

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



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FINAL Wednesday Lunchtime Concert of the 2007-2008 season 12:10pm – April 9, 2008

Join us for the last lunchtime concert of this season! This month will feature young Daniel Carr on the piano. Daniel performed a spectacular program at our first concert in December 2006. Daniel is a senior in high school and a student of Mary Heller. Works will be selected from the following:

J.S. Bach	Partita No. 2
Wolfgang Mozart	Sonata No. 10 in C Major
Beethoven	Sonata in A-flat, Op. 26
Johannes Brahms	Intermezzo in E-flat Minor and Rhapsody, Op. 119, No 4
Maurice Ravel	Sonatine
Samuel Barber	Excursions, Op. 20

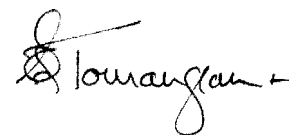
A View from the Big Pew

Dear Friends,

It's Monday in Holy Week I'm 2/3 of the way through my second-ever antibiotic "z-pack," and the plans for services later this week seem to be coming together well. I offer you this month the following article, reprinted from "*Alban Weekly*," a service of The Alban Institute. Even the J&C carried a wire service article on the Religious Landscape Survey to which this reprint refers, so this may not be your first exposure to that research.

Research like this raises interesting questions for those us who are historically one of the "mainline" churches of this land. For example, I wonder what the finding that only 43 percent of those aged 18 to 29 identify themselves as Protestant Christians means for the future of the Episcopal Church and St. John's? Or what the Episcopal Church and St. John's might have to say and offer to that 12.1 percent of Americans who identified themselves as "nothing in particular" as regards faith tradition affiliation? Then again, if 44 percent of those surveyed indicated that they were now worshipping in a faith tradition other than the one they were reared in (and that is certainly true of the Episcopal Church and St. John's). How do we honor and receive the gifts of faith and upbringing that those folks bring with them?

Well, you know me: I wonder. Enjoy the article below. If you want to know more check out the Pew Forum web site: <http://www.pewforum.org/>



Crunching the Numbers

by James P. Wind

Recently, the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life released the first set of findings from its massive [U.S. Religious Landscape Survey 2008](#). As I studied the report and tracked its initial coverage in the mainstream media, I took special note of the provocative phrases employed to catch the public's attention: "[many Americans switch faith identity](#)," "faith identity fluctuates," "[constant membership turnover](#)," "a quantum leap in the rate of change," "[Churn. Churn. Churn.](#)"

For those who read beyond the headlines and initial paragraphs of these news stories there was important information. Based on a sample of more than 30,000 adults and done with a methodological rigor that will make this survey a benchmark for future attempts to map the religious life of Americans, the Landscape Survey offered much to ponder. First, America remains stunningly Christian, at least in terms of religious self-identification. Of those polled, 78.4 percent identified themselves that way. After more than a century of modernity, secularism, higher education, enlightenment, and new religions, the vast majority still see themselves as in some way Christian.

That “in some way” is important. The survey documents the amazing variety of ways that Christians understand and practice their faith. And here is where the survey’s detailed analysis simultaneously confirms, sharpens, and challenges what many of us thought was going on. According to the surveyors, the biggest chunk of American Christianity is Protestantism, which makes up 51.3 percent of the adult population. So Protestants are still the religious majority in our society, but just barely so. The study goes on to note trends that suggest that any Protestant triumphalist celebrations better take place quickly. The Protestant majority has declined in relative size from the 60 to 65 percent level often noted by surveys taken during the 1970s and 1980s. Steady decline has been Protestantism’s overall trajectory from the 1990s on.

When the researchers slice the story generationally we see that 62 percent of those 70 and older are Protestant, while only 43 percent of those aged 18 to 29 identify themselves that way. Unless major and unanticipated changes take place, this survey may be the last one to paint a picture of American religious life before Protestants experience a historic shift and become a minority movement in the land they once claimed to shape.

The researchers have much more to say about Protestantism, about the three major subtraditions that comprise it—evangelical (26.3 percent), mainline (18.1 percent), and historically black (6.9 percent)—and about the generational, educational, income, and family-size dynamics that are shaping it. But what I found especially noteworthy was the discovery that “roughly one-third of all Protestants...were either unable or unwilling to describe their specific denominational affiliation.” Thus not only is Protestantism a composite of very different traditions, but many who placed themselves within this category did so with considerable vagueness about what that means. Specific denominational identities recede into the background in the story the survey tells.

One of the findings that has generated the earliest buzz is the dramatic growth of what the researchers call the fourth largest religious tradition in America. After the evangelicals, which make up 26.3 percent of the adult population, the Catholics (23.9 percent), and the mainline (18.1 percent), come the unaffiliated (16.1 percent). Almost equal in size to mainline Protestantism, the unaffiliated have as much internal diversity as the rest of America’s faith communities. Consisting of small groups of atheists and agnostics, this “tradition” included 12.1 percent of Americans who identified themselves as “nothing in particular.” For those interested in emerging trends, it is important to note that this group experienced the largest net growth of any of the major religious groupings, climbing from 5 percent in the 1980s to 16 percent today.

