



CHURCH OF THE HOLY COMMUNION

February 2018 | Issue No. 113

A Sacred presence
in the center of Memphis

THE COMMUNICATOR

COLLEGE STUDENT REPAYS CHURCH FOR LIFELINE

Zeke Smith recounts the sad parts of his life in a detached monotone. When his parents, poor and struggling, divorced, his mother left. He lived with his dad, who worked the night shift and didn't know much about raising a teenager. The gulf means Smith, 19, has essentially been responsible for his own care since he was 15.



Zeke Smith recruits at the University of Memphis for his weekly discussion group.

Photo by Cindy McMillion

at the University of Memphis, volunteers at Church of the Holy Communion, leading a college-student discussion group on Wednesday nights and teaching youth formation on Sunday morning. On Sunday nights, he's back to help with EYC.

Smith's story, including that he quit his high school classes because he didn't fit in, is a quiet message

He survived the loneliness and the gnawing need for family support by walking into St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Jackson, Tennessee. He was greedily receptive to anyone who noticed him.

"The Episcopal Church became my family. I've always wanted to find ways to give back and say, 'Hey, the Episcopal Church is really cool.'"

And so, for eight to ten hours a week, Smith, a freshman

to church people to pay attention not just to the stranger at the gate but also to the people who sift through church doors, sometimes as lost souls hoping to be noticed.

"We never know what someone else might be experiencing when we extend the hand of fellowship. We never know when we might be the one who makes all the difference," Sandy says.

We also don't know what wells of inspiration and talent live inside.

(Zeke continued on page 7)

VESTRY'S OFFICERS FORM LEADERSHIP CORE

The Vestry elected officers at its first meeting in January, forming the nucleus of leadership that will guide the congregation through a series of important questions and votes this year, including shaping a vision for the church's long-term sustainability.

The congregation finished last year in a deficit position, and pledges have been relatively flat for two years even as expenses



John Lewis



Mike Murphy



David Visinsky



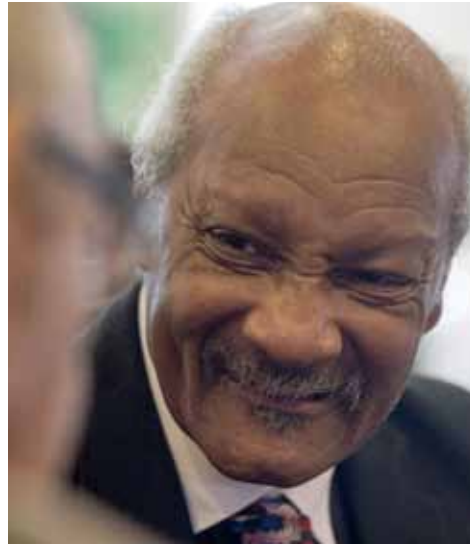
Marlene Shaw

have increased.

"It's not that we are in financial difficulty," Sandy said, "but we need a good, strategic plan to make sure that we don't get into financial difficulty."

Newly elected officers are John Lewis, senior warden. This is Lewis' second consecutive and final term. Mike Murphy is junior warden; David Visinsky is serving as treasurer for his third and last year. Marlene Rutledge Shaw, elected in January, is clerk.

(Leaders continued on page 6)



Photos by Brandon Dill

Reverend Cleo Smith, Reverend Leslie Moore and Mr. Baxter Leach were among the hundreds of sanitation workers that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. came to Memphis to support in 1968. They told their story to a packed Rector's Forum on January 28.

1968: VIEW FROM SANITATION PICKET LINE

Bxter Leach, Cleo Smith and Leslie Moore, poor, unskilled black laborers, were among the most invisible members of Memphis society in the 1960s.

They and the roughly 1,300 others hauling garbage at the time of the 65-day sanitation strike in 1968 represented thousands of black men in Memphis who were largely illiterate, displaced laborers from the Mississippi Delta where farms and plantations had long since mechanized.

Getting a job on the city sanitation crew was a matter of being free of tuberculosis, passing a blood test and standing in line for the most menial labor on the city payroll.

Leach, Smith and Moore spoke about their lives and the work in the Rector's Forum on January 28, telling the story of what it was like to carry tubs of garbage – rotting in the Memphis heat – from the back yards to the waiting garbage truck at the curb, five days a week.

Maggots and slop dripped down their necks, backs and clothes. In those segregated days, they were not allowed to shower in the city-provided facilities used by white employees. As a result, many climbed into a city bus for the ride home at night smelling like the garbage they had hauled all day, to the disdain of other passengers.

