



The Crossing

From the Rector



It is said that the Christian mystic Theresa of Avila found difficulty at first in reconciling the vastness of the life of the spirit with the mundane tasks of her Carmelite convent: the washing of pots, the sweeping of floors, the folding of laundry. At some point of grace, the mundane became for her a sort of prayer, a way she could experience her ever-present connection to the divine pattern which is the source of life. She began then to see the face of God in the folded sheets.

People can most easily recognize mystery when it presents itself in dramatic ways. The person who heals for unknown reasons when all hope is gone, the angelic visitation, the life-altering coincidence. We seem to be able to hear God best when He shouts: even Moses required a burning bush, and Jesus' disciples needed him to feed multitudes with a single fish. Yet mystery is as common as a trip to the grocery store. In *Guide for the Perplexed*, E. F. Schumacher notes that the endless debate about the nature of the world is founded on differences in the sensitivity of the eyes that behold it: "We can see only what we have grown an eye to see." Some of us can only notice miracles. Some of us can only see in times of crisis. Yet we can all learn, like Theresa of Avila to see God in the folded sheets.

This year I found an endless fascination with a small garden that Bryce planted. I especially loved the cabbage that he had planted along a rather meandering furrow. One evening, I had gone out to water the garden and ran a hand lightly over the crisp green lettuce leaves, the heading cabbage, the carrots coming up underneath the corn, marveling at its vitality, almost as if it were bubbling up out of the ground. Suddenly words from the Psalms came back to me, words that I had heard countless times over the years and knew by heart, words that I heard now for the first time:

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, King of the Universe who brings forth bread from the earth.

Far from being the usual meaningless mumble, these words suddenly were a potent description of something real, a statement about grace and the mystery of life itself. I had no idea that these familiar words were simply a description of something true. I seem to forget how wonderful a garden is as it springs forth. Living in suburbia USA, I tend to rush in and out of a grocery store to buy whatever I may need.

I had done ritual the way I had done life: Automatically. Life can become habit, something done without thinking. Living life in this way does not awaken us. Yet any of our daily habits can awaken us. All of life can become ritual. When it does, our experience of life changes radically and the ordinary becomes consecrated, sacred, holy, extraordinary. Ritual doesn't make mystery happen. It helps us see and experience something which is already real. It does not create the sacred, it only describes what is there and has always been there, deeply hidden in the obvious.

When we realize that God is in the ordinary, our daily grind suddenly has meaning and purpose. The household chores, whether the lawn or the laundry, become opportunities to express love and care for other members of the household. A walk to the mailbox brings a chance to greet the neighbor. As we enter into the season of Fall, watch as the things that happen as ritual, i.e. the turning of leaves from green to brilliant colors, from the heat of summer to the crispness of fall; the shadows becoming longer. As we enter into the ritual of the church open yourself to something that we do all the time, but take for granted. Smell the past, hear new words from the old, or find a symbol in the sanctuary and just wonder.

When we open our eyes to see the intricate beauty of life in the small stuff, perhaps we can, like Theresa, be given the grace to see the face of God in the folded sheets. Can you find God in your rituals? With blessings and hope, I am,

Faithfully yours,

Fr. Bill

St. John's Calendar of Events

Upcoming Events Save these Dates!

- **Sept 11**—Sunday School begins
- **Sept 23—Oct 2**—Fr. Bill on Vacation
- **Oct 2**—Blessing of the Animals—Merchant's Hope Church @ 10am
- **Oct 4**—Mens Hurricane Dinner—Ribble Hall @ 6pm
- **Oct 8**—Fall Workday @ 8:30am
- **Oct 16**—10:30am service and Fall Parish Picnic @ Jim Enoch's home on the river—no 8am service
- **Nov 6**—Fall UTO
- **Nov 22**—Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service held at First Baptist at City Point—time to be determined



Senior Warden's Report by Brian McDonald

Our very knowledgeable Assistant Treasurer, Carey Adams, is in the process of auditing the Church's 2010 financial records as required by the Diocese. Carey has been a lot of help and I am grateful to have him looking over my shoulder. As we start into the second year on the ACS computer program we are in the process of updating our computer records. We are hoping that the 3rd quarter financial statements will include an information update sheet that you can return with any changes. We would like to communicate more by email and to do that we need to keep the email addresses current.

