

The Hallowed Word

All Hallows Episcopal Church

... a strong faith ... a caring community ... an active ministry ...

March 2016

Diocesan Convention this year was the best ever!! One high point was the address to convention by The Rt. Rev. Henry Nutt Parsley, Jr., our Provisional Bishop. It is a bit long, but worth sharing with you. Rev. Nanese gave up her own space to allow you to read this.

THE BISHOP'S ADDRESS 148th
Annual Convention + Diocese of Easton

May the blessing of God, the eternal goodwill of God, the shalom of God, the wildness and warmth of God, be between us and among us now and always.



I greet you in this 148th convention of our diocese with love and affection in the name of Christ. It is good to be together again. I am grateful for my colleague Martin Wharton being with us, along with his charming wife Marlene. Bishop Wharton reminds us of our deep roots in the English Church going back to 1631 when the Book of Common Prayer was first prayed on these shores and when we were a fledgling extension of the Church of England in the New World. As we prepare to elect the 11th Bishop of Easton it is good to remember our long and rich history as we ready ourselves to begin a new chapter together in the story of this faithful diocese of the Episcopal Church.

I am reminded of the story of a journalist who arrived to interview the famous cellist Pablo Casals around his 90th birthday and was told that he would have to wait, as Mr. Casals had not finished his daily three hour practice session. When the journalist spoke with Casals he asked why did he at age 90 still need to practice so long everyday? Pablo Casals smiled and said, “because I think I am making a little progress.”

I think we have been making a little progress together in Easton. I am proud of you for the good work you have done during this creative time and grateful for the grace of serving as your Bishop Provisional. Becky and I have enjoyed this beautiful land and thank you for your friendship and hospitality. Someone asked me recently, if Bishop Shand was number 10 and the next Bishop will be number 11, then what number are you? I said that I guess I am 10.5!

One of the best books I read in the past year was *The Boys in the Boat* by Daniel James Brown. It tells the story of the famous US Olympics rowing team who snatched the gold medal from the Nazi crew in Germany in 1936. It begins with a conversation with one of the aging heroes of the crew, Joe Rantz, who says to the writer, tell them “not just about me. It has to be about the boat.” The boat was for Joe, Brown writes, “more than just the shell or the crew. It encompassed but transcended both. It was something mysterious and almost beyond definition.”

Brown goes on to weave the compelling story of these remarkable rowers from working class families on the West Coast during the Great Depression: as he puts it, this “crew of very different men” and how he “came to understand how these mystical bonds of affection...might lift a crew above the ordinary sphere, transport it to a place where nine boys become one thing- a thing that could not quite be defined, a thing that was so in tune...that as they rowed, effort was replaced by ecstasy. It was a rare thing, a sacred thing, a thing devoutly to be hoped for.”

Today I would like to take that story as a metaphor of our life as a diocese. We are 38 very different parishes and missions. But we are one body, together in “the boat” called the Episcopal Church in this diocese. It is something “mysterious and almost beyond definition,” this boat. We

come together in convention to remember how our mystical binds of affection can lift us to a place where we too can become “one thing”... “a rare thing, a sacred thing, a thing devoutly to be hoped for” as we follow the way of Jesus.

As I have come to know and love you this is the central thing that I most yearn for you to embrace more deeply. This sense of being a diocese, of being one church with 38 different missions stations united by the love of Christ and his ministry in and through us all. As Episcopalians our life is not just about any one parish. It has to be about “the boat,” about the whole.

In the 15th chapter of John’s Gospel Jesus spoke of himself as the vine. “I am the vine,” he said, “you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit...” This is a beautiful image of the kind of community Jesus means for his church. Like a grape vine we are all linked inexorably together, all growing from the ancient tap root of Christ whose life courses through the whole vine, bearing the fruit of God’s love in the world.

