



Historic St. George's
United Methodist Church

Messenger



JUNE 2008, VOL. 27, No. 2



Time Travelers Pack the Place!

Almost 500 confirmation-aged youth filled St. George's on two dates this spring for *Time Traveler*, a touchstone experience that brought United Methodist heritage to life in drama, music and games. By popular demand, a Time Traveler experience for adults will be held on October 11, 2008. Register your group online at historicstgeorge.org or call 215-925-7788. Additional events for youth will be scheduled for 2009. More photos on Page 2.

"Time Traveler took us on a marvelous journey into United Methodist history in the U.S. in a way that was exciting, fun and a wonderful learning experience. We will do it again!"-- Aldersgate UMC, NJ

"The youth and adults talked about this experience all the way home. It was creative, well done, and took on the important issues of our early Methodist history."-- Yardley UMC, PA

The "Hot" Seat — *Our Museum includes an important piece of Americana*

A person could walk right by and think it was just another old chair. Except this one is a real treasure, made by the same furniture maker who outfitted Independence Hall!

The craftsman's name is **William Savery**, who set up shop at 2nd and Market Sts., circa 1742, after his apprenticeship to the famous Solomon Fussell. If you were in the market for some



of the finest English style furniture in Philadelphia, you looked for the sign of the chair hanging above his shop's entrance. Savery was neighbor to one of St. George's founders, **James Emerson**, a dealer in orange and lemon shrub,* whose shingle featured a sugarloaf.

Recently, **Robert Whitley** of Solebury, Pa., the master craftsman who restored the Savery chairs at Independence Hall, studied our chair. Though the chair is unsigned, Whitley said it is most certainly a Savery piece, an exciting example of the best in colonial American craftsmanship. The chair has a few condition issues: repair to its "shog and splat," and re-oiling the finish. See our Wish-List (page 3) for how to make this a fitting memorial or special gift.

*Shrub was a popular colonial beverage. We're proud to offer shrub in our gift shop courtesy of Tait Farms of Center Hall, Pa. — taitfarmfoods.com

continued on page 3



www.fondaphoto.com©

Time Travelers

Clockwise: Award-winning playwright Ed Shockley portraying Richard Allen; “Once Upon a Nation” actor Peyton Dixon portraying Simon Blessing, an itinerant preacher from Colonial times; a group of puzzle-solvers unravelling a message from John Wesley; youth contemplating issues surrounding St. George’s infamous balcony incident; enthusiastic singers following Wesley’s admonition to sing lustily as they “line-out” a hymn in the old manner.

We are grateful as always to David Fonda (www.fondaphoto.com) for his enduring images. See our web site for a slide show of the May event (www.historicstgeorges.org)

We're Still Making History

What's Been Doin' at St. George's

Don't forget. **Sunday worship time** changes from 11 to 10 am July 6 through August 31... Wow! **Easter** raised us to new heights with almost 100 in attendance... We recovered some of St. George historic connection with the foundation of Mother's Day, welcoming **Celeste Zappala** who spoke about mothers and peacemaking. Anna Jarvis would be proud... Our favorite tenor **John Easterlin** was honored to perform during the Crystal Cathedral "Hour of Power" broadcast. He was also interviewed by Dr. Shuler on air. John will be **singing at St. George's on July 6th**, other dates to be announced... We hope to have a crew of Phillies fans representing St. George's at the **21st annual United Methodist Night** at Citizen's Bank Park Saturday afternoon July 26. Contact the church office about tickets... The **Dr. Lori Antiques Appraisal** event was a fun day in May for neighbors and church members alike. What treasures! We'll do it again... The **Wednesday Study Group** ended its spring session on Buddhism, part of the "Five Faiths, One Community" series. The group has grown to almost a dozen, adding participants from the neighborhood and a inter-faith group from Society Hill, folk from Old Pine Presbyterian, Old St. Joe's Catholic Church and Society Hill Synagogue. Fall will bring us to Hinduism, then to Christianity, completing the cycle, come spring... **Pastor Day** will be a delegate to the Northeast Jurisdictional Conference in July when new bishops are elected... He attended the Northeast Jurisdictional Commission on Archives and History meeting in May traveling to Cambridge Springs, Pa, and just received word he has been elected to the General Church Commission... **MARK THE DATE! Homecoming Sunday, September 21, 11 AM.** Have a great summer!

