



# Hickory Neck Nuggets

May 2015

## And now for something completely different...

By The Rev. Earnest Graham

Let's be honest, we are creatures of habit. We can see this in the patterns of eating and sleeping, work and relaxation, exercise or entertainment. Whether we enjoy a favorite beverage at a particular time of day, or tap on the latest mind-numbing video game in between events, we become accustomed to these actions. Historically, this is true of religion. We set aside days, times and places for worship. We mark certain days as feast days to celebrate. And we come to them with the expectation and hope that we will receive a measure of grace, even if it is our daily bread. When these practices meet our expectations or, God willing, exceed them, they can be rewarding in ways that surprise us. They may bring comfort in their familiarity. But religion, if practiced with hope and expectation, does something very different. It puts us in contact with the living God. And while we may fit God into the space of our lives, God is bigger than that.



Our celebration of the Resurrection, Ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit in Pentecost reminds us that God refuses to stay in the comfortable places we put God.

An empty tomb, a risen Christ, who appears before the disciple and crowds of people before ascending into the heavens, tongues of flames and the chaos of hearing many languages in your own tongue—these experiences demonstrate that God is doing something out of the ordinary, outside of the regular routine of religion as we know it. We no longer look to laws written on tablets of stone; we look to the Spirit, who writes God's instruction upon our heart.

This is radically different than what the world thinks we are as a church. Ask your friends outside of the church, and they will most likely tell you it is all about following rules or behaving a certain way. We may even think the same things ourselves- if not in thought then in deed. But the truth is, God is doing something completely different. God has broken through the walls of stone, and longs to dwell with us in Spirit and truth.

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# Sarabande

By Sarah Ford Bland

*“That Easter day with joy was bright. . .” Fifth century Latin, #193 in The Hymnal 1982*

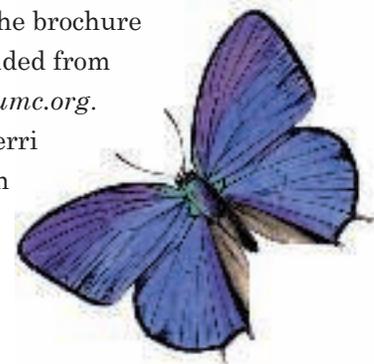
Our Easter alleluias are an exuberant expression of joy celebrating and praising the risen Lord. My own joy in this season is deepened simply by my presence at Hickory Neck, for it was here on Easter Sunday two years ago that I began to feel God nudging me to come here to serve. That call continues to be reaffirmed in many places and in many ways! This year during Holy Week, which included that memorable date for me, I was startled to discover that Psalm 43, one of the scripture passages in my daily meditations, includes these verses: “Send out your light and your truth; let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling! Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy, and I will praise you with the lyre, O God, my God.” I thank God every day for leading me to Hickory Neck to serve as your minister of music.

Let me add my joyful thanks to all who helped enrich our Holy Week and Easter services with their gifts of music. The Parish Choir sang for Palm Sunday, Good Friday and Easter 9:00 a.m., with Jim Ball, Laurie Brown, Nancy Byrd and Cheryl Matthews serving as cantors and soloist. The Choral Scholars shared their special musical leadership with us for the Maundy Thursday service as well as Easter 11:15 a.m. For the Easter Vigil we were happy to have a “pick-up” choir of

Parish Choir members, church members and a few of my singer friends. Thanks to the generosity of Williamsburg Baptist Church, we borrowed some hand bells for some simple musical enhancement at the Easter Vigil and on Easter morning. I am grateful that our budget, together with some designated gifts for music, allows us to bring in instrumentalists for special occasions. Our oboist on Palm Sunday and our trumpet players on Easter, all college students, were thrilled to take part in our services.

Looking ahead: the Parish Choir will sing in worship following its regular schedule this month, then conclude its weekly Wednesday night rehearsals on May 27 with a 6:30 program at the Convalescence Center at Patriots’ Colony. Regular weekly rehearsals will resume in the fall. Information about summer singing will be in the June/July Nuggets.