Jesus goes on to say that “whoever does not abide in me is thrown away as a branch and withers.” I take this to mean that churches which live to themselves die to themselves. And that churches that live richly connected to the whole vine bear much fruit, because they are always looking to see how they can give and share and extend themselves for the good of the whole and for the life of the world.

Such an outward outlook and outward thrust makes all the difference.

This is why our theme here is “Connect, Collaborate, Create.” This is what a vine does when all its branches are working together. When you look at a vineyard you will see lots of seemingly separate plants growing upward on cross shaped supports, but when you study it you see that each one is not really separate. Each is a part of a greater vine. Each connects with the life flowing through other branches in collaboration with one another, and they create the fruit of beautiful, succulent grapes that nourish life and create the wine that makes glad the heart.

No less than this is our calling as the Episcopal Church in this diocese. Each of us lives in a local context and each of our ministries must grow in that context. Healthy congregations make a healthy diocese. But it is just as true that a healthy diocese makes healthy congregations. The more we are deeply connected with Christ and each other, the more good fruit we will create for the world around us.

I occasionally hear people ask these days, ‘what is a diocese for...what has the diocese done for me lately?’ I hope that the vineyard image is a response to such questions. The diocese is not Bray House or the bishop or the staff we support. To borrow from Buber, a diocese is not an “it;” a diocese is a “thou.” A diocese is us, all of us together. Like a vineyard, a diocese is the life and mission we share together. Christ is the vine and we are the branches. What we do we do for one another. What we do for one another we do for Christ.

Now let me stress that a vine does not exist for itself. It does not live so that people can look and say “isn’t that a beautiful vine?” No, it exists to produce grapes. It exists for juice and joy and good wine.

Just so, the church exists not so people can say isn’t that a beautiful building? Thankfully we Episcopalians do have beautiful buildings and they are living symbols of God’s beauty. But they exist for mission, for being places of prayer for all people, for sharing the love of God with the world. If we are not doing that, it does not really matter what else we are doing. “The church lives by mission as a fire by burning,” wrote Emil Brunner.

We have to think outside the box today. In our time we can no longer sit in our comfortable pews and expect people to flock in the doors. We must find fresh ways to reach into the world around us, inviting others to join us, serving, living the joy and juice of the Gospel so that people can see the love of Christ at work.

There is a little church in a little town in my former diocese, where some years ago not much was going on. Almost everyone around seemed to be a Baptist and our church was nearly invisible down a side street. A few folk came to the 10 o’clock service, worshipped, worried about how to pay the bills, shared some coffee and cookies, went home.

A priest came to me one day and said let me go there on a part -time basis and see what we can do. I said, “go, brother, go!” He went and freshened up the place a little, put out new welcome signs, inspired new leadership, and began an outreach ministry of giving “beans and rice” meals, especially to the struggling Hispanic people of the rural area. A church of about 10 people now has well over a hundred. The old place is bursting at the seams and the Episcopal Church is known as a place alive with the love of God and putting that love into practice.

Every one of our churches can be like that.

Someone once said that evangelism is “one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread.” Being bread is more than just having a nice Sunday service, as central as worship always is of course. Being bread means outreach and meeting the needs around us. It means Bible study and inviting teaching. It means going out to connect with different populations and see how the Gospel relates to their life. It means getting outside the box!

Connect, collaborate, create - this is the way forward for us.

Let me describe three ways that I believe this might happen more vigorously among us.

First, I have great hope for the grassroots “mission cluster” initiative being launched by the renewed Department of Missions. It offers the opportunity for us to connect as Episcopalians beyond our parish boundaries and imagine new ways to vitalize our mission and collaborate with each other through initiatives in mission, evangelism, and Christian formation. This is the program envisioned by our discernment process and adopted by this convention last June. It is not a topdown package; it is the people’s program, trusting the Spirit’s movement among you.

One of my best boyhood memories is when my scout troop blazed a new trail in the Kentucky woods. We spent a week living in and moving through a virgin forest clearing, marking, signing a hiking trail for public enjoyment. It was an adventure, full of surprises and unexpected challenges. For one, it was when I first learned to crack an

egg and cook it in a skillet. A small but unforgettable culinary skill, which, among others, Becky opines I do not use often enough.

