

The Mountain Herald

May 2016

May Celebrations

5/1
Riley DelChamps

5/6
Ruth Wallace

5/8
Meg Smariga

5/11
Bernadette Roche

5/13
Gladys Dobson
Craig Zearfoss

5/18
Carol Hannam

5/25
Mary Belcher
Gordon DelChamps

5/26
Rick Galliher

5?28
Sarah Knipe

Did we miss your birthday
or anniversary?
Please call the
Parish Office.

The Episcopal Church of the Transfiguration

From the Rector's Desk

Dear Friends in Christ,

Most of us remember the stirring Broadway play (later made into a movie), *The Miracle Worker*. It tells the true-life story of Helen Keller--rendered deaf, blind, and all but mute by a childhood illness--who might otherwise have been committed to an institution, were it not for the intervention of her teacher Anne Sullivan. Through stubborn persistence and personal devotion, Anne is able to turn the helpless and at times violent child into someone intimately connected to the world around her. The scene at the family's pump, where she finally makes Helen associate the fingered sign for water with the water itself, is a classic high point in American theater and film.

Recently, I was privileged to get to know a dedicated group of Ann Sullivans! These were participants in a workshop for deaf interpreters that Transfiguration hosted, designed to make them more proficient in the intricacies (and varieties!) of liturgical language. Each was 'fluent' in American Sign Language (ASL), an extraordinary concept and practice that has opened the world to generations of deaf persons, allowing them access to a communication that hearing people take for granted. Not unlike spoken language, ASL requires constant practice (in listening and dexterity), and one must use it regularly in order to stay proficient. So the workshop last week also served as a chance to interact with other interpreters and thus hone one's skills.

At a time when the news from around the world and here at home appears so dire and discouraging, it was a welcome experience to see people gathered in one place for the sole purpose of improving other people's lives. It reinforced the power of human compassion, a theme that I know I've spoken of before, and a virtue to which we devoted our Lenten study. Yet here once again was an example of walking in another's shoes, of stepping inside another's life struggles--but in this case, also using the tools of human ingenuity in order to lessen those burdens, and to offer a sense of freedom and hope.

I admire so much the work and commitment of these interpreters (and of all those who reach out to the sensorily and physically impaired). For they are most closely imitating the work and spirit of Christ--who said to the deaf mute in Mark's gospel, *Ephphatha*, "Be opened." They are mediating God's love and power; they are 'opening up' another's life to the sounds of creation. We may not discern the effect ourselves; we may hear only the muffled click of fingers. But to someone who is deaf, the message echoes loudly and joyfully in the grateful listening heart.

Let this be our task as well. By a daily practice of compassion, in the language of love, through the word and sign of ministry, let us open the ears and eyes, the mind and soul of anyone willing to 'hear,' anyone longing to learn of the goodness of God. And let us be listeners ourselves, ready always, through the silence, to hearken to Christ's voice speaking to *us* . . . and to follow where he leads.

Many Blessings,

Fr. Gordon +



Outreach News for May 2016

In April, the Outreach committee voted to contribute \$1000 to SHIP for scholarships to the recently established New Horizons program that will assist homeless high school students through the summer with academic and work opportunities. Additionally, \$1000 will go to the Wes Wubbenhorst Memorial Fund.

This year we have received more requests than usual and have committed a great percentage of funds to date than in past years. Please continue to submit your ideas for Outreach opportunities to the committee. Also, look for announcements in the bulletin about the United Thank Offering (UTO) ingather in May.



SHIP Community Auction
To benefit local homeless students!

Saturday, June 11, 2016
Saturday, June 11, 2016 @ 9am
Frederick Fairgrounds, Building 14

Join us at the Frederick Fairgrounds in Building 14 for SHIP's inaugural community auction featuring loads of high quality household items donated by scores of Frederick County residents. Bid for our kids in need!

Donations Now Being Accepted!

Accepting quality home décor furnishings, furniture and other household items, collectibles, glassware, china, crystal and flatware, vintage antiques, clocks, framed art/mirrors, costume jewelry, vehicles, motorcycles, boats, canoes, kitchen items, hand tools, power tools, lawn & garden and other misc.

(All donations are tax deductible)

Pick-Up is Available.
Contact Auction@ShipFrederick.com or call
(240) 385-9172

Visit www.auctionzip.com ID #12972 to view photos and terms

Thinking about Earth Day (Week)

Contributed by Katie Groth

In today's Church bulletin, there was a letter from The Rt. Rev. Chilton Knudsen, Assistant Bishop of Maryland. If you read the bulletin, you know that her text had to do with celebrating a "sustainable Eastertide." I am grateful to her for her attention to a critical matter, that of our stewardship of "this fragile earth our island home". Brothers and sisters, we often forget what a sacred trust that is. In Genesis, we are called to tend the garden, the "dominion" of God. So, how are we doing?