Williamsburg’s 23rd annual Ecumenical Summer Music Camp for children will be held July 13-17 at Williamsburg United Methodist Church. This year campers will learn and perform a musical, “Elijah”. A flyer with registration information is posted in the New Chapel. The brochure can also be downloaded from [www.williamsburgumc.org](http://www.williamsburgumc.org). Sarah Bland and Terri Lensenmayer are on the faculty.



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Deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month. Items received after this date will be considered for publication in a future issue.

Please send submissions to [nuggets@hickoryneck.org](mailto:nuggets@hickoryneck.org)

*Something Different, from page 1*

Are we prepared for the possibility that God is doing something new in the life of the Church? Are we open to the reality that the communion we share is more than a ritual to be fulfilled, but a sign of the amazing thing God is doing in our presence? In order to do so, we have to let go of the idea that religion is something we do out of habit. Or as the Eucharist prayer puts it “ for the presumption of coming to this table for solace only, and not for strength; for pardon only, and not for renewal.” This season invites us out of our comfort zone to experience God in unexpected ways, and to be transformed by God’s love.

Blessings,

***Earnest+***

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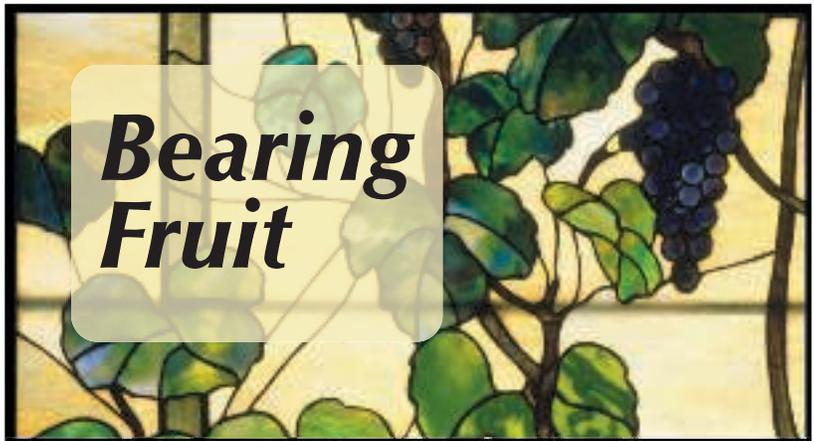
## Upcoming Events

**Sunday May 17th-** We will celebrate the Feast of Ascension at all three services. Traditionally this feast is celebrated 10 days before Pentecost on a Thursday—we have transferred it so that all will be able to participate in the service.

**Sunday May 24th** – Pentecost Sunday- We will celebrate the incoming of the Holy Spirit in a festival of sight and sound.

**Sunday May 31** -- Parish Picnic at 4:30 p.m.

**Sunday June 14** -- Special Parish Meeting at 10:15 a.m. There will be an update from the Discernment Committee. We will also vote to approve the revised parish bylaws. Copies of the proposed bylaws are available in the church office for anyone who wishes to read them.



# Bearing Fruit

“ I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.” - John 15:5

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I am writing to talk about our giving. We all know that supporting our ministries takes faithful regular giving. If you have pledged to give weekly or monthly, please be sure to do so. Otherwise, especially in the summer when vacations occur, we will find our crucial ministries underfunded!

Tips to keep up with your habit of giving:

- 1) Use your weekly envelopes to keep you on track.
- 2) Consider setting up automatic deposits to Hickory Neck from your bank account. That way you will never miss a week!
- 3) Write your checks for the time you will be away and place in the plate the week before you go away.
- 4) Write your envelopes and stamp them before you travel and take them with you. Then mail from your vacation cottage on the appropriate week.
- 5) Leave your checks written and ready to go with a fellow parishioner who will be in church.

Thank you for your faithful giving. Thank you for letting me offer some tips. Making sure our pledges arrive on time allows our vestry members and our treasurer to rest easy, knowing that we will have what we need to support our ministries throughout the year and accomplish our very vital mission.

Blessings!