The men earned about \$70 a week, giving them an annual income of \$3,640 at a time when the national median income was \$7,743.

“We weren’t treated fairly. They didn’t have no kind of regard for us,” Moore told the crowd. “Dr. King came to Memphis on the behalf of the sanitation workers because we had been through some stuff.”

His “heart was jumping for joy,” Moore said, the day King agreed to come.

“We had decided we were going to fight until we got what we really wanted. We let our work speak for itself,” he said. “We let our wage speak for itself.”

The three men were part of a the congregation's yearlong look at Dr. Martin Luther King and the events that culminated in his assassination.

“The Journey Toward MLK 50 series is

intended to remember the legacy of Dr. King, and to look into our lives today to see how his ministry carries on in our lives today,” said the Reverend Benjamin Badgett.

“Because we are in Memphis, it is especially important for our faith community to share the memories and stories around the events of Dr. King’s life and death so we can better understand ourselves and our neighbors in light his work for civil rights.”

The strike began less than two weeks after Echol Cole, 36, and Robert Walker, 30, were crushed in the back of garbage



More than 200 people attended and gave the men a standing ovation.

(Strike continued on page 3)

Strike cont'd from page 2

truck near Quince and Colonial.

The two climbed in the back of the truck to get out of the rain. At the time, city rules said sanitation workers could not seek shelter on white people's property.

The Tennessee Historical Commission erected a marker at the intersection on February 1, 2014 – 46 years to date they were killed.

Word of the tragedy traveled quickly among the sanitation workers.

Cleo Smith was on a crew working in a neighborhood to the south.

"We had to keep working," he said. "We couldn't stop working."

A white woman, whom he called a "good Samaritan," came out of her house with blankets and sheets to wrap the bodies in.

The next day, Thomas "T.O." Jones, a hero of the movement, called a strike meeting.

Jones and 30 other sanitation workers were fired in 1963 for trying to start a union. Jones kept in contact with his friends on the trucks. When Cole and Walker were killed, the laborers looked to him for leadership.

He came through.

"He told me, 'Get your men. We're going to meet,'" Leach said. "Some went with us, and some didn't."

The next day, hundreds of sanitation and sewer workers walked off the job, leaving the city to cover the daily garbage pick-up with managers and men who would cross the strike lines. It could not keep up.

With the words to Joan Baez's song "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around," ringing in their hearts, the men picked of their-now famous "I AM a Man" signs and walked the picket line.

"We decided we were going to take a stand today and not go to work," Moore

said.

Smith and some of the other younger workers went to A. Schwab, a longtime dry goods store on Beale, and bought ax handles.

"We stood on the picket line with them to see who would cross," Smith

said. "We were determined we were going to be men, not boys."

The strike was settled on April 16, nearly two weeks after King was killed, "basically on the terms that were available before King arrived,"

Charlie Newman told the forum crowd.

Newman was a young lawyer at Burch, Porter & Johnson when the firm decided to represent King in the city injunction against a second march. The first march ended in violence.

In King's room at the Lorraine Motel, King, his lawyers and the pantheon of the early civil rights leaders hammered out their case.

They spent the next day, April 4, in federal court. By the end of the day, Judge Bailey Brown had lifted the injunction, and the march was set to roll.

"As we were walking back to our offices on Main Street, we heard the sirens," Newman said.

King was dead.

Smith was home when he heard the news.

"The first thing that popped into my head was all hope was gone," he said shaking his head as he remembered the defeat. "I cried that night."

"Dr. King is not here, but his spirit is here and his work still goes on," Moore said, telling the crowd that the ongoing job is to actively work for peace, justice "and to get along with one another, especially your family."



Missie McDonnell says cultural divides kept Memphians apart.

IMPRESSIONS

I was absolutely in awe just being with these brave men. They were remarkably open and frank with the audience, and I meant what I said. I stand on their shoulders, because as menial as their jobs were, they taught us all how to stand up for what was right. Mere words cannot express my gratitude.

-OTIS SANFORD

These were young black men who were eager to earn a living wage to support their families. They were no different from any man attempting to earn a living in those days. And yet they were subjected to injustices and indignities every day at their work.

-DR. PEGGY VEESER

It is good to finally hear, direct from the heart, what really happened leading up to the horrible and tragic loss of April 4, 1968. The gentlemen are heroes for rising above the treatment and having the ability to tell the story and still maintain a sense of humor.

-MILTON ROGERS

EARLY SPRING AT HOLY COMMUNION...



Words³

This month, Words³ writers are reading from their work on **Pets** and **Travel**. All are welcome, including listeners. | February 21 at 5 p.m., Room 307. Free snacks!