Of course we cannot solve all the issues that are before us that have come from human beings using resources that the earth provides and not caring for the creation in the meantime. But our Bishops have asked us all to "be good stewards of this gift of creation with which we've been entrusted."

I am asking each member of our congregation to attend to one simple thing – and that is to reduce or eliminate your purchase or use of polystyrene foam – commonly known as "Styrofoam." It is a compound that is toxic to the environment and will never break down into soil or "biodegrade." In other words, it never dies! It cannot be recycled at all. Every bit that we put into the ground or into the ocean will be there forever.

I have taken note of all the places that polystyrene foam is used in our daily lives. The two most common ones are supermarket meat trays and food containers (such as take-out boxes or coffee cups). To the greatest extent possible, I am asking you to stop buying and using polystyrene foam. I have also taken it upon myself to patronize stores and restaurants that do not use it. Main Cup in Middletown spends more money on the biodegradable take-out containers because they believe in being environmentally responsible. You won't find polystyrene cups at Starbuck's either.

Take it upon yourself as an individual to do the right thing and share your point of view with others. Tell shop owners that you appreciate their use of biodegradable containers. Tell supermarket managers that you won't buy, for example, eggs in polystyrene boxes. And then don't do it. Pass on your message to others along with your quiet refusal to buy it.

(Continued on page 3)

Ladies' Lunch Group



The COTT Ladies lunch was held on Tuesday, April 19 at noon in Memorial Hall. Debbie Knipe brought homemade tomato soup with crunchy croutons. Ruth Wallace brought delicious French bread. Robin Rolph and Susan Wirths contributed ice cream and cookies for dessert.

The next lunch gathering will be on May 17, at noon in Memorial hall. We will celebrate everyone's birthday with a big birthday cake at this luncheon. All COTT ladies are invited. Bring a \$5 gift to share and a baby picture of yourself for some birthday party fun!



(Continued from page 2) **Earth Day**

Please go to <http://www.cmecouncil.org/AwakeArise.html> to get more information about the Ecumenical effort called "Habits of Faith" program of the Awake and Alive campaign that the Episcopal Church has joined. Prayerfully consider your sacred responsibility for this world we live in, a world we will pass on to our precious children for generations to come.

Trip to India:

February/March 2016

Rosemary DuMont

It is not easy to get to know India. What you first feel when you first arrive is shock and awe rather than understanding: unending crowds of people in vibrant colors of saris, turbans, lungis, and robes, pressing against each other, speaking a variety of languages; the horns and screeching of vehicles competing with each other and with street music for attention, the cacophony of sounds crashing against your ears with every step; bubbling pots of "something" cooking, right there on sidewalk grills, filling the air with pungent aromas; the trash, in piles everywhere, on the pavement and in the road finding cows and goats rooting for dinner with abandon, right alongside lavish displays of vegetables and fruits, and fabrics, and shoes, and anything else you would care to purchase.

The sheer density of everything in the cities we visited was overwhelming. There were beggars and musicians, vendors, and pedestrians, vying for street space with cars, motorcycles, bicycles, rickshaws, buses, donkey pulled carts, cows, goats, stray dogs, monkeys, and a pig or two. Overhead, electrical lines, cable lines, satellite dish lines vied for space as well, looping over and around poles, fences, draped almost to the ground in a virtual spaghetti of technology. Cities pulsed. The intensity of being in a city was unnerving. Then we would reach our hotel, and an attendant with a calm look in his eyes and a smile on his face, would incline his head, press his palms together and say softly to us, "nameste."

This contrast between the pulsing crowds and the soft speech of individuals was India "normal," as we came to know it on our 25 day trip in that country. It seemed to express what were elemental aspects of our journey: both the courteous, calm deference from individuals that we met, as well as the scrambled force with elbows out, necessary for walking down a street.

We (my husband, Paul and I) went to India for a wedding, the wedding of the son of a dear friend, who, though born and raised in the United States, returned to the country of his roots, to marry an Indian woman whom he had met in the U.S. They had a three day Hindu ceremony, which occurred at the beginning of our trip. That ceremony was a great introduction to many of the characteristics that we came to define as Indian, the array of colors in clothing, thousands of flowers, and wedding decor; the pageantry (the groom came in riding a white horse); the crowds of people, both witnesses and participants to the wedding events; the spicy food of seemingly infinite variety, the monks, spreading incense and chanting for hours over the bride and groom, as well as the entire families of both. Our minds as well as our stomachs were overcome by the over-the-top nature of it all.