Parish Register

Weddings

Jaclyn Discullo & Jeremy Durkin on May 30, 2008

Jessica Beane & Michael Miller on May 31, 2008

Membership

David Adam – Charge Conference, UIM clergy, retired

Wish List

Special Gift or Memorial Opportunities

Thanks for your generous responses for the projects that keep St. George's in tip-top shape. Gifts can be designated for all or part of items having significance to you.

Museum Entrance Marble Step Repair. (\$13,000). Thanks again to Rev. Charles Otto and Peg Gorman for their memorial gift of \$1000, which paid for the railing repair. Additional work was also needed on the marble steps, which required further investment. The next 200 years of visitors will have ease of entry thanks to this repair.

New Tables and Chairs for the Hopkins Fellowship Hall. (\$2,500) With Sunday attendance growing, we need more welcoming accommodations for lunch and fellowship!

Portrait Restoration: Ezekiel Cooper – 1763 - 1847 (\$950) and **Joseph Rusling** (\$500). Restoration experts have looked at these treasures and are eager to get to work.

William Savery Chair Restoration (\$575). For necessary repairs to Colonial-era chair. Work will be performed by Robert Whitley (whitley studio.com)

Two New Microphones for Tour Guides and Worship Services (\$550 each). After extensive exploration of the sound system, we determined that two new microphones would offer the best bargain and sound. With all the programs we have planned, we want to make sure folks can hear.

Planned Giving

Historic St George's is blessed by members and friends who include this great church in their estate planning. These gifts are instrumental in helping us accomplish our mission of historic preservation, education, archival and museum development.

We can assist you in developing a bequest to reflect your interests and desires about the work here, and of course there are tax benefits to your estate.

Contact Pastor Day at 215-925-7788 or e-mail him at:
pastor@historicstgeorges.org

“Make Us One with Christ”

Reconnecting Long-Severed Ties

Editor’s Note: Historic St. George’s and Gloria Dei (Old Swedes) Church swapped articles reflecting on the winter long experience of 16 folk from the two churches as our denominations move towards “full communion.” The following article was written by the Gloria Dei’s Rector’s Warden (akin to our Lay Leader).



In 2005, the Council of Bishops of The United Methodist Church adopted a covenant relationship of Interim Eucharistic Sharing with The Episcopal Church. A similar resolution was approved by the General Convention of the Episcopal Church in June of 2006. This Interim Eucharist Sharing has allowed certain Methodist and Episcopal churches to do something they haven’t officially done in more than

200 years.

For the last several months, members of Historic St. George’s United Methodist Church and Gloria Dei (Old Swedes’) Church have been gathering together to learn about each other’s history, traditions and beliefs. As is typical of any Gloria Dei gathering, and, as I found out, of St. George’s as well, there was much lively conversation and plenty of snacks to eat.

We are in dialogue to explore the possibilities of “Full Communion” between The United Methodist Church and The Episcopal Church, where we recognize and accept the ministries of each other, while maintaining our own identities. The goal is not absorption of one church by another, but the bringing about of an ecclesiastical community on the basis of “unity in necessary things.”

During these meetings, we learned a bit about our histories, including the stories behind the founding of each and what separated us from one another, as well as likenesses and the differences between the two churches today. We talked about our individual experiences and beliefs, recognizing much in common. The hope is, as the EIR handbook states: “that if churches are firmly grounded in what is essential to unity, they will find wide room for diversity.”

We are now talking about the next step in our dialogue, where we bring the two congregations together to worship. By doing so, we hope to open the dialogue further, inviting all members of both congregations to ask questions, discuss concerns, offer ideas and help as we continue this journey. You can join us as we prepare our joint services. If you are interested, you can ask Joy, from Gloria Dei, or Fred, from St. George’s, for more information. For some background information, go to these links:

<http://www.historicstgeorges.org/>

<http://www.old-swedes.org>

<http://www.umc.org/site/apps/nlnet/content3.aspx?c=IwL4KnN1LtH&b=2072519&ct=3866691>

http://www.episcopalchurch.org/6947_29783_ENG_HTM.htm

http://www.umc.org/site/c.gjJTJbMUlUe/b.2102713/k.D095/United_Methodists_put_pact_with_Episcopalians_into_practice.htm

I know that some of you are thinking “OK, Dave, so we have the background, we see the next steps, but there are bigger questions here: What is the point? Why are we doing this at all? Why should I care?”

