 2007

If you are 70½ years or older, the government is allowing charitable gifts up to \$100,000 directly from your IRA to St. George's with no Federal income tax if the gift is arranged through your IRA Administrator as an outright gift. Your tax advisor can provide information on specific state requirements. If you want help with researching this avenue, please contact Pastor Day at (215) 925-7788 or email him at pastor@historicstgeorges.org.



Returning to her Roots

This doll representing Susanna Wesley has completed a journey she started at St. George's in 1958, when she was purchased by **Minda Sanders. Janice Sherick** of **Covenant UMC** in Lancaster brought Susanna to us at the Annual Conference. She will grace the shelves of our Sunday School classroom. If anyone knows the story of the doll's production, drop us a line. The inscription on her hem says "Sally Witzear – Old St. George's 1767" We'd love to know who Sally is, or if anyone has a similar doll, share your story with us.

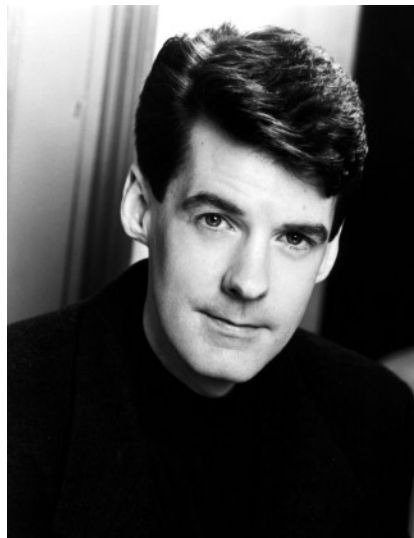
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Alfred T. Day III, Pastor
Donna Miller, Administrator
Lorenzo Crew, Sexton

Christmas in July?

No, just a reminder to save the date for our 27th Annual Christmas Musical on **December 2, 2007 at 3:30 PM**. If you are in the Philadelphia area, this is an event you won't want to miss. Area choirs and fine local musicians combine to bring you a unique holiday experience. Our beautiful sanctuary is decked out in Colonial simplicity and the candlelight adds to the considerable charm and enchantment of the event.

Along with October's **Sweet Singer** production (see page 2) and **John Easterlin's** soloist appearances during Sunday Worship, the Christmas Musical remains a wonderful opportunity to experience the creative arts in our inspiring location.

More Musical Inspiration at St. George's



John Easterlin

John Easterlin lives and works in New York City, where he has performed for the Metropolitan Opera. St. George's is always grateful when we have the opportunity to have John's musical talents as part of our worship service.

Join us on July 1, July 8, August 16, September 16th and September 30th to experience John's gifts. Services are at 10 AM during July and August and at 11 AM in September.

What's in a Name? *We Invite Your Creative Input*

"Newsletter" is pretty bland as titles go...if you can think of a better moniker for our publication, jot it down on your Membership Renewal form or drop us an email at office@historicstgeorges.org. The winning entree (chosen by our Administrative Council) will receive a \$25 gift certificate.

Associate Members

St. George's relies on the support of our Associate Members. We are grateful for your continuing dedication to the mission of our historical church and its ministry in today's world. Please complete and return the entries below in the enclosed envelope with your membership renewal. To help our new administrator keep good records, please indicate any corrections to your name and address as they appear on your mailing label. (We apologize for any errors!)

Also, we would love to keep in touch with our Associate members via e-mail. If you have an e-mail account and would like to share your address with us, we pledge to respect your privacy. Our records are not shared with any other organization.

Yes, Please renew my membership:

Level: \$25 \$35 \$50 \$75 \$100 Other _____

Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-Mail _____

Newsletter Name Suggestion: _____