SUNDAY MORNINGS | RECTOR'S FORUM

FEBRUARY

February 11 | The Rector on Race
Sandy offers a personal reflection on his experiences with race, and how they impact his understanding of conversations about race relations today.

February 18 | A Failure to Communicate: A Memoir Dr. John Bakke, political strategist and retired professor at the University of Memphis, will talk about how breakdowns in communication—between the city and the citizens, the workers and the city—plus the tone of media coverage, hardened the sides in their camps as the sanitation strike loomed.

February 24 | A Journey through the Delta: Music and Race Hester will lead a discussion on the intersection of race and culture that produced the Delta Blues.

MARCH

March 4 | A New Era of Civil Rights
Led by Terri Freeman, president of the National Civil Rights Museum.

March 11 & 18 | When It Is Just Too Much to Bear Staff from Samaritan Counseling will help us explore ways of dealing with the seemingly never-ending barrage of hate, intolerance, violence and tragedy that flood through the media, including social media.



Young Adults event February 18 at BRIDGES

Join us at BRIDGES for fun teamwork activities 2-4 p.m. FREE

My Episcopal Life

6:45 to 8 p.m., Wednesdays,
Feb. 21 - March 21, in Parish Hall.
Sandy is teaching.

CONTEMPORARY THEOLOGICAL ISSUES is a lay-facilitated, lively discussion of theologically interesting current media. This class meets Sunday mornings at 9:15. All adults are welcome to participate in our thoughtful exploration of challenging topics." | Room 307.

GROUPS A

All Saints' Guild <i>Second Tuesday</i> 10:30 a.m. Carrick Room	Brotherhood of St. Andrew <i>Second and fourth</i> <i>Saturday</i> 8 a.m., Chapel	Centering Prayer <i>First Saturday</i> 9 a.m., Chapel	Daughters of the King <i>Second Sunday</i> noon Carrick Room	Knitting Ministry <i>Third Tuesday</i> 11 a.m., Room 307 <i>Every Wednesday</i> 6:30 p.m., Room 307
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**Here@HolyC
Wednesdays
at 5:45 p.m.**

Come and enjoy our brand of family-style dinner, followed by compline and small-group discussions. All the choirs practice, plus, there's Zumba, ABC Watch Party, activities for children and Bring It Food Hub pickup. Repeat each week!



**MIFA Offering Leadership Training
for Youngsters on February 19**

Children 6-13 and their parents are invited for a morning of activities to affirm kids' leadership skills and deliver Meals on Wheels. Runs from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., includes breakfast and lunch. Contact dmclure@mifa.org to register.

2018 SPRING SPORTS

SOCCER: Registration runs through February
Boys & Girls Age 4 – 13
Games run from March 23 to mid-May

BASEBALL/SOFTBALL
Registration: February and March
Boys & Girls K – 4th
Games run from May to early June



Exercise Schedule at Holy Communion

Beginner's Gentle Yoga	Intermediate Yoga	Tai Chi	Zumba
Mon. & Wed. 4:15-5:15 p.m. Room 308	Tues. & Thurs. 4:15-5:15 p.m. Room 308	Mon. & Wed. 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Room 308	Mon. 6:15-7:15 p.m., Gym Wed. 6:30-7:30 p.m., Gym Sat. 9:30-10:30 a.m., Gym

**Shrove Tuesday
Chili Cook-Off**

February 13 at 6 p.m.



Join us for a lively evening with Winchester and the Ammunition. Chili teams are forming now. If you want to compete, contact Matthew Arehart. Evening will end with the burning of the palms on the patio. Cost is \$10 or \$25 for families. Proceeds go to the youth pilgrimages fund.

| *Parish Hall*

Food for Thought

On Sunday evenings in Lent, Hester and Alison England are leading a discussion group at the reception following the 5:30 p.m. service. Each will start with 10-minute presentation, followed by conversation. **February 18 - March 25**

AND GUILDS

Men's Bible Study <i>Friday</i> 7 a.m. Room 214	More Than a Meal <i>First Sunday</i> after 10:30 service at Grace-St. Luke's	The Reading Life <i>First Tuesday</i> 11 a.m. Carrick Room	Sandy and Mimsy's Biblical Adventure <i>Thursday</i> 10 a.m. Room 308	Words ³ (Words, Cubed) <i>Third Wednesday</i> 5:00 p.m. Room 307
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TEAM IN PLACE DURING ASSOCIATE RECTOR SEARCH

In January, shortly after Benjamin Badgett announced his call to St. John's Episcopal in Waynesboro, Va., Julie Ellis and the rest of the search committee were working to find his successor.