Our mission clusters offer such an adventure. We are blazing a trail; there is no map or pre-ordained outcome for this. It is grassroots-based, Spirit-led, and mission focused. It offers the possibility for us to use our gifts collaboratively and create initiatives that none of us can do as well alone. Remember Jesus' parable of the sower who cast seed in every direction? He was not a scientific farmer; he simply broadcasted the seed, scattering it freely. Some seed did not take but some did. When it fell on good ground there was a fabulous harvest. Our mission cluster structure is a way to sow seeds. I hope that you will work hard to see that it flourishes.

Secondly, we need to take Christian stewardship much more seriously. The giving of our members is simply not keeping up with the cost of living. We are increasingly behind the eight ball, not just in Easton but across much of the church. It is shocking to realize that usually our average member's annual car payments exceed what is given to God through the church. Do we really care more what car we drive than what we give to God?

Stewardship is far more than making the church budget, as our Treasurer has just reminded us. It is about commitment - our individual response to the grace of God, the standard of which is the Biblical tithe, the ever-ancient and ever-new measure of our gratitude for life and grace. This standard has been affirmed by our church again and again in recent years. We all need to commit to increasing our giving to God by 1% a year until we reach this life-giving mark of faithfulness and commitment. I say "life-giving" because that is what the Biblical tithe is about. It is not legalism or duty. It is a joyful invitation to live a life defined by gratitude. Nothing is more life-giving than gratitude.

At the same time I believe that our churches need to reinvent the wisdom of what we used to call the Every Member Canvass. The genius of this was its "person to person" approach to annual giving. Most of our churches lately have reverted to simply mailing letters with pledge cards, usually citing what percentage the budget needs to increase. Studies

show that this is the very least effective way to encourage generous giving. We need to reach out personally to each member of our churches to connect, to communicate, and to encourage their vigorous commitment to God's work. Whether done one-on-one or in small group gatherings such personal contact is the most effective way to encourage and teach Christian stewardship. And it is both fun and builds living community.

We will have a diocesan stewardship training day on May 14 for all parishes. We will talk about our stewardship theology and practical ways to address these challenges. It is the first one in some years and I urge your people to be sure to attend.

The diocesan budget has made a little progress this year through our considerable efforts to ask our parishes to meet their full apportionments. Over the past five years we have moved from 75%-84% of our churches meeting their apportionments, which is encouraging. But we are still a significant \$134,670. below full support. The Listening Committee began a very helpful process of listening and encouragement with the churches who are unable (or unwilling) to give their full apportionments. Thank you to the parishes whose unfailing loyalty in meeting your apportionment is absolutely essential to your diocese and to you who have indicated that you are charting a clear path to doing so.

I know that some of us face financial challenges, but let me say - and say clearly that there is no excuse for a parish that can, not to give its full apportionment. This is what it means to be an Episcopal Church.

The Listening Committee was a positive step forward in deepening our relationships and communication and I very much hope that the Diocesan Council will build on it. To draw on the rowing metaphor again, if Easton is to be sustainable in the long run, we really have to start pulling our oars in the same direction.

Lastly, and at the heart of it all, we need to renew our belief that what we are about is the most important work in the world. In our secular day of big business, big money, big government, big media, it is easy for us as a church to feel a little sidelined. But we must never diminish the significance of what we are about.

I have had the good fortune to be raised by faithful parents and to be part of this Episcopal Church all of my life. I would not be who I am without knowing the love of God for me and the divine gift of my life and of the world. All of which came to me through the witness and example of faithful believers, and through this beloved Episcopal community. This loving and courageous church.

