The Song of Saint Francis

Volunteering and Your Health

Leading worship services at St. Francis is especially joyful for me. It is amazing to stand at the back of the church while the assembly finishes up the last hymn on Sunday morning and consider all that has happened, the hymns, readings, and communion. So much has happened in that hour that has filled us with joy, commitment and purpose. In response, we are sent out into the world to do the work we have been given to do, as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord.

Lately, I have been focusing on what happens within us as we fulfill that promise, and do that work. What good comes into our lives as a result of our volunteering?

I regularly read several newsletters having to do with healthy aging. Of those, two from this month have major articles on volunteering. These articles point out the positive results of reaching out to others.

The UCLA publication, Healthy Years, suggests that by volunteering we not only get an altruistic feeling - we receive a health boost as well. From their research, volunteering is associated with reductions in symptoms of depression, better overall health, fewer functional limitations, and greater longevity.

The Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai’s publication, Focus on Healthy Aging, considers the positive effects of volunteering on brain health. Their article is entitled, "Consider Volunteering: Your Brain May Benefit." Of special note is their emphasis on staying social, including emotional wellbeing and neurological health benefits. "Volunteering in your local community engages you socially, helping to combat depression and isolation. It may enable you to continue utilizing knowledge you’ve gained across decades as well as skills that depend on memory."

Cited in this article is a 2016 study that found that older adults who volunteered for up to 100 hours per year (about two hours per week) experienced a reduction in the extent to which chronic conditions such as arthritis affected functional abilities like walking a block, climbing a flight of stairs, stooping or kneeling, picking a dime up off the ground, and lifting or carrying 10 pounds.

(Continued on page 2)
Volunteering for 100 hours or more was associated with fewer functional limitations.

It is good to know that our efforts to reach out to others continues the positive experience we have on Sunday morning. Jesus taught us that what is done to "the least of these" is done also to him. And to ourselves. Our caring for others is also self care. As we reach out to our neighbor, we, too, become less isolated. We, too, become stronger and healthier.

**Be a 21 Percenter! by Beth Beswick**

Everett has asked me to spearhead a membership growth campaign to ensure that St. Francis remains a vital and growing church. As I wade into the project I have done a bit of research, talked with many of you, done some brainstorming and of course prayed. I do want to share a few of the facts I have gathered and also pose a question to you.

Churches are living things that are born, grow, flourish, change and sometimes, unfortunately, die. Churches must be fed and nourished. What does that mean? A 2014 survey by the national Episcopal Church determined that the following traits are most indicative that a church would grow:

1. There is a strong emphasis on living one’s faith in all aspects of worship and church life
2. A church is willing to change to adapt to new trends and meet new challenges
3. The church has at least one non-traditional worship service
4. Worship services are vibrant and engaging
5. Coffee hour is vital and a bit “chaotic” - draws in visitors
6. Has regular (weekly is best) special events to draw others in
7. Has multiple electronic methods to reach out to visitors and members

There were other characteristics such as absence of serious conflict, having Sunday school, and type of church leadership that are also important, but the seven I listed seem to be the most critical. I was glad to be able to check off all these things as traits that describe St. Francis.

That being said it is critical that we are very focused and intentional about growing our beloved church. Attracting new members requires desire, action and involvement. Our behavior - what we DO will be what drives our success. A consistent fact noted in everything I read is the vast majority of people connect with a congregation through an existing relationship with a friend, neighbor, co-worker or acquaintance.

Another stunning fact—READ CAREFULLY: while 96% of unchurched folks WOULD attend church if asked, only 21% of church-goers invite others to attend. I truly think many more of us than this invite people to attend St. Francis, but that is an amazing number any way you look at it. Is there someone you know who might be waiting for that invitation, or is there someone you know who hasn’t even thought about coming to church but might just say yes if you ask? Think about this and be part of that 21% who invite someone to church—be a 21 percenter!!

If any of you have thoughts or suggestions about how to grow St. Francis please contact me by email, call, or catch me at church. I need more input! Thank you to those who have already contributed—I am constantly amazed at the creative abilities we have among us.