I can answer those questions only from my own heart, not from the more cosmic perspective. For me, the idea of meeting with another Christ-centered community, especially one whose history we shared until a few hundred years ago, seemed intriguing. I thrilled at the idea that, someday, all Christian churches might be able to come together, to put aside the man-made divides, and get back to the common thread of our existence, that of experiencing and spreading the Good News of Christ.

I am not an idealist. I know that, perhaps by design, we are faulty creatures and our own interests have the capacity to keep us far apart from one another... even while proclaiming the same beliefs.

I have learned in our discussions that, while we share common missions, there are differences between us. The differences that stood out most for me, though, were not ones that should keep us apart. Instead, they cry out to us to come closer together, to work more together, to accomplish more together. Our differences speak to the many sides of my own being; the “intellectually-spiritual” and the “emotionally-spiritual”, the “fellowship-driven” and the “Gospel-driven”.

Gloria Dei is more than a fellowship of people; it is the touchstone of my life in Christ. I need the Gospel, the people, the shared goals, the coffee hour, the yard days, the flea markets, the worship services... I need all of it.

I can’t help but wonder... if I open my life to others -not just to those in my own church, but across the divide - how much more does Christ have for me? Can I learn more of what God has in mind for me by listening to others, even those who do things a little different from me?

It seems an obvious answer, doesn’t it? Yet, why should I leave the comfort of the familiar, the cocoon of my own beliefs, to experience something new and different?

I have to go back to the life and lessons of Saul. Saul was comfortable... no, more than comfortable, he was RIGHT! Saul was more than a believer in God, he was a Pharisee and as such he played a prominent role in the political and religious life of Jews. This was his life. To be open to a new experience was unthinkable. Yet, if not for Saul, would Christians even BE today? What did it take to open Saul’s mind, to turn him into “Paul”?

I am not a Pharisee, I have no answers and I can’t convince others of the rightness of God’s word. Yet, I am no different from those who opposed the early Christian church. I have my ideas, my beliefs and I am com-

fortable with them. Why can't I just remain being Dave? Why should I become Paul (or "Jim" as Pastor Fred likes to call me)?

We have a new conversion experience open to us today. Like Saul, I need the word of God to be freed of my preconceived notions of right and wrong. By opening myself to others, perhaps I can experience more of God's grace. Maybe even offer God's grace to them.

Thank you — and God's Peace.

Dave Sampieri — Rector's Warden, Gloria Dei



This past winter, representatives from Historic St. George's and Gloria Dei (Old Swedes') Church joined in a study group preparing the way for the United Methodist Church and the Episcopal Church coming to full communion in 2012. Selected by our respective bishops, our churches joined several others in Eastern Pennsylvania — and dozens around the country — in sharing respective histories, faith in common, the structure and policies of

our churches, our theologies and practices of ministry towards planning and celebrating Holy Communion together. A shared celebration of the Eucharist between Gloria Dei (Old Swedes') and Historic St. George's is planned for the Fall, with other cooperative study groups and shared endeavors as well.

The seven session study not only blossomed into additional sessions but a real bonding between the participants meeting at alternate church sites. "What made the discussion so meaningful is the deep and rich history of each church that continues through today," said one of our St. George's participants. "We sat in the same pews as the people who started our churches here in the new world. It was interesting to learn the traditions of each denomination. Though some of the ways we actually celebrate Holy Communion are different, it's still the Lord's Table and not our own."

We learned about Gloria Dei (Old Swedes') and the Episcopal Church. . . William Penn's welcoming the Swedes before 1700, Lutheran beginnings supplied with missionary pastors from Sweden, becoming part of the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania in the mid 19th century, the ship models that hang from the ceiling of the sanctuary as mementos of colonists' perilous journeys across the Atlantic, the two wide-eyed cherubim and open Bible adorning the balcony, the annual Santa Lucia festival each Advent, and the growing congregation today.