There are other startling revelations when one crunches these numbers. At first glance, American Catholicism looks relatively stable, making up 23.9 percent of the adult population, a figure very similar to the 25 percent regularly reported over the past several decades—except, as the researchers remind us, for the stunning fact that actually American Catholicism has suffered the greatest losses of any faith community. Almost one-third of the survey respondents who claimed to have been raised as Catholics no longer label themselves that way. Now fully 10 percent of America’s adults are former Catholics. How, given that massive exodus, could Catholicism’s numbers change so little? In a word, immigration. Nearly half (46 percent) of the 34 million immigrants surveyed by the pollsters identified themselves as Catholic. A very different Catholic reality is emerging behind the surface stability.

The great flux that is condensed within the numbers in the preceding paragraph is not just a Catholic story. The Landscape Survey tells us that all denominations are experiencing many exits and entrances. In fact, fully 44 percent of those surveyed indicated that they had moved from the religious tradition they were born into to another.

What do all these statistics mean for those who lead American congregations? Interestingly, the survey does not focus on congregations at all. Yet the local churches, synagogues, and temples of the land are the places where all this switching, fluidity, and vagueness manifest themselves week after week. In every worship service, board meeting, Sunday school class, social event, and rite of passage, all the churn that the Landscape Survey points to “out there” in the national environment is going on “in here”—in the lives of individual members and the small faith communities they belong to. Once upon a time religious leaders represented very distinct religious communities that were clearly differentiated from the ones down the street or across town. Now our leaders work in a sea of religious vagueness and search for ways to help people surrounded by a growing tide of “nothing in particular” find something in particular to build a life upon. Stay tuned.

James P. Wind is president of the Alban Institute.

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Spring Church Work Day - April 26, 2008 **Help Maintain Our Church Home**

The Property and Garden Committees would like to invite you to a Spring Work Day at St. John's on Saturday April 26, 2008 from 9:30 am to 2:30 pm. The Spring projects range from mulching and other gardening to cleaning windows and other sprucing up inside and out. We would greatly appreciate any time you can spare and you do not have to stay the whole time. There will be a variety of projects for all skill levels and ages. Childcare and lunch are planned but not finalized. If you would like to volunteer with the Garden Committee, please contact Barbara Powell at powellbl@purdue.edu or 474-6313. If you have work projects for the list or other questions about the day, please contact Tony Bailey at tktblailey@earthlink.net or 463-7263. Watch for sign-up sheets in April.



Habitat for Humanity's 2008 Cover Indiana Bike Tour

Get out your bikes and start training for the "2008 Cover Indiana Bike Tour." Habitat for Humanity of Lafayette invites you to join them as they 'Cover Indiana' during the week of May to May 17. The goal is not only to help raise many walls but to also raise awareness of Habitat's mission of ensuring that every man, woman and child has a decent place to sleep at night. For additional information about 'Cover Indiana' please contact Hailey Dady at 765-447-8401 x2404 or visit www.habitatindiana.org/biketour. See Teresa for entry forms.

UTO

Our Spring Ingathering for UTO at St. John's will be May 4, 2008.



We have so very much to be thankful for:
Friends
Challenges for growth
Easier weather most days
Opportunities to share time, talents and treasures
Food and clothing
Adequate shelter
Transportation as needed
Medical care of many kinds

I'm sure you can think of more!
Let us share with others less fortunate.

Yours in Christ,
Mary Louise Davis

Words, words, words!

Please Welcome:

James, Deborah and Anna Walsh who recently transferred their records to St. John's from Church of the Heavenly Rest in Abilene, Texas.

I love words!
As diaskeuast of this august publication, I'm asking you to send me some good ones.

I am a crossword puzzle maniac... Here is one of my newest: **Incunabula** - Extant copies of books printed before 1501.

My granddad always said, "Get on your fork-ed end" to us when he wanted us to stop lallygagging and get moving. What fun expressions do you remember from your childhood? Send me some! Let's lighten up this "rag" and have some fun!!

Keep sending in reports, announcements, pictures and opinions

Property Committee Information and Quiz

The St. John's Property Committee's next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, April 5, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. in the Commons. The monthly update meeting is followed by working on various projects as needed.

Top 5 Work Projects List

(we'll help you get started and supply/pay for the materials - you supply the labor)

- #5 - repair upstairs hallway ceiling near west stairway
- #4 - caulk and paint around new upstairs windows
- #3 - scratch and dent removal on pews
- #2 - re-glue baseboard trim (all over)
- #1 - New Property Committee Members (we like the ones we have but we want more!)

If you're interested in assisting with one of these projects or any others, please contact Tony Bailey at: tktbaily@earthlink.net or 463-7263.

So, you think you know St. John's??

How many rest rooms does St. John's have??

- A. 2
- B. 3
- C. 5
- D. 7
- E. 8

We'll give the answer next month.

March's Question and Answer

How many stained glass windows are in St. John's?? (hint - I count 7 behind the altar)

- A. 15
- B. 19
- C. 27
- D. 31
- E. 50+

And the answer is (drum roll please)

E. 50+ (7 behind the altar,).