**Bunkie Righter**





By Alan Zoellner

An English language assignment, a train station, and the diligence of a South Korean student brought Laura and Kent Ross together and their family eventually to Hickory Neck. Kent, born near Nashville, Tennessee and Laura, from near Indianapolis, Indiana, were both in South Korea in the early 1990s. Kent was serving in the Army as a terrain analyst, while Laura was teaching English as a second language to Korean students. One day Laura assigned her students to find and interview a foreigner. One of her students found Kent waiting for a train on a station platform. They were going in the same direction, so the interview continued on the train. Though not required by terms of the assignment, the student introduced Kent to Laura and the rest, as they say, is history.

Kent describes himself as a “math geek.” He earned his Bachelor’s degree in Physics at Wheaton College, a Master’s in Civil Engineering from Purdue University, and eventually a Ph.D. in Agronomy with a focus on satellite imagery, also from Purdue. Laura attended Indiana University. She describes their relationship as a “mixed marriage” (Purdue and Indiana are ancient rivals in Hoosierland). Laura has a Bachelor’s degree in East Asian Studies from Indiana U.

The Rosses married in June of 1993 and subsequently spent time in South Korea to wrap up Kent's military commitment. Back in Indiana both Kent and Laura completed their degrees and then moved to Mississippi as Kent started a science career working with NASA contractors. The family was living in Poplarville,

Mississippi in 2005 when Hurricane Katrina struck. They evacuated to Tennessee, but returned to a scene of devastation. Their two acre homestead which had been 75% wooded was stripped of most trees, and they had holes in the roof of their house. Also devastated was the extensive garden of camellias and roses that Laura tended.

They moved to Virginia when Kent took a position with NASA Langley where he now serves as their national science adviser. The Rosses have been worshipping at Hickory Neck since late in 2013. When asked what brought them to HNC, Laura mentioned the rural nature of the community. They were both attracted to the area west of Williamsburg and, after a period of renting, found a home at the end of Forge Road. They both wanted a church with a liturgical tradition and, after trying an Anglican version, they decided that Hickory Neck was a better fit for them. Laura was also attracted to the church’s community garden.

The Rosses have four children: Gwynneth, a student at Thomas Nelson Community College; Ethan, a sophomore at Warhill High School; and Gareth and Seth, in 7th and 6th grades respectively at Toano Middle School. Their interests range from writing (Gwynneth) to theater (Ethan) to music (Gareth) and drawing (Seth).

We hope the Rosses will contribute their talents to Hickory Neck for many years to come. ✝



*The Rosses: Gareth, Gwynneth, Ethan, Seth, Laura, and Kent*

# Second Sunday Mission

*(Editor's Note: We are still seeking recommendations from parishioners for future ministries this year for August – December. Contact any Vestry member.)*

Our Second Sunday Mission in May will be for **Williamsburg Area Meals on Wheels**, with "loose plate" collections donated to this worthy charity. Meals on Wheels prepares and delivers nutritious meals at noon-time Monday through Friday, including holidays, to the Williamsburg, James City County, and upper York County areas.

They also provide additional services such as emergency shelf-stable meal packages, breakfast foods to those most in need, nutrition supplements and education, social interaction, and "food for a collaborative congregate meal project."

The primary volunteer opportunities involve food delivery. According to their website, "We offer a dedicated route and work with our volunteers to develop a schedule around your availability. Many of our volunteers find this to be such a rewarding opportunity that they have been with us for years."

Meals on Wheels can be contacted at **757-229-9250** or through their website:

**[www.wmbgmealsonwheels.com](http://www.wmbgmealsonwheels.com)**

## Choral Scholar Grads 2015

By Sarah Ford Bland

The Choral Scholars conclude their year of singing for us on Sunday, May 3. During the 11:15 service we will recognize the two seniors, Richard Rossini, tenor and Jess Hoover, alto. We are fortunate that Richard will remain another year as singer and administrator as he completes a 5th year master's program. Here is an update on these two fine student-singers:



**Richard Rossini** is a History and English double major originally from Connecticut. In addition to the Choral Scholars for 3 years, he sings with the Christopher Wren Singers, W&M's oldest a cappella group, and he works as both a consultant and student

administrator at the Writing Resources Center. He is excited to remain in Williamsburg next year as he finishes his M.A. in Secondary Education at W&M's School of Education. He hopes to be an English and Social Studies teacher.