The committee is conducting phone interviews now and will invite a few candidates to visit in March.

"We would hope to have a recommendation from the search committee to the rector by Easter," said Ellis, chairperson.

The committee serves in an advisory role. The Vestry creates the position, and by church law, the rector fills it. Sandy expects to hire a full-time curate or associate rector by July.

"We are looking for someone who has a real vocation around pastoral care, who takes life from visiting in homes and hospitals and whose gifts include training and empowering lay volunteers to care for each other. These people really share the ministry of caring," Sandy said.

In the meantime, the congregation will get a chance to renew its acquaintance with the Reverend Eyleen Farmer, recently retired associate rector for pastoral care at Calvary Episcopal. She has been hired to work ten hours a week in pastoral care, starting in late February.

"Eyleen regards this as a homecoming," Sandy said. "She was sponsored for ordination by Holy Communion."

Although Farmer will preach twice this semester, her assignment does not include Sunday work or office hours.



The Reverend Eyleen Farmer



Marjorie Baker

The other new face will be Marjorie Baker, a second-year student at Virginia Theological Seminary, who will serve as a paid seminary intern, starting in late May.

"I look forward to learning what it is to be the church during the week, day in and day out," she said. "In seminary, most of the education revolves around Sunday. I look forward to seeing

what it is like to give pastoral care during the week and how Sandy and Hester handle hospital visits, budgets and planning for the program year."

Baker has completed training in hospital chaplaincy but says it is not the same as what happens in a parish.

"Pastoral care is such an important part of the priestly vocation. To get to experience it in a place like Holy Communion, where you have Sandy and Hester, who seem so pastoral and kind, and a congregation that already ministers to each other, that is a great place to learn.

"A church that relies solely on clergy for pastoral care is going to be in trouble. It's very important when the churches themselves take ownership."

Her father, John Baker, was associate rector at Grace-St. Luke's from 1995 to 1999. Baker's grandmother still lives in Memphis. Her mother-in-law is parishioner Judy Phillips.

"Margie wants to come to Memphis and work hard here for the summer," Sandy said. "We're thrilled to have her."

She will return to seminary in the fall for her final year.

Leaders *cont'd* from page 1

The executive committee serves also as the Vestry's personnel committee. It will be asked to approve the financial arrangements for the associate rector who will succeed Benjamin Badgett.

The Vestry, with executive committee direction, will make decisions about how to pare the renovation project, which will begin in late spring when the staff moves offices to Moss Hall on the St. Mary's campus, to keep it in line with the \$7 million pledged in the capital campaign last year. And it must decide if it wants to move forward on significant enhancements in the Nave to improve sound, replace the failing heating and cooling system, and upgrade the worn and dated flooring and ceiling.

"I'm glad to have the opportunity to serve alongside Sandy and the rest of the Vestry for another year," Lewis said. "We made a lot of progress in 2017, particularly as we began to develop and implement the vision and mission statements that will help us remain focused for the long term.

"I'm looking forward to continuing that work as well on efforts related to the major building projects we have in front of us. Our various project committees have invested significant time and effort into planning these projects over the last year, and it will be exciting to see real activity and work being done."

Shaw, who is a member of the executive committee in her first year on the Vestry, feels the weight of the office.

"I certainly feel the responsibility that Vestry members bear for ensuring that Holy Communion stays focused on our work as a Christian community; that we work to deliver our strategic goals; and that as a non-profit organization, we have healthy and sustainable operations.

"As a proud grandparent, serving on the Vestry allows me to work for something that is critical for my grandsons (Hudson, Catcher and Stanton Miller) and indeed all the young people who attend Holy Communion. There are always challenges ahead, and my prayer is that I might offer assistance in a meaningful way."

In Smith's case, it is grand. Of his own volition, he recruits friends from the university (he's working contacts at Christian Brothers and Rhodes too), drives them to the church and then scribbles down the questions he's been asking himself from his Modern Political Thought class.

"Sometimes, God's plan seems frivolous. We don't want to do it, but it's still God's plan," he says, talking the questions out loud. "Does evil exist? Is there a need for religion if we live in a perfect society?"

Eleven college students are registered on an app that helps him keep track of who's coming. As meeting time approaches, his phone beeps and buzzes.

"I have hope the college group will become self-sustaining and a fruitful thing," Smith says. His plan is to create a diocesan-wide group that would meet in the Barth House at 409 Patterson. The diocese has just voted to restore and renovate what is now a closed building.