As I get older I have a harder and harder time seeing how people live without God and the power of faith in their lives. Yet there is today what C.S Lewis once called an “enchantment of worldliness.” Many people are under its spell, even without realizing it. This enchantment would have us believe that there is no spiritual reality, no God who made us and loves us and whose life flows through ours. No heaven, no ultimate accountability, no grace through Jesus’ cross, no eternal purpose to life. There is only the dimension of this world and the belief that the way to happiness is having all of its seductive things.

As an article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* recently put it, “If anything characterizes ‘modernity’, it is a loss of faith in transcendence, in a reality that encompasses but surpasses our quotidian [daily] affairs.” This is a loss of a sense of the holy, of the Beyond, of the sacred that lives at the heart of all things, leaving too many with only a sense of the worldly, horizontal dimension of life, emptied of depth and mystery and wonder.

Our challenge is to break this enchantment. We do this by inviting others to join us in the transcendent experience of worship and the sacraments, which opens up the way of the Spirit in our hearts. We do this by outreach ministry with the last and least among us, which shows divine love in action. We do this by sharing in the face of illness and despair and death a faith that there is a world without end beyond this one, clothed in marvelous mystery to be sure, but an ultimate reality that gives us hope in the triumph of love, and healing, and peace. It matters - matters more than anything else in the world finally- that people find the treasure of the Gospel. Without it Shakespeare’s Macbeth was right, life is “a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.”

Yes, our worship and mission really matter. We must never forget it. We must be passionate about it, passionate Episcopalians! (That is not a contradiction in terms)

At the end of *The Boys in the Boat*, Daniel James Brown writes of the experience of “the boat” in winning the gold medal against the Nazi crew. They “strove together, pulled together as one, gave every thing they had for one another, bound together forever by pride and respect and love.” When a group of rowers come together as they did, all for the boat, he writes in conclusion, they can “reach for a mysterious reservoir of power far greater [than their everyday strength]. Then it is that you can reach for the stars.”

As I leave you in the summer, with your new bishop on the way, something like this is my hope for you. The Diocese of Easton is like that boat and the mysterious reservoir of strength is the Spirit working in you when you come together. My hope is that you will pull together as one, give everything you have for the whole and for God’s mission, and ‘reach for the stars’. It will mean creative thinking and new forms of partnership with each other - and perhaps one day with a neighboring diocese. But by God’s good grace you can do it and I believe that you will do it.

Connect, collaborate, create. That is the way.

It has been a distinct honor to serve as your Bishop Provisional. I will always remember you and these beautiful shores with gratitude and delight for having been with you for a season. I am deeply thankful to the diocesan staff and the loyal, gifted lay leaders who have worked so hard during this time in the diocese. We are truly blessed by our people and their dedication.

In days to come as I sit on the porch in old Carolina reading a little poetry and listening to the opera, I will cast my eyes up the Intracoastal Waterway - up past the Albemarle Sound and the Outer Banks, past Cape Charles and Smith Island, and I will see in my mind’s eye the mouths of the Nanticoke and the Choptank and the Miles, the winding streams of the Wye and the Chester and the Elk, and the geese flying

high over the steeples and roofs of your beautiful churches. And I will smile and think of all you with profound affection and great hope.

In the words of St. John Chrysostom, “Thanks, thanks, for everything; praise, praise, for it all.”

God bless you.

Lenten Bible Study continues on Wednesday with supper at 6:30 and a new interactive style “All the gifts you can bring!” at 7 pm.

Sunday March 13 we will celebrate with our Traditional Irish Liturgy. Remember to wear green and bring any Irish tweed or plaid for a special blessing.

Ron Geesey was honored at Diocesan Convention for serving six years as Diocesan Treasurer. It was a lot of work and required a lot of time on the road to Easton, and the grateful bishop and delegates thanked him warmly.



Holy Humor – discovered and passed on by Tish Dryden.

A father was approached by his small son who told him proudly, “I know what the Bible means!”

His father smiled and replied, “What do you mean, you ‘know’ what the Bible means?” The son replied, “I do know!”