**Jess Hoover** is a theatre/music double major from Fredericksburg, Virginia. She sings with the Botetourt Chamber Singers and has sung with the Choral Scholars since her sophomore year. This summer she is hoping to have a theatre internship for live sound in Washington, D.C.



Best wishes and Godspeed to Richard and Jess as they embark on their post-B.A. adventures!

# PARISH PICNIC

SUNDAY MAY 31

4:30 P.M.

BE THERE!



**Games!**

**Cakewalk!**

**Food!**

**Fellowship!**

**FUN!!**

## Vestry Highlights

The April Vestry Meeting took place on Tuesday, April 14, at 7:00 p.m. at the Wilkinson Center.

The focus of the evening was giving. Members have brought their pledges up to date, leaving Hickory Neck in the black for the month of March, and our fearless citrus sellers' efforts enabled an extra payment of \$2400.00 on our mortgage. Thank You, Hickory Neck!

Rebecca Zoellner, a member of the Discernment Committee, was pleased to update the vestry on the numbers of participants in the focus groups. Thanks to the concerted efforts of Nancy Byrd, Dave Hartsough, Sue Edwards, and Betty Somloi, we had 107 participants in person at focus groups, and an additional 7 turned in surveys outside of the focus groups. Without our members giving their time and opinions, we could not have pulled together the data necessary for a profile. It is currently in process, thanks to Dave Hartsough, Juliana Morris, and Paula Simmons. Alan Zoellner will edit the finished project. The profile should be completed by the end of May.

Our youngest parishioners are figuring into our

stewardship picture as well. They donated \$340.00 to 3 different local charities through their Easter Egg Sam Bucks. Father Henry also noted that offertory envelopes from our children are showing up in the collection plates on Sunday. The Vestry was pleased and proud to hear that news.

After a letter of concern about a recent funeral, the Vestry reflected on its capabilities to accommodate large crowds of mourners. This has resulted in a set of guidelines that will help to ensure better results in the future.

New bylaws have been approved for submission to the congregation. The vestry will be presenting the bylaws at a special congregational meeting on June 14 to discuss and vote on their approval for the church.

Mark your calendars for a huge Hickory Neck picnic. Games, burgers and dogs, and a cakewalk will be part of the fun on Sunday, May 31 at 4:30 p.m. You won't want to miss it!

Terri Lensenmayer

## Transition Update

By Juliana Morris

The Discernment Committee continues to work hard to complete the research and documents necessary to turn in to the Diocese. Thanks again to all who attended the "Focus on our Future" (FooF) meetings and those who completed survey sheets individually. We look forward to sharing the results with you.

We have entered the phase of writing the required documents called the Portfolio and the Profile. The Portfolio is a set of twelve questions prescribed by the national Episcopal Church. The Profile is a document created by Hickory Neck Church.

Both documents describe Hickory Neck and serve as aids in the search process. We are gathering information on many topics. They include financial history and current status, history of the church, strengths and challenges of the church and what we are looking for in the future of our church and in our next Rector. The answers from the FooF meetings are a rich source of information for both documents. We also are gathering information from many other sources and members. It is exciting to see tangible progress as these important documents come together. Both documents require extensive writing, editing and graphic design and must be approved by the Bishop before we can formally announce our search for a Rector. We are working diligently to get the Portfolio and Profile completed quickly and are making every effort to produce quality documents that will make priests in search want to drop everything and run to our doors! As always, thanks for your prayers and for the honor of serving you on this committee. ✠

## Chaplain's Corner

### “Eye of the Needle”

By Chaplain Don Seeterlin

The harder I try, the “behinder” I get. The more I strive to do right, the greater the temptations to do otherwise. Even St. Paul wrestled with this dilemma. In his letter to the Romans he wrote: *“I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.” Romans 7:15.* Many times it seems like the action or temptation we strive to face and conquer is only made the greater by our focusing on it.