(Continued on p.4)

India (Continued)

Post wedding, we joined a guided trip, sponsored by Road Scholar (Elderhostel), entitled "A Spiritual and Cultural Journey: India's Golden Triangle and Holy Ganges River." We traveled to Delhi, Agra and Jaipur, visiting sites sacred to Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, Sikhs, and Jains. We took a 6 day cruise on a riverboat to discover the Hugli River (one of the main channels of the Ganges River through the Delta) and the rural towns that line its banks. To Hindus, the Ganges is a goddess, the physical manifestation of the sacred. We visited its most holy city, Varanasi, observing people carrying out rituals at ghats (steep stepped embankments) in the early morning as well as at night, where snake charmers, bathers, and people doing laundry, competed for space along the river bank with singers, dancers, and colorfully dressed monks. We sat in a boat out in the water and watched evening ceremonies as they played out on shore. The following morning, when we returned to the river, we heard loud laughter echo across the water, coming from members of the "Laughing Club," who were making a conscious effort to add the right tone of levity to the solemn religious proceedings.

The contrasts apparent in every aspect of Indian life are extended right up to a conception of God. We were told that there are 330 million Hindu deities, yet we were also told that Hindus believe in only one God. Then there are all those other religions; India accepts as a matter of course that there are many religions, and there seems to be room for them all. Buddha was born and became enlightened here (we visited both the spot where he became enlightened at Bodh-gaya and the place where he gave his first sermon at Sarnath - one of the most peaceful places we saw in our 25 days of travel). Jainism started here as a reaction to animal sacrifice and still remains a lively religion in India. Indian Christianity goes back to Christianity's earliest days, as it spread from Jerusalem through Syria and on to the Indian subcontinent. We visited a Roman Catholic church in the town of Chandannagore, with an active congregation of 200 members, and an Anglican Cathedral in Kolkata,, serving Christians since 1847. One of the oldest mosques in India sits in Delhi. Called the the Jama Masjid, it is 360 years old and is still serving the Muslim population there, 20,000 at a time during Ramadan. We visited the mosque on a quiet day and could admire the amazing architecture and beautiful gardens unimpeded by crowds. We were told by a professor at Banaras Hindu University that there have been historical efforts to merge the great religions of India. Akbar the Great, a Moghul emperor of the late 1500's, believed that similar truths underlie all religions; he pioneered inter-religious collaboration that was far ahead of his time. Rama Krishna did the same thing in the early 20th century.

The full drama of religion in India is staged through pilgrimage, a hallmark of the Indian religious experience. There are shrines everywhere, big, little, imposing, and private - street shrines where people go in the morning before work; or big temples where believers travel to while on vacation. In Kolkata, we visited a temple dedicated to Rama Krishna on the anniversary of his 182nd birthday. People were lined up for blocks to enter the temple grounds to pay their respects. We visited the mother temple of Hari Krishna, set close to the shore of the Hugli River. The grounds vibrated with

music; people inside the temple were packed cheek to jowl. No matter, they danced and chanted. We could see hostels in the distance, to house the pilgrims who arrived there from across the world.

How can we understand the nature of the Indian religious quest? One way is through art. We saw statues, temple carvings, and colorful tapestries filled with figures and animals that told the stories of the gods claimed by Hindus, Buddhists, and others. My favorite figure is Ganesa, the elephant headed Lord of good fortune, who provides prosperity, fortune and success. He is the Lord of beginnings and the remover of obstacles of both material and spiritual kinds. Sculptures of Ganesa abounded in temples and in roadside shrines. My husband and I purchased a silk tapestry of Ganesa, which we plan to hang in our home.

Hindus and Muslims also apply architecture to their religious quest; the Taj Mahal is the ultimate Muslim example of that effort. Unfortunately, when we visited, it was so very crowded in the airless inner sanctum of the mausoleum, that admiration for the building had to wait; when viewing the structure from across the Yamuna River early the next morning, we had a unique opportunity to contemplate its beauty as it glowed in the light of dawn. The Rama Krishna Temple in Kolkata represents all religions through its architecture. It too was crowded when we visited, making any effort to study its art almost impossible. The fused influences of Hindu and Muslim architecture were seen in the Amber Fort in Jaipur and were a large part of the pleasure in seeing the place. Thank goodness it was not too crowded there to enjoy its beauty!