“Okay,” said his father. “What does the Bible mean?” “That’s easy, Daddy...” the young boy replied excitedly,

“It stands for ‘Basic Information Before Leaving Earth.’”

Episcopal Relief and Development Fund Make it your Lenten Promise to learn more and donate to the Episcopal Relief and Development Fund. We already do so much to relieve hunger here in Snow Hill, but what else can we do in this world? Consider giving to the ERD to support its mission. Visit them on the web

<http://www.episcopalrelief.org/what-we-do/ourprograms>

Or find more information in the handouts in the back of the church.

Time Changes Sunday Morning, March 13. *Turn forward 1 hr.*

Musings by Jim - *highlights from last century’s local newspapers*

February 1, 1913 – Letter from Mr. Boehm. A detective from Gettysburg, Pa., arrived in Snow Hill last Saturday night, with requisition papers for a S. A. Carpenter, the young man who attempted to get money in Snow Hill under false pretenses. The officer said Carpenter was wanted in Pennsylvania for numerous offenses, of a like nature to the ones he attempted to work here, and that he would be taken back and placed in a reformatory school.

Mr. C. L. Boehm writes to us from Highfield, Md., explaining his relation and knowledge of Carpenter as follows: “After reading an article in your issue of Saturday last, as to the arrest of young Carpenter, and finding he is foolish enough to say the checks were bona fide, I wish to make this statement: Upon receipt of a letter from Mr. Parsons,

Cashier of the Deposit and Savings Bank, informing me of the forgery, and stating the young man said I had given him the check in payment for a motor-cycle, I then knew who it was who had presented the check, as I gave a young man last August at Pen-Mar a check for \$15.00 in payment for a bicycle, which he said he was trying to sell to get money for his mother to go see his sick brother, who was then in a hospital. I found out the wheel was his, and bought it. After getting the letter from my bank I connected the wheel and the motor cycle together, and went over to Waynesboro, Pa., Saturday, and, after considerable trouble, located the parents of the young man. He is wanted at Gettysburg, Pa., for obtaining \$25.00 from a department store. I do not want my friends in and around Snow Hill to think that I gained strength so rapidly that I can handle a heavy motor cycle up here in these mountains, where the grades run from 95 to 200 feet to the mile. As soon as I can manage this feat I will start home and go to hard work. This is a lovely place up here, and the air is pure and dry, and I have gained 2 ½ pounds, but that will not run a motor cycle. I hope the young man will think better of the checks being bona fide, and own up.”

February 22, 1913 - Bishop Mann preached a very able sermon in All Hallows P. E. Church, of Snow Hill last Sunday morning. The Bishop and his wife are very much pleased with Snow Hill, and surrounding country, and are desirous of purchasing a place, with the view of locating here in the near future.

The value of improved poultry for their laying qualities, as well as for market, has been so thoroughly demonstrated that new breeds are rapidly taking the place of the old and common farm stock. New methods of incubation, new and advanced ideas on housing, scientific principles of feeding, and discriminate selection of the parent stock, are being adopted, and are powerful agencies in the propagation of new and better breeds. Especially is this true of chickens, and the commercial returns are commensurate with the time and money expended. There are several breeders of fine poultry in Snow Hill, Mrs. E. S. Dashiell having some

White Orpington pullets of the Kellerstrass strain, which are great layers. She has recently purchased a White Orpington cockerel, having the blood lines of the Congo Dune Alpine, and Cook & Bullington strains. This rooster was exhibited at a fair, and was priced at \$35.00. Mrs. C. L. Vincent has a pure strain of Rhode Island Reds, and is now caring for about seventy-five young chicks, some of which were hatched the middle of January, and are now from five to six weeks old. Other fancy poultry breeders in Snow Hill and William T. Duffy, with White Orpingtons, and Mrs. D. Frank Fooks, with White Wyandottes. (I find this a rather interesting story since the Town Fathers just last year allowed the keeping of chickens once again in Snow Hill.)