Through it all we are discovering that we are richer, stronger, and better together than we are alone. In a time in history when we read so much about schism threatened in our churches, it's good to be talking about coming together.

What does this mean for the future? Some kind of merger between the Methodist and Episcopal Churches? No, not at all.

Our time together — St. George's and Gloria Dei (Old Swedes'), as with others around the country, brings a fresh understanding about the gifts and strengths our two denominations offer each other and how there is nothing — as there has been in the past — to keep us from recognizing one another's clergy in presiding at the Lord's Supper in each other's churches. But even more than that, to be open in exploring how sharing the Lord's Table empowers us to discover and act on Jesus' bidding here in Old City and Society Hill — some things we may do better together than by ourselves.

Fred Day, Pastor — Historic St. George's UMC

Save the Date!

In the fall, we are looking forward to sharing together in worship. On **September 28th**, at 10:00 am, both congregations will worship together at Gloria Dei, with Pastor Day preaching. On **October 12th**, 11:00 am, both congregations will worship together here at Historic St. George's, with Rector D. Joy Segal preaching. Mark your calendars now to be a part of this great movement of the Spirit.



When we began the Methodist Episcopal study months ago, I had a lot of misconceptions about the Methodist church. I knew the two denominations had a shared history, but I assumed Methodists had evolved into something similar to Main Line Baptists. Instead I discovered that many Methodist churches are sacramental and liturgical. We read the same Bible lessons each Sunday at church. We say the same creeds. We even pray some of the same prayers.

The members of Gloria Dei and Historic St. George have even more in common. We are both city churches. We both have the same interest in preserving historic roots that go back before the Revolution.

But what does that mean to us, other than being an interesting fact? Perhaps it is like two families who attend the same church. Each family lives in its own home, but at church they become friends — the children play together, the parents work on committees together. Perhaps the families of crisis. This is a way to view Methodists and Episcopalians as well. We are all made of people, individuals relating to each other in friendship, support, conflict and forgiveness. Perhaps at this time in history, churches should reach out to each other in the same way, helping to strengthen the holy catholic church to the greater glory of God.

Julie Daye — Gloria Dei

Opening the Vault:

What's Up at the Museum & Archives

John Adams, in Praise of Thomas Webb

The recent interest in John Adams, second President of the US, sparked by David McCollough's biography and the HBO mini-series led to a real find for us. For years it's been said that John Adams came to St. George's, where he heard Captain Thomas Webb preach. But we lacked any substantiating specifics.

Eureka! We found it, thanks to **Marilyn Templeton** from Meridan St. UMC in Indianapolis, IN. Marilyn put us onto McCollough's footnote of *The Diary and Autobiography of John Adams* by L. H. Butterfield, in which Adams, in Philadelphia to attend to the business of the First Continental Congress in 1774 says:

“In the evening, I went to a Methodist meeting and heard Mr. Webb, the old soldier who first came to America in the character of a quartermaster under General Braddock. He is one of the most fluent men I have ever heard. He reaches the imagination and touches the passions very well and expresses himself with good propriety. (pg. 156)”

St. George's would have been the Methodist meeting place in 1774.

John Dickins – Lookin' Good!

Let's face it. Not having a portrait of John Dickins in our collection was downright embarrassing! The London born editor and publisher became a Methodist on this side of the pond, traveled as a preacher from 1777 on, attended the Christmas Conference – even made the motion to name the new American Church “Methodist Episcopal” – and was appointed, serving St. George's to develop the Methodist book and pamphlet business today named Cokesbury.

Although no formal portrait image existed, there was a woodblock print. From this print, the celebrated illustrator Charles Hargens painted a portrait of Dickins for Methodism's *Together* magazine in 1961. The portrait hung in the Nashville offices of Cokesbury but the publisher has no record of its current location. Luckily for us, Mr. Hargens's son lives nearby. After a phone conversation, he was able to locate a photo of the original, which is being reproduced. The portrait will be hung on Homecoming Sunday.