God’s grace be with you always

* - Beth Beswick*

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**A Prayer for the Poor and Neglected**

Almighty and most merciful God, we remember before you all poor and neglected persons whom it would be easy for us to forget: the homeless and the destitute, the old and sick, and all who have none to care for them. Help us to heal those who are broken in body or spirit, and to turn their sorrow into joy. Grant this, Father, for the life of your Son, who for our sake became poor, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen (BCP, p. 826)

*Everett*
How excited I’ve been about the April 7th music and art pairing at St. Francis by the Sea! All are invited to enjoy this pairing of harp music of Carole Bowman Green with the gallery opening of Artist/Calligrapher Anne Cowie. This event takes place the Friday before Palm Sunday and promises to gently usher us out of the penitential season of Lent. Carole’s program begins with “The Gift of the Ancient Music of the Celts,” followed by performance of selections from Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Isle of Mann, Cape Breton and Galicia (Celtic region, Spain), and concludes with a presentation on therapeutic music entitled “The Three Strands of the Bards and Monastic Prescriptive Music.” Here is an excerpt from Carole’s bio:

In 1991, while traveling in Maine with her husband and their two small children, Carole fell in love with the sound of a small Celtic harp offered for sale in a Bar Harbor folk music shop. Many harps, many lessons, and many sessions with patients later, Carole is deeply committed to providing music to those who might benefit from the many gifts the harp’s resonance and ancient healing songs can offer. Therapeutic bedside harp has evolved a wonderful interweaving of past work in hospital chaplaincy, pastoral ministry with families, and the ongoing study of vibro-acoustic sound and the therapeutic benefits of music. Since completing studies for certification as a practitioner offering bedside therapeutic harp and vibro-acoustic harp therapy, Carole has been contracted to provide bedside harp for hospice patients at three residential care centers in the tri-county area served by Lower Cape Fear Hospice; she also offers harp music for The Davis Community residents and families dealing with the challenges of Alzheimer’s and dementia, post-surgery rehabilitation and other long-term care needs.

For the past several years, in addition to playing for weddings, community gala events, contemplative retreats, church worship services and conferences, Carole has served as the regional Area Coordinator for the Music for Healing and Transition training program (www.mhtp.org), working to widen the circle of certified therapeutic music practitioners in the southeastern states. Carole and her husband, Bill, are members of St. James Episcopal Church in Wilmington and now divide their time between their home in Wilmington and a farm in Alleghany County where the Blue Ridge Parkway approaches the Virginia border. Music of the harp continues to provide profound, healing sounds and wonderful connections of lives on both sides of the state and in every stage of life.

Friday, April 7th -- Gallery opens at 5:30; concert seating begins at 6:45.
Both events are free and open to the public – refreshments are served – ALL ARE WELCOME!

Stay tuned! ~ Linda
"Reaching out with the Love of Christ to others in need" - St. Francis Outreach

HEELING OUR WORLD
Shoes. Running shoes, walking shoes, high heels, lo heels, princess heels, hiking boots, rain boots, snow boots, Nike, Keen, Adidas, Naturalizer, you get the idea? We don’t even think twice about shoes, except maybe for which shoes should I wear for which outfit. That’s where “Heeling Our World” comes in. Heeling Our World is a project which impacts and improves the lives of children both in the U.S. and in Africa. It addresses the issue of the 300 million barefoot children around the world who are at risk of disease and death due to lack of footwear. In the U.S. this project raises awareness among students and gives them a pathway to advocacy. Looking specifically at shoes for children, a simple design called KLEM, made from locally sourced materials, are provided to barefoot children. Money raised is used to empower mothers in Africa who can then make shoes for their own children, set up cottage industries, sell their shoes at markets. In March, a handful of St Francis parishioners met with Mitch Lewis, Executive Director, Heeling Our World. Mitch spoke about the project and taught us to make these KLEM shoes. We will be hosting a series of workshops for middle to high school aged youth and adults and make colorful, simply designed shoes for children in orphanages in Mozambique, Sierra Leone, and Uganda. A date has not been set for the first workshop, but watch for details in the next few months. Monetary donations can be placed in the offering basket with checks made out to SFBTS noted Heeling Our World. Be a change maker, become a global citizen.

HOPE MISSION
If you’d like to continue to help support Hope Mission through non-perishable food donations, please leave them in the Parish Hall in the tub labeled Hope Mission. Special needs for this month include: jars of pasta sauce, boxes of spaghetti, bags of fresh onions, and toilet paper.