March 15, 1913 – Death of Mrs. Mary Smith. Mrs. Mary Smith, the widow of the late Capt. J. Parker Smith, died suddenly at the home of her son, Mr. C. Parker Smith, in Snow Hill early Thursday morning, of heart trouble. Mrs. Smith had been in feeble health for several years, and had been a great sufferer from heart trouble and a complication of diseases. She was 71 years old, and was the daughter of the late Stephen S. Colbourne and wife, of Somerset County, where her early life was spent. More than forty years ago she came to Snow Hill with her husband, who was at that time the first mate on the Steamer Maggie, under the late Capt. Stephen H. Wilson. With the exception of a few years, when she lived in Princess Anne and in Baltimore, her entire married life had been spent in Snow Hill, where she had a large circle of friends. Mrs. Smith was a good Christian woman, and she had many lovable traits, which greatly endeared her to her family and friends. Mrs. Smith is survived by two children, Mr. Clarence Parker Smith and Mrs. Eva Callaham, both of Snow Hill. Messrs. William E. Cluff and Robert H. Cluff are nephews of the deceased, their mother having been her sister. Funeral services will be held at the house Sunday afternoon at three o'clock, after which her body will be laid to rest beside her husband in the family burial plot in All Hallows P. E. Cemetery.

May 17, 1913 – Mr. Charles F. Snow, one of the officers of the Maryland Penitentiary, came here Saturday to attend the funeral of his brother-in-law, Mr. John James Collins. Mrs. Collins and Mr. Snow are children of the late Walter P, Snow, in his day one of the leading lawyers of Worcester County. Charley has many friends here who were pleased to see him looking so well.

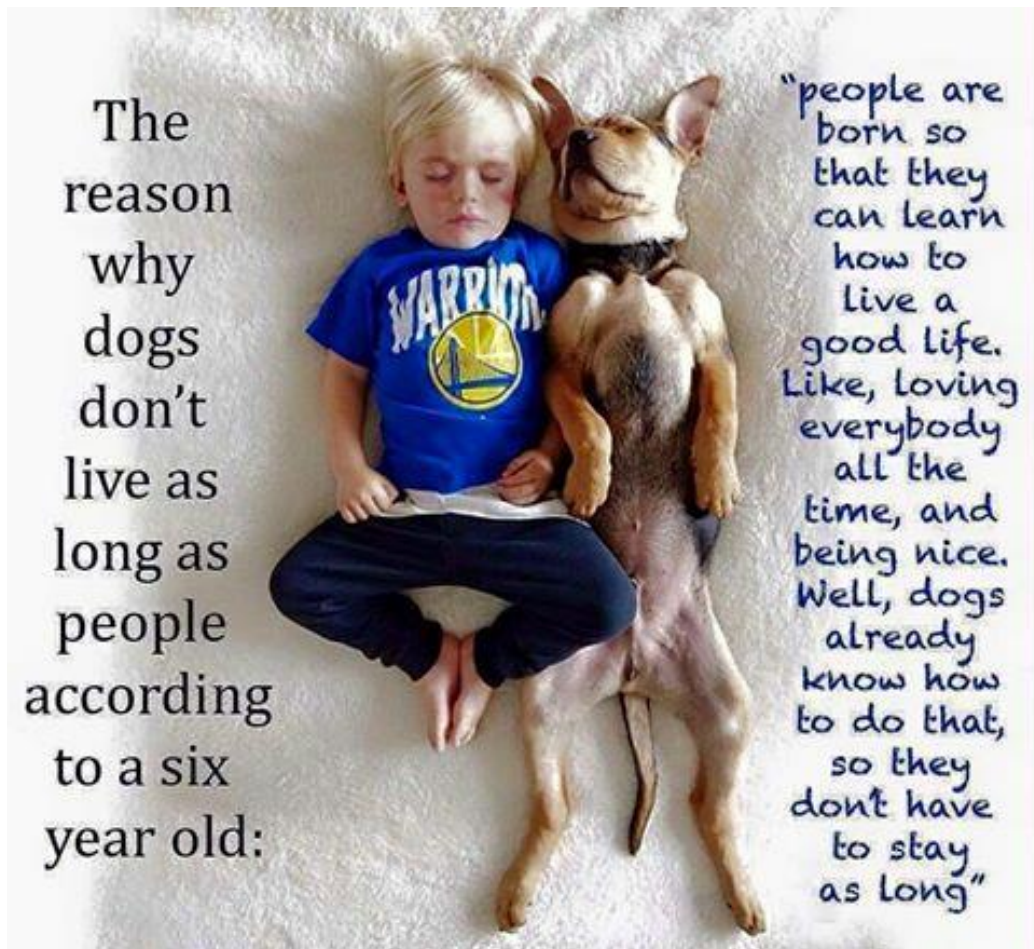
John James Collins. Mr. John James Collins, a well known and respected citizen of Snow Hill, died of heart failure at his home early last Saturday morning. Mr. Collins had been sick only a week and his death came as a great surprise to everyone.