In addition to bringing Mr. Dickins home, Pastor Day and Administrator Donna Miller enjoyed visiting with the Hargens. We viewed many of the original paintings his father produced for *Together*, *Saturday Evening Post*, and *Boy's Life*. We especially enjoyed



Mary Hargens, Pastor Day and Charles Hargens, III.

hearing how his father employed family and neighbors as models. His mother, also an accomplished artist, was represented in *Vogue* and many popular advertisements. The Commission on Archives and History of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference is inviting Mr. Hargens to speak about his father's work at a future meeting.



John Dickins by Charles Hargens



A Busy Summer in the Sanctuary *Pilmoor and Asbury Portraits Undergo Restoration; Ceiling Repaired*

Thanks to a grant from the **General Commission on Archives and History** and tip from **Rev. Scott Friedgen-Vietch** of Honeybrook UMC, St. George's was able to arrange for the restoration of the Joseph Pilmoor and Francis Asbury portraits gracing our sanctuary. In the photo above, custodian Lorenzo Crew helps art specialist Gerry Hoeffner remove the Pilmoor painting for its journey to Mr. Hoeffner's studio.

Meanwhile, Hanson Contractors began work on a section of the ceiling and crown molding (pictured below) separating from the lath. The work crew was able to schedule between weddings, so no brides will be taking vows under the scaffolding. Meanwhile, Sunday services are being held in the fellowship hall, the original Society's meeting place and site of the first three meetings of Methodist ministers in America. The challenges of maintaining our beautiful colonial structure continue!



What the Wind Blew-in: *Visitors to Church, Museum and Archives*



A few months ago, **Val Shipman** from upstate NY began a correspondence, seeking information about a photo that contained the band members above. We were able to comb through the records of the **29th Street Church** and learn about the band, who no doubt helped the Rev. Dr. Hanna in 1912 to win a contest against **Erie Avenue UMC**: the goal was to increase membership in their Men's Bible Class. Nothing short of spectacular, Dr. Hanna's efforts resulted in the attendance of 2,485 men on December 29th, 1912, beating out Erie Avenue's 2,296! Val and her husband visited the archives this month and were able to find an uncle's name in the membership records.

The ring of the doorbell always brings surprises. We welcomed visitors hailing from **Scotland, Singapore, South Africa**, and states from **Maine to Alaska**. We also welcomed 18 confirmation classes and tour groups.

Al Short of NJ is always a welcome visitor to the archives. Recently, he presented us with a miniature hymnal and the two ancestral portraits below. Both gentlemen served as Trustees of St. George's:



John Woodman Watson, born in Southwark, Philadelphia, PA in 1843



Frederick Augustus King, born in Barbados, arrived in Philadelphia in 1880 and married Watson's daughter Mary Martha (Al's great-grandmother).

Please Give Your Support to Historic St. George's for 2008

*Your support keeps our
doors open to visitors
from around the
world.*

We are grateful for your dedication to the mission of our historic church and its ministry in today's world. Without the support of our friends across the nation (and beyond!), we could not continue to develop and offer the types of programs you have read about in this issue.

Please complete and return the entries below in the enclosed envelope with your gift. To help our 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 supporters via e-mail. If you have an e-mail account and would like to share that information with us, we pledge to respect your privacy. Our records are not shared with any other organization.

Is there a group in your church that might want to become a supporter of our efforts? Please pass on a copy of the newsletter to your anyone in your local congregation who might have an interest in history.

If you hear of anyone making a trip to Philadelphia, either for business or pleasure, encourage them to drop by and visit the birthplace of American Methodism. We constantly work on updating and expanding our exhibits, so help us spread the word. We look forward to the next ring of the bell and the answer to "Where are you visiting from?"

*We have associates in 47
states: do you know anyone
in Mississippi, New Mexico
or Rhode Island that would
like to join?*

Yes, I would like to make a gift to Historic St. George's

Level: \$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 \$500 Other _____

I would like to order a replica of St. George's (prices include shipping costs)

Number of Replicas at \$25 ea. _____ Total enclosed for Replicas _____

Number of Ornaments at \$12 ea _____ Total enclosed for Ornaments _____

Replicas and Christmas ornaments (pictured at right) of Historic St. George's are available from our Gift Shop. Order now to have for holiday gifts.



Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-Mail _____