Finding that elusive peace and silence through contemplative prayer, or any deep prayer, can arouse the same challenges as one strives to empty his/her mind of all swirling thoughts and feelings. The more one strives to focus by exerting *self-control*, the more the thoughts and feelings come flooding in, and the more the attention is pulled away from that peace. It is only by letting go, by not resisting, but handing over all thoughts and feelings to God, and resting in the knowledge that God loves us limitlessly that we have the chance of stepping beyond the white noise and distractions to a peaceful encounter of wordless sharing with the Lord.

We need to let go of everything we have and carry with us, all of our thoughts, feelings, concerns and plans, and trust the Lord to handle them for us. We need to admit that the Lord is God, not us, and that He can be trusted with all we have, and all we are. Set aside our entire ego and just rest in the Lord’s presence. It is only by letting go of what we think is important, that we can find what truly is precious. Is only by sitting still that we can move forward. It is only by

being silent that we can truly dialogue with God. Jesus seems to have been alluding to this in His statement *“It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than it is for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.” Mark 10:25.* Whether the “eye of the needle” is a small opening in a city wall, or a narrow mountainous pass, the result for the camel is the same. The animal would have to be completely unloaded, and depending on the opening, might even be forced to go through on its knees, completely humbled.

So too with us, in order to come into the Presence of God, we need to completely humble ourselves, let go of all control, and trust God. The more we focus on handling things ourselves, the more our focus is diverted from God. As the saying goes, “the proof is in the pudding.” Many times the only way to make a hectic day less hectic and productive is to stop for a moment and let your mind rest. Take an example from the camel, unload your burden, and allow Christ to guide you into heavenly rest. ✚



Eye of the Needle, Jerusalem / by dpt56



## Birthdays

1 Lily Dutro	15 Margaret Sutton
2 Mary Jo Smith	15 Ruth Rowland
3 Nancy Byrd	18 Linda McGee
4 Lynn Kelley	22 Diane Perry
5 Bob Pringle	22 Amanda Buckley
5 Neal Lensenmayer	23 Sherron Ware
7 Ree Stone	26 Trevor Simmons
8 Bob Byrd	27 Joanne Izzo
9 Bert Geddy	29 Jamie Seeterlin
9 Gary Lensenmayer	30 Kathryn Thomas
10 Jennie McCray	30 Paul Casanave
12 Alita Small	

## Anniversaries

9 Judy & Jesse Hodges
14 Debbie & Bob Coles
17 Tara & Ervin Best
20 Tanya & Chuck White
22 Barbara & George Johnson
24 Shannon & Ron Houser
24 Barbara & Ray Laroche
27 Tina & Noel Sinclair
30 Jessica & Stuart Hughes

*Did we miss your big day? If your birthday or anniversary is this month and you are not listed above, please send the information to [Nuggets@hickoryneck.org](mailto:Nuggets@hickoryneck.org)*



(03/31/15)

Budget Income	\$106,979.73
YTD Actual Income	\$112,994.11
Budget Expense	\$108,979.81
YTD Actual Expense	\$105,286.50

Perhaps the gradual spring thaw in March helped our financial situation. Both pledge and non-pledge income exceeded budget significantly, and we are grateful for all of you who brought your pledges up to date. Expenses continued to be under budget, thanks to the watchful eyes of our many ministry chairs. Consequently, March ended in the black by \$11,909, and year-to-date, we ended in the black by \$7,708.

The net Citrus Sale profit from the three winter months was \$2,069.46. This along with other contributions enabled us to make an extra payment in the amount of \$2,400 toward the principal of our mortgage. The balance now stands at \$180,957.

As we continue to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord, new life abounds. The fields of winter wheat are now rapidly greening. Soon the stalks of grain will appear reminding us that just as the wheat provides sustenance for mankind, we, too, can provide for mankind by sharing our Time, Talent and Treasure. Let us continue to spread the Good News and provide sustenance from our Holy Hill.