Mr. Collins was 67 years of age, was a native of Worcester County, and had spent all his life in and around Snow Hill. He was engaged in merchandising here at the time of his death. Mr. Collins was for a number of years engaged in the lumber business here and was the first person to introduce electric lighting in Snow Hill installing a dynamo in his mill more than twenty-five years ago from which lights were burnished the town and private parties, thus making Snow Hill one of the first towns in Maryland to be lighted by electricity. About fifteen years ago he was in poor health and went to Colorado for several months to recuperate. He returned to Snow Hill much improved and to all appearances was sound and in good health until his last sickness.

Mr. Collins leaves to mourn his death, a widow, two sons and one daughter. These are Messrs. Walter and Scott Collins, of Snow Hill, and Mrs. J. Beverly North, of Washington, D.C. He was a brother of Oliver D. Collins, Esq., and Mrs. John White, of Snow Hill.

Funeral services were held in All Hallows Church Monday afternoon after which interment was made in the Collins lot in the churchyard. The services were conducted by the Rector, Rev. W. Fred Allen.

Katherine Gordon found a good one to share with us.



Ecumenical Good Friday Service will be a cantata with scripture at Mt. Zion Church. This is a Snow Hill tradition that involves all clergy and congregations in the Snow Hill area. Mt. Zion's choir is amazing, and the service is meaningful and open to all; 7:00 pm at Mt. Zion Church.

Calendar for March 2016

Sunday, March 13: 8:30 a.m. Choir rehearsal
9:30 a.m. Irish Liturgy,
Sunday School
Coffee Hour in the Parish Hall

Weds., March 16 6:30 p.m. Simple Pot-Luck Dinner
7:00 - 8 p.m. Creative Exploration of a Scripture Passage

*Palm Sunday, March 20 **Holy Week Begins***

8:30 a.m. Choir rehearsal
9:30 a.m. Palm Sunday Liturgy with Holy
Baptism, **begins in the Parish House.**
Sunday School
Coffee Hour in the Parish Hall

During Holy Week the Main Entrance to the Church, on Church Street, will be open during the daylight hours for quiet prayer.

Monday, March 21: Shortened Vestry meeting 7-9 p.m.

Tuesday, March 22: Rector in Easton for Clergy Renewal of Ordination Vows

Maundy Thursday, March 24:

6:30 p.m. Simple Pot-Luck Supper with Holy Eucharist in Hall,
Followed by Stripping of the Altar in Church

All are welcome

Good Friday, March 25:

7 p.m. Snow Hill Ecumenical Good Friday Service at Mt. Zion
Church, 410 Dighton Avenue, Snow Hill, led by clergy of Snow Hill,
all congregations are encouraged to attend!

Easter Day, March 27: 9:30 a.m. Festive Eucharist everyone welcome!

Easter Egg Hunt to follow (children only)