We have a good start on the Ribble Modernization. The pantry and handicap bath are complete. I want to thank everyone who has helped with the pantry and bathroom. There has been a lot of time and hard, hot work put in. Margaret Strouth has volunteered to be in charge of the kitchen. She is in charge, but she is not "chief, cook and bottle washer." I know you will help her when she asks. We are currently working on the engineering for a wheelchair lift to move stair challenged people between the Ribble floors. We haven't developed a schedule yet but hope the wheelchair lift will be in operation before Christmas.

The rectory sale is complete with the closing on September 8th. Believe it or not, the Trustees had to sign ONE MORE document before the closing. I know many of you remember the Advent Calendar with all the windows. Well, this process to sell the rectory reminds me of that calendar. We turn in one paper to the court and they open another window to see what we need to submit next. I was afraid the final window would require that we prove lineage of our Bishop back to an Apostle to show he was authorized to approve the sale! So it is done and a big Thank You to George Eliades for putting up with me as he pushed his part thru the court. I know he is tired of seeing me in his lobby.

St. John's Is Going To The Rivah by Sue Tinsley

The Fundraising Committee is pleased to announce a Fall Parish Picnic. Mark your calendars for Sunday, October 16. We will have one service that day at 10:30 a.m. and the service will be down by the river. Jim Enochs has graciously offered to host our gathering at his home. The service will be followed by a picnic. There will be fellowship, friends, good food, and entertainment. Look for details in your church bulletin and on the website as we get closer to October. We look forward to seeing you all there!

St. John's Men's Hurricane Dinner

by Ned Hopkins

Men of St. Johns are invited to a men's gathering for dinner in Ribble Hall at 6:00 PM on Tuesday, October 4th. We will be celebrating the hurricane we recently survived or praying that none are headed our way. Fathers are encouraged to bring their sons. The food is always great as is the fellowship. Mark this event on your calendars!

Building and Grounds by Johnna Casey

The floor in the Sunday School is finished thanks to Brian McDonald, Keith Hayes, Ned Hopkins, Cole Winkler and Bob Sansone. Everybody please stop by and see the wonderful new floor.

We will have a fall workday on Saturday October 8 at 8:30 a.m. Please bring your gloves, dust rags and rakes so that we can make OUR Church look great! Refreshments will be served.

I would like to thank everybody for the cards and well wishes after my accident. It sure is great to have such a loving Church family.

St. Martha's Guild by Carol Hayes

St. Martha's Guild will meet Thursday, September 8th at 7:00 p.m. in Eppes Hall.

All women of St. John's are encouraged to join us. Our membership is growing and there is always room for more. We are a busy group with a great sense of fellowship and purpose. We have several outreach projects that we are involved with as well as projects within St. John's. Come check us out and see what we are about.

We will begin serious bazaar planning so please come with ideas or thoughts on how we can make it bigger and better this year. The date for the bazaar is November 19th (not very far away).

Also we will be making decisions with regard to some of our outreach programs. This is an important meeting.

If anyone needs transportation please call Carol Hayes at 458-6539.

St. John's Website by Sue Tinsley

St. John's has a website: stjohnshopewell.org. If you haven't had a chance to browse our webpage, take some time to look it over! It is not just for new members because we have information on our site for the entire congregation. Along with a message for new and prospective members, the service times, and location, we also tell the history of St. John's. There is a calendar section which will give you a quick view of special events specific to our church, as well as an Episcopal church calendar. We also have a section for important announcements and an archive of newsletters.

We are building a gallery of photographs of the fun and fellowship at St. John's. If you have any pictures to contribute, please send them to Sue Tinsley or the church office so we can include them on the site. Any comments or additions to the website should be directed to Sue Tinsley.

Parishioner Profiles by Pat Doherty

They met at Moore’s Lake when Patty was 15 and Carlton 17. Carlton was there with the High School baseball team and Patty for the High School softball picnic.

They waited to get married until Patty finished her three years at Longwood and one at MCV, where she graduated with a B.S. in medical technology. They have been married for 51 years and are the proud parents of two sons, Bruce and Bryan. Bruce lives in California and is a blasting and explosives engineer; Bryan lives in Richmond and is a preservation architect.