FAMILY PROMISE
We continue to collect items in the basket in the Parish Hall for Family Promise of Morehead City. They were very pleased with the bags of supplies that were delivered to them last month. In March, two families completed their program and they accepted two new families, six children with one of the families expecting a baby. Please continue to bring toiletries and cleaning supplies, gently used twin sized sheets and blankets. Place items in the basket in the Parish Hall labeled Family Promise.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY
Carteret Landing, an assisted living and memory care facility, is looking for volunteers to help in the following areas: music with residents, piano or choral performance; Bible study; knitting or crochet, sharing needlework supplies; building a raised bed garden, birdhouses or bird feeders; painting, crafts, basket making; nail polishing; or Bingo. If you are interested, please let Denise Throckmorton know.

“The Simple Path
Silence is Prayer
Prayer is Faith
Faith is Love
Love is Service
The Fruit of Service is Peace”
― Mother Teresa

Denise Throckmorton
and the Outreach Committee
First Ever Parish Leadership Conference by Barbara McCreary

Bringing parish leaders together facilitates information dissemination, networking, and an awareness that we are part of a larger body in Christ. That was the vision Bishop Skirving and Canons Browne and Stockard had in mind when they planned the first ever Parish Leadership Conference held March 17-19 at Trinity Center.

Bishop Skirving kicked off the conference by showing the participants a TED Talk by Simon Sinek (available for viewing on YouTube) on The Golden Circle. In his talk, Sinek identified that "great leaders think, act, and communicate in a particular way." Using examples from history of people who accomplished great things, he explained the reasons why the Wright brothers, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Steve Jobs were able to succeed while others in their respective fields did not have a lasting impact. What did those particular individuals know and apply that we too can use effectively in making our church even more successful?

The Golden Circle is a way of looking at communication "from the inside out," starting with the "why" of the issue rather than the "how" or the "what." The "why" gets to the heart of the matter, engaging people and helping them to connect and want to get on board. (If you go back and reread the first sentence of this article, you'll note that I used this very technique. I started with the "why" of the conference.)

After the talk, Bishop Skirving then asked the conference participants made up mainly of clergy, wardens and other vestry members, parish administrators, and treasurers from our diocese to think about the following question: What is the "why" of your congregation?

How would starting with the "why" rather than the "how or the what" help strengthen people's commitment?

In break-out sessions I learned about upcoming changes to the Church Pension Fund and guidelines for writing church by-laws. As we prepare to hire our new Parish Administrator, it was especially good timing and helpful to receive the "new hire" package that was distributed. Bishop Skirving, in his session "No One of Us is an Island" (or as he alternately named it "Silos are for Corn,"") emphasized the importance of connecting with others in our own church, connecting with churches of other denominations in our proximity, connecting with other churches in our deanery, our diocese, and beyond. Together we see there is no "my ministry" but an "our ministry." How can you help? Go to the diocesan web site, under "News and Events" and subscribe to "News and Notes." Bishop Skirving is trying to increase the effectiveness of this communication tool.

During shared meals at the conference and during social time, I had the opportunity to connect with folks from Wilmington and Beaufort, as well as Goldsboro and New Bern. We confirmed that, though our churches vary in size and demographics, we have much in common and there is much we can learn from one another.

I appreciated the opportunity to represent St. Francis at this conference, and I highly commend it to others when it is offered again. If they had given an award for the "Shortest Distance to Come to the Conference," I surely would have won. We are most fortunate to have this conference available to us at "our back door."
Parishioners, both local and those at a distance, enjoy listening to our podcasts. For those who are unable to attend our service, it is an opportunity to hear the lessons read aloud and to hear our beautiful choir sing. The recording helps people feel as if they are right in our sanctuary with us. For those who are in attendance, it is a way to hear the words of Everett’s sermon again, for example, enabling people the time to reflect on his message.

The team who operates our soundboard makes that happen for us. Linda Laughton states, "The soundboard crew's primary role is operating and monitoring the microphone levels through the board during a service. Secondly, they ensure that my laptop is connected to the soundboard during the service which "captures" a recording of the entire service. That’s it! I then am able to produce a variety of products from the recording, to include our weekly podcasts."

