

From Father Nik

While the African Episcopal Church of St Thomas in Philadelphia was growing and thriving under the pastoral leadership of the Rev'd Absalom Jones, the Episcopal Church as a denomination was struggling to maintain the momentum built up in the wake of American independence. The General Convention of 1789 had created a polity that brought together the evangelical, Low Church of the southern dioceses with the northern High Church dioceses. Moreover, the consecration of Samuel Seabury of Connecticut, William White of Pennsylvania, Samuel Provoost of New York, and—later—James Madison of Virginia as bishops, grounded the Episcopal Church in the Apostolic Succession embodied in that unbroken line from Jesus' first disciples. Given those triumphs, it seems unlikely that the Episcopal Church would, within a few years, find itself sapped of energy and floundering before an uncertain future, but that—apparently—is what happened.

After his participation in the 1792 consecration of Thomas John Claggett as bishop of Maryland, Bishop Seabury—the Episcopal Church's first bishop—restricted his attention to his own diocese until his death in 1796. In 1800, Bishop Provoost tendered his resignation as rector of Trinity Church and Bishop of New York. He appealed to a decline in health and a desire to retire from public life for his withdrawal from church leadership, but others suggest that Provoost, believing “the Anglican tradition would die out with the old colonial families . . . became so discouraged” he simply abandoned what he assumed was a sinking ship (Holmes 59). Bishop Madison of VA continued in his episcopal office until his death in 1812; however, the demands on his time and energy from his obligations as rector of James City Parish and his presidency of the College of William & Mary left him little time to attend to many of the duties of a bishop. Bishop White alone was left of the founding bishops of the Episcopal Church to provide leadership on a national level and to keep alive hope of revival in the next generation.

David Holmes begins & ends the 2nd chapter of his *Brief History* with a description of Bp Madison's ordination of a young man named William Meade, just over a year before Madison's death. The ordination service was held at Bruton Parish, which had fallen into disrepair. “The congregation inside numbered about eighteen,” most of whom “were either relatives or acquaintances of Meade” (20). Madison hadn't prepared a sermon, so Meade, having just been ordained moments before, preached. “The ordination of young William Meade was the last ordination performed by Bishop Madison,” Holmes writes, “and probably no one who witnessed that simple service realized its significance. With its land sold, its churches abandoned or deserted, its few remaining laity and clergy in despair, and many observers regarding it as extinct, the Episcopal Church in Virginia—as well as in the nation—needed revivalists in the truest sense of the word. In William Meade and others of his generation, it got them” (59).

CARITAS is Coming

CARITAS is a shared ministry that helps break the cycle of homelessness by providing shelter and stability our neighbors who have lost both.

The CARITAS guests will be staying at
St. James the Less, Ashland from September 5 to 12.

**Fork Church is responsible for
the evening of Sept. 8, the morning of Sept 9,
and bag lunches for Sept 9.**

Look for the sign up sheet in the narthex of the church.
Let's all put our faith to work!

Lemonade on the Lawn

Thanks to Sally Campbell for this morning's refreshments!
The Miles family will host next Sunday.

Fall Small Groups

This Fall, the Thursday morning Men's Group & Women's Group
will read *Searching For Sunday* by Rachel Held Evans.

The book's chapters are organized according to the Seven Sacraments,
so the Adult Sunday School will explore those sacraments in depth.

**We'd like to organize another (co-ed?) small group
to meet on a weeknight to discuss the book.**

If you're interested, please let Fr Nik know.

Bishop Spong Discussion Group

Ruth Syman-May & Janet Taylor are leading a discussion group based on
St Paul's 2015 Lenten Lectures by Bishop John Shelby Spong.

The group meets at 10:00 on Thursday mornings at St. James the Less.

All are welcome!

Christian Education

... is on break for the Summer.

Godly Play, our Sunday School for children, will resume in September.

J2A Youth Group will meet on Sunday, September 13 with the Youth Group of Church of Our Savior, Montpelier.

The Adult Forum will meet again on Sunday, September 13. During this Fall, we will be exploring the Sacraments.

Small Groups

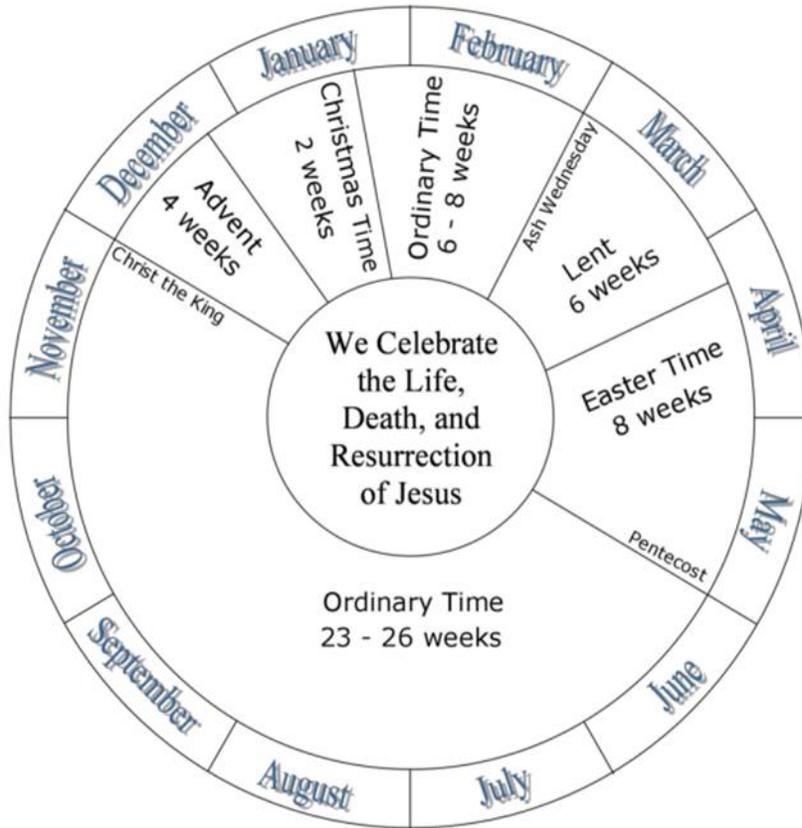
The Women's Book Group will meet again in September. They are reading *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle over the summer. Please contact Kathy for directions or more info: boysthree@embarqmail.com

The Men's Book Group will meet Thursday, Thursday Sept 3 at 7:30am at **The Ashland Coffee & Tea** to discuss *The Wisdom of Stability* by Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove.

Christian Formation

If you're interested in being Baptized or would like to become a member of this Church, please contact Fr Nik – KNicholasForti@gmail.com

The Liturgical Year



Nik's Calendar

Friday, Aug 28 – Young Rectors Group, 10am-12:30pm

Sunday, Aug 30 – RMC Campus Ministry Promo Luncheon, 11:45am

Sat/Sun, Sept 5/6 – Fr. Nik away to officiate at a wedding

Looking Ahead

Thursday, Aug 27 – Parish Hall reserved by Scotchtown DAR, 9am-4pm

Thursday, Sept 3 – Men's Book Group, 7:30-8:30am

Sunday, Sept 6 – Prepare lunches for **CARITAS** after worship

Office hours: Jacquie Alleva, our parish secretary, works Tuesday & Wednesday mornings and Thursday afternoons. If you would like to submit an announcement, please do so by noon on Thursday.