Fred Boelt



Charlotte Susan Dow, baptized April 12 - daughter of Jennifer and Brian Dow, granddaughter of Fred and Sue Biel

Michael David Wilkinson, died November 5, 2014; Committal April 18 - son of Marie Wilkinson



## Our Prologue

By Martha W. McCartney

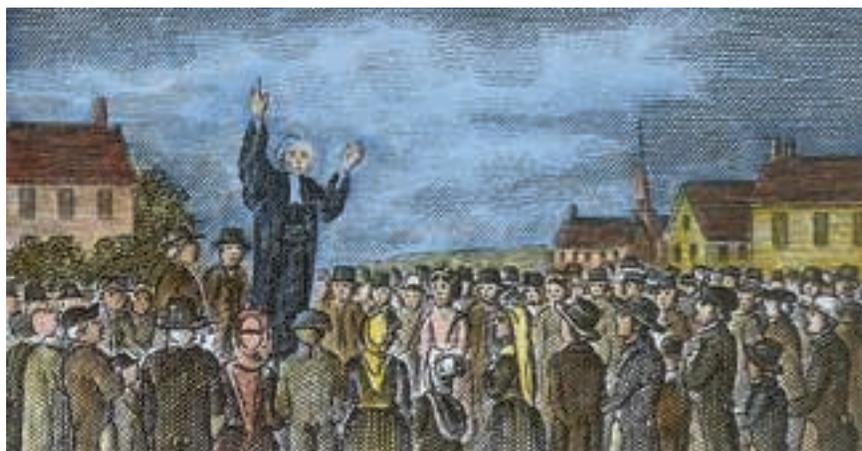
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### *The First Great Awakening and its Impact on Hickory Neck*

During the 1730s and 1740s there was a groundswell of dissent from the Established Church, that is, the Church of England. It was then that the religious revival known as the Great Awakening swept through the colonies from New England to Georgia and permeated rural Virginia. It involved powerful preaching that gave listeners a sense of deep personal need for salvation. By pulling away from ritual, ceremony, and hierarchy, the Great Awakening made Christianity intensely personal by fostering a deep sense of spiritual conviction and redemption.

In some localities, like-minded people began gathering to hear readings of the Bible, religious tracts and sermons. Evangelists or so-called “New Light” preachers called upon their followers to renounce dancing, horseracing, and card-playing, which they deemed sinful, in favor of prayer and repentance. At emotionally-charged revival meetings they threatened the unrepentant with hellfire and eternal damnation. During the 1760s, 1770s, and 1780s the Baptists, Methodists, and Presbyterians attracted a large and loyal following in Virginia. These religious stirrings brought about a revolution in southern religious life that coincided with growing resentment against the Mother Country and erosion of interest in the Anglican Church.

When evangelical preachers began attracting large crowds, some Anglican clergy asked government officials in Williamsburg to control the itinerant ministers’ activities. They reacted by exercising the Act of Toleration’s requirement that dissenting ministers be licensed. Meanwhile, the Anglican clergy and many members of the gentry class, which did not find the Great Awakening appealing, declared that the so-called “New Light” and “New Side” ministers and their



followers had “turn’d the World upside down.” The Great Awakening invigorated not only those eager to Christianize slaves, it also heightened interest on the part of the enslaved, for American-born blacks found a faith that could provide

comfort and hope in an otherwise oppressive world. The revivalist movement increased the number of African slaves and free blacks who were exposed to, and subsequently converted to, Christianity. In the Methodist, and especially Baptist churches, blacks adapted Psalms, hymns, and sermons to the repetitive call and response and the bodily movements of their African heritage. Scholars believe that as early as the 1780s the contours of a distinctive African-American religion had already begun to take shape. The Great Awakening’s appeal to blacks and prompting from the Bishop of London most likely prompted Anglican clergy to commence baptizing slaves during the 1740s. ✠



# HNC

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## Holy Week & Easter at Hickory Neck



Photos by Mary Teale