The team is currently looking for one or two more members to add to their rota. It is not a major time commitment. You would participate only about every six to seven weeks. All training will be provided. Though all the current members happen to be guys, that’s certainly not a requirement! Larry Castle commented, "It’s been a good experience for me." Please consider if you feel called to this ministry, and contact Larry Castle with any questions you may have and to volunteer.

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Lunch will be served after the meeting at a cost of $10. Reservations need to be made by April 24. Please sign up at the office window. I will be attending and can take four others in my car.

Work on the cookbook continues and if you haven’t sent your appetizer or hors d’oeuvre recipes yet, please get them to me at bobbiehill@embarqmail.com or leave them in the church office.

I am looking for someone to host a May ECW meeting in their home. Date can be of your choice.

Bunco is scheduled for June 6 in the Parish Hall. Ask your friends to put it on their calendars. The proceeds will go toward this summer’s Beach Towel Ministry by Deacon Carol Eaton.
What is Beach Towel Ministry? Beach Towel Ministry is a youth oriented ministry that specializes in housing repairs and refurbishment for the elderly, the physically and mentally challenged, and those who are struggling economically. The Good News of the Gospel is spread by participating in work projects such as building handicap access ramps, painting, minor roofing, weatherproofing, cool sealing, clearing yard debris, and other needed housing repairs. The most important aspect of Beach Towel is the care, love, respect, and overcoming loneliness these young people provide for the families they are serving.

Who may attend? Rising ninth graders through graduating teens, their youth group leaders, and chaperones from churches inside our diocese and outside our diocese. Youth groups come from as far away as Pennsylvania and as near as the hosting church.

Where is Beach Towel Ministry held? For the past ten years St. Peter’s Episcopal Church , Swansboro, NC has hosted Beach Towel for one week in July. Bishop Skirving, the bishop of the Diocese of East Carolina, would like to see it spread to other churches in our diocese that are near the beach or those needing help recovering from Hurricane Matthew. This summer St. Andrew’s, Goldsboro, NC will host Beach Towel Ministry for Hurricane Matthew Relief from July 15th - July 22nd. while St. Peter’s offer Beach Towel Ministry from June 24th-July 1st.

Why is it called “Towel” Ministry? The towel reminds us of Jesus who wrapped a towel around his waist and became a servant by washing his disciples feet. Also, a waiter or waitress places a towel over his or her arm and serves others. Like Jesus we come not to be served but to serve others. Here at St. Peter’s we call this “Beach Towel Ministry” because of our nearness to the beach.

How did Beach Towel Ministry begin? This ministry, originally known as Towel Ministry, began in the mountains of the Diocese of Western North Carolina over thirty years ago. Later others continued this outreach ministry by establishing host churches in the Piedmont. When the Rev. Bert Eaton and his wife, the Rev. Deacon Carol Eaton moved to Swansboro, they brought Towel Ministry to St. Peter’s by- the-Sea.

Is there a Spiritual component? Beach Towel serves as a spiritual and religious bonding experience for everyone. The week includes daily Morning Prayer, evening worship, a foot washing service, a healing service with Eucharist, walking the labyrinth at St. Francis by-the-Sea located on Emerald Isle and a closing Eucharist Friday Evening. At the end of each day teenagers report to the entire group on their experiences and where they saw God that day working in their lives with those whom they are serving.

What happens during off-time? The group when not working enjoys activities such as beach trips, a pool party, in house movies, skit night, and other activities depending on the location of the camp.

How is the church and community involved? Parishioners become involved in Beach Towel by preparing rooms for housing, providing breakfast and dinner for the campers, and by being welcoming. They also volunteer to be on a job site. The community helps by donating food, bottled water, Gatorade, and Lowes in particular will discount tools and materials. The local high school, churches or athletic gyms provide shower facilities.

How do we find Job Sites? In January Beach Towel Ministry contacts and sends applications to social workers, senior citizen centers, churches, home health agencies, and other agencies that are recommended. Our Beach Towel committee gets together to decide first, what projects we able to undertake and who needs the most help.

What is the cost to attend Beach Towel? Teens pay $300.00 a week that covers food and building supplies. There is no charge for adults and youth leaders. No teenager is turned down because they are unable to pay. Beach Towel has scholarship money available.