Smith came to the Episcopal Church through a couple of avenues. At first, he was struck by the physical beauty of St. Luke's. That was reinforced by the people, including a friend's mother who treated him like a son, and a youth leader and his wife who let him bunk in their extra bedroom, saving him a 35-minute commute.

Someone else invited him to Camp Gailor-Maxon at DuBose Conference Center. Maybe it helped that the building is on the National Register of Historic Places and

that the 65-acre Monteaque retreat is stunning.

What Smith remembers is feeling lighter than air because he'd found a peer group that didn't laugh when he talked (he has a Midwestern accent) or find it odd that he had been baptized three times as his family moved from church to church and then quit going altogether.

"It was my first introduction to the Episcopal youth community. I quickly fell in love. I felt like I belonged. There were kids of all kinds of personalities and all walks of life. I came as a very flawed individual and still felt cherished for what I am," he says.

He met Minister to Youth, Matthew Arehart on a ski trip and renewed the acquaintance at Happening a few years ago when he was thinking of moving to Memphis.

"I was blown away by how invested he was and how interesting he was. He wasn't just a two-dimensional figure. He had multiple facets that made him interesting to me," Smith said.

Arehart offered him a chance to work with youth on Sundays and lead the college group on Wednesdays.

"Holy Communion is my parish away from home. I've never gone to an Episcopal church where there aren't good people that receive you with open arms," Smith said. "I'm so glad I am here now. I don't know where I would be without the Episcopal Church. It has been a major focus in my life, and I don't see that changing any time soon."

"What I want to show college kids is that I understand college is hard but if you ever need it, you have a family here, a safe place where you can question what you believe..."

—Zeke Smith

Memorials & Honoraria

Received December 19, 2017 – January 15, 2018

**In celebration
of the marriage
of Jessica Johnson**

**and the
Reverend Sandy Webb**

Barton Lynch

Bruce & Melody Taylor

Alice Bolton

Sam & Barbara Gassaway

Don & Elma Malmo

Julie & George Ellis

Emily Woodside & Bill Falvey

Vance & John Lewis

Mary Call & Mott Ford

Tonya & Sam Rembert III

Hester & Andy Mathes

Judith Phillips

Sally & Frank Navarra

The Visinsky Family

Daniel Amsler & Judith Horning

In honor of Jennifer Kruchten

Deenie Phelan

In memory of Philip Cruzen

Shellie & Mary Cole McCain

Butch & Alexis Porter

Debbie Kuykendall

Kathy & Ben Adams

In memory of Don Savage

Mark & Elisabeth Bishop

In memory of the Reverend

Reynolds Cheney

Anna & Gwin Robbins

In memory of Marty Wick Sr.

Kathy & Ben Adams

In memory of Fred Kubler

St. Mark's Episcopal Day School

THE COMMUNICATOR



Church of the Holy Communion

4645 Walnut Grove Road

Memphis, Tennessee 38117

Ph: (901) 767-6987 F: (901) 767-7034

www.holycommunion.org

WORSHIP TIMES

Sundays: 8:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 5:30 p.m.

Weekdays: Monday through Friday 8:10 a.m.

Wednesday 12:15 p.m.

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CLERGY

The Reverend Sandy Webb, *Rector*

The Reverend Hester Mathes, *Associate Rector*

The Reverend Dr. Randy McCloy, *Deacon*

VESTRY

John Lewis, Sr. *Warden* + Mike Murphy, Jr. *Warden*

David Visinsky, *Treasurer* + Marlene Shaw, *Clerk*

Debbie Campbell, Mike Driscoll, Amanda Goetze, Hugh Holt,

Nat Johnson, Dale Jones, Tracy Killen, Tim McCormack,

Anne-Morgan Morgan, Cava Sittnick, Richard Williamson,

Christy Yarbro and *Youth Representative* Evelyn Roberts

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Director of Administration

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Minister of Hospitality

Director of Operations

Facilities Staff

Director of Recreation & Wellness

Assistant Minister of Music

Minister to Children

Assistant Minister of Music

Assistant Minister of Communication

Facilities Staff

Minister of Music and Liturgy

Receptionist

Minister of Communication

Sexton

Sexton



The Reverend Benjamin Badgett and his family said goodbye in a reception at the church on January 28. Benjamin accepted a call at St. John's Episcopal in Waynesboro, Va., beginning in early March.

Church of the Holy Communion, an Episcopal Church in the center of Memphis, seeks to be a sacred presence, grounded in the servant ministry of Jesus, offering spiritual growth opportunities for all.