When we began our journey in India, our guide told us that what we were likely to find was "ourselves." If finding oneself, includes responding to an assault on all the senses, India provides that in spades. It is not a place for the faint of heart. There is much that is shocking: the poverty, the noise and the dirt, the traffic that invents rules of the road as it goes along. There is much that is spiritually moving: the sounds of chanting and of clanging bells, the glow of ceremonial fires and candles floating on the Ganges River and the smell of incense in the air invite surrender to the flow of life there.

Travel can be challenging to our sense of control and remind us that life moves on outside of our comfort zone. That feeling can be central to our spiritual growth. That feeling can also help us discover, in the words of Henry Miller, "a new way of seeing things." India challenged me in that way. I now look at that 10 year visa I obtained in order to travel to India this first time and wonder if I will use it again. I am amazed to say, "I hope so."



Paul and Rosemary DuMont are new members of the COTT family and can generally be found at the 10:15 service.

May 2016

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Healing - both services 8:00a H.E. II 9:00a Christian Ed 10:15a H.E. II/hymns 11:15a Hospitality PM - Chorale & AA	2 9:00a Morning Prayer 12:00p AA 7:00p Bridge Club	3 9:00a Morning Prayer	4 9:00a Morning Prayer 12:00p AA 7:00p Vespers/ Rite of Healing	5 9:00a Morning Prayer 12:00p AA 7:30p Choir	6 9:00a Morning Prayer 12:00p AA 8:30p AA	7 9:30a AA 7:30p AA
8 Mothers' Day	9 9:00a Morning Prayer 12:00p AA 7:00p Bridge Club	10 9:00a Morning Prayer 6:30p Women's Dinner 7:00p B & F	11 9:00a Morning Prayer 12:00p AA 7:00p Vespers/ Rite of Healing	12 9:00a Morning Prayer 12:00p AA 7:30p Choir	13 12:00p AA 8:30p AA Diocesan Convention	14 9:30a AA 7:30p AA
15 Pentecost	16 9:00a Morning Prayer 12:00p AA 7:00p Bridge Club	17 9:00a Morning Prayer 12:00p Ladies' Lunch	18 9:00a Morning Prayer 12:00p AA 7:00p Vespers/ Rite of Healing	19 9:00a Morning Prayer 12:00p AA 7:30p Choir	20 9:00a Morning Prayer 12:00p AA 8:30p AA	21 9:30a AA 7:30p AA
22 Trinity Sunday	23 9:00a Morning Prayer 12:00p AA 7:00p Bridge Club	24 9:00a Morning Prayer 6:30 Men's Dinner	25 9:00a Morning Prayer 12:00p AA 7:00p Vespers/ Rite of Healing	26 9:00a Morning Prayer 12:00p AA 7:30p Choir	27 9:00a Morning Prayer 12:00p AA 8:30p AA	28 9:30a AA 7:30p AA
29 8:00a H.E. II 9:00a Christian Ed 10:15a H.E. II/hymns 11:15a Hospitality PM - Chorale & AA	30 Memorial Day Office Closed 9:00a Morning Prayer 	31	Rector Family Visit - No Morning Prayer or Vespers			

Do you have a question about anything regarding C.O.T.T?

Our Vestry members are here to help -
Talk to one of them or Fr. Gordon any time.

VESTRY

<u>Class of 2016</u>	<u>Class of 2017</u>	<u>Class of 2018</u>
Dorothy Beard	Barbara Collins	Mel Galloway
Bill Spare	Richard Galliher	Jim Hubbard
Marusia Zearfoss	Debbie Knipe	Tony Traini

Janet Roberts - Sr. Warden
Brad Staup - Jr. Warden
Craig Zearfoss - Treasurer
Marsha Burrell - Clerk

SUNDAY SERVICE SCHEDULE

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

9:00 a.m. Christian Education for All

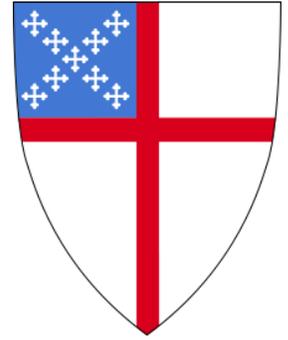
10:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist

11:30 a.m. Hospitality

1st Sunday of each month Anointing and Prayers for Healing follow each service

Morning Prayer - Mon through Friday - 9:00 a.m.

Vespers with Rite of Healing - Wednesday - 7:00 p.m.



CONTACT US

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For Pastoral Emergencies, Church Members should contact the office at 301-371-7505 or via e-mail at transfiguration1@verizon.net

Email Rev. Gordon De La Vars at fr.gordoncott@gmail.com

Contact Associate Pastor Rev. Ellen Hurwitz at (301) 293-1514

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