If you are interested in attending Beach Towel Camp or need more information, contact the Rev. Deacon Carol Eaton, Cell - 704- 842-0007 or e-mail - eatonbc@aol.com
Arboretum Membership by Jolene McCann

A membership to the JC Raulston Arboretum at NC State University was given in memory of Mary Anne Ragland to St. Francis by the Sea. Anyone representing St. Francis may attend free of charge and participate in all membership privileges, including receiving free plants.

Contact Larry Castle or Martha Edwards to sign up and receive the membership number.

St. Phillip’s Choir Visit by Linda Laughton

There are many advantages to being a beach church. One great perk for me is to include visiting choirs in Sunday worship.

On Sunday, March 26, we enjoyed a visit from the choir of St. Phillip's Episcopal Church, Durham, where our good friend, Lewis Moore, serves as Choir Master and Director of Music. Lewis contacted me months ago to tell me about the retreat at Trinity Center that he would be conducting for his choir that weekend, and we agreed to combine our choirs for Sunday worship before the group returned to Durham. The choirs met for the first time at 9am Sunday morning to rehearse all the music of the day. The a cappella anthem featured a tenor solo by Matthew Reid from St. Phillip's and was met with applause from the congregation.

Opportunities like this allow us to welcome new faces to St. Francis by the Sea, to make new friends, and to provide a larger choral sound in our worship. We thank Lewis and his choir for joining with us in worship, and welcome them back again any time!

Our next planned Sunday morning combined choir experience is with the Salisbury Presbyterian Church Youth Choir from Midlothian, Virginia on Sunday, June 18. You will enjoy the anthem of the day, a traditional Zulu melody arranged for mixed choir, “Hamba nath’inkululi wethu,” which translates to “go with us Lord and set us all free.” The youth choir, under the direction of Dr. Mark Patterson, will perform a concert at St. Francis by the Sea at 5pm that afternoon. Donations and love offerings given at the concert will benefit Camp Trinity. We invite you to mark your calendars and hope you will attend.

Stay tuned! ~Linda
### Holy Week and Easter Service Schedule

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<tr>
<th>April</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>April 9</td>
<td>4/9</td>
<td>Palm Sunday</td>
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<td>4/13</td>
<td>Maundy Thursday</td>
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<td>April 14</td>
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<td>April 16</td>
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<td>Easter Sunday</td>
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### Lay Ministry Schedule

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<th>4/9 Palm Sunday</th>
<th>4/13 Maundy Thursday</th>
<th>4/14 Good Friday</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Layne Helwig</td>
<td>George Hirasawa</td>
<td>Barbara McCreary</td>
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<td>Terry Smith</td>
<td>Meg Bradford</td>
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<td>Jolene McCann</td>
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<td>Scott Shelton</td>
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<td>Gary Keeter</td>
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<td>Larry Castle</td>
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<td>Betty Watson</td>
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<th>4/23 Youth Sunday</th>
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<td>Ellen &amp; John Marriott</td>
<td>Romaine &amp; Dan Riddle</td>
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St. Francis by the Sea Episcopal Church
920 Salter Path Road
Salter Path, NC 28512

Save the dates!

First Class Mail

Sunday Schedule:
9:00 am — Adult Forum; 10:00 am — Eucharist Service
Nursery available; casual dress welcome

Wednesdays — 12:00 noon — Celtic Eucharist

St. Francis by the Sea Episcopal Church is a parish in the Diocese of East Carolina
The Right Reverend Robert Skirving, Bishop

Rector
The Rev. Everett Thomas, Ph.D.

Deacon
The Rev. Carol Eaton

Vergers
Tim Bradford
Marion Morris

Parish Administrator
Sharon Watling

Treasurer
Dan Riddle

Sexton
David Shapiro

Vestry Class of 2017
Tim Bradford
Larry Castle, Junior Warden
Romaine Riddle

Vestry Class of 2018
Beth Beswick
Pat Jones
Terry Smith

Vestry Class of 2018
Layne Helwig
George Hirasawa
Barbara McCreary, Senior Warden

Clerk of the Vestry
Sharon Watling

Music Director
Linda Laughton

Art Gallery Director
Tim Bradford

ECW Chair
Bobbie Hill

Outreach Chair
Denise Throckmorton

Director of Youth Ministry
Open

The Song of St. Francis is a monthly publication of St. Francis by the Sea Episcopal Church.
Sound side of NC 58 between Mile Marker 10 and 10½
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