Carlton graduated from the University of Richmond as a CPA in 1966. He worked for A.H. Robbins for many years serving as a VP in several financial areas. He read law and passed the bar exam in 1976. Carlton accepted the position as Treasurer at St. John’s after retiring from Robbins and served from 2004 – 2010.



Carlton & Patty Townes

Both Patty and Carlton have sung in the choir at St. John’s. Patty was a member in her teens and has sung consistently since 1969. She has also served as President of St. Theresa’s Guild, chairman of the Episcopal Church Women (ECW), Chairman of the Petersburg Convocation (ECW), and member of the board at Jackson-Field. Patty has been a member of the vestry since 1972 and Register since 1973.

Both Patty and Carlton are avid golfers and Patty plays a mean game of tennis!

NOTICE: In the event of inclement weather, service cancellation notices will be announced on TV station WWBT-12 on Sunday mornings.

Food Pantries by Carol Hopkins

We at St. John's help to provide non-perishable food items including canned goods and dry food items to the food pantries in Hopewell and Prince George.

This is a very important ministry as the need for this service is growing all the time.

If you are unable to bring items to put in the basket in the Narthex, please consider a monetary donation from time to time. The money can be given to either Carol Hayes or Margaret Strouth and we will see that it gets to where it is needed.

If you have any questions about this, contact us and if we don't have the answers we will find out.

Coffee/Fellowship Hour

by Carol Hayes

What a great summer we have had at Coffee/Fellowship hour !! Thanks to everyone who has participated. We have had great attendance and what a way to "catch up" with each other.



There are a few openings in September and October. Please sign up on the chart in Eppes Hall.

For those who have never done it, the important thing is to keep it simple and if you have questions regarding anything about it, contact Carol Hayes.

You don't know the fellowship you are missing if you don't take a few minutes after church to join us.

“We Care for Kasey” Campaign

You can help give hope to Kasey Crute by donating to the “We Care for Kasey” Campaign. Kasey, who is the niece of Dave and Rene Bickel, was a freshman at UVA studying environmental issues. While on a spring break trip to Panama to build eco-friendly latrines for a small rural town, she was severely injured in a tragic accident on March 10 that left her paralyzed from the chest down. After almost five months of hospitalization and therapy, Kasey is “almost” back home in River’s Bend. While her house is still undergoing renovations to make it accessible, she will live for the next 5 or 6 months with her Uncle and Aunt, Dave and Rene, who live close by.

To help with Kasey’s ongoing medical care-giving bills, please make your checks payable to St. John’s Episcopal Church, designated for “We Care for Casey”. All donations will be sent to the Kasey Crute Assistance Fund.

GOLFERS: See flyer on bulletin board about the **First Annual Kasey Benefit Golf Tournament** to be held on Saturday, October 1, at the River’s Bend Golf Club in Chester. This tournament is organized by Dave Bickel. (You can also Google [KC GOLF Benefit Registration](#) or email Dave Bickel at kaseykare@gmail.com.)

Outreach & Mission at St. John's by Carol Hopkins

"...as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me." (Matt. 25:40) (RSV)

St. John's Mission & Outreach Committee coordinates the many ministries and projects that involve reaching out to people in need who are outside our parish. The needs are on many levels: local, diocesan, state, national, and global. The committee is chaired by Carol Hopkins, with Margaret Strouth, Barbara Bean, and Ned Hopkins assisting. The entire parish shares in the mission/outreach ministry by your donations of food, other items, and money; by your hands-on participation with the individual projects and organizations; and by your PRAYERS.

What are the opportunities for reaching out this Fall?

SEPTEMBER—A "**Penny Power**" project for the **Boys' Home, Inc.** in Covington, Virginia. By donating pennies and spare change during the month of September, you can help a boy on the road to a new life! Count the many things for which you are thankful and fill a small blessings box with spare change; donate the total to St. John's Church, designated for Boys' Home. **Pennies have power: Change a boy's life, one penny at a time!**

If you would rather donate an item from the **Boys' Home Wish List**, see below. Please bring items to the Narthex during September and place in the specially marked box. Items will be delivered to Covington in October. Learn more about Boys' Home from their web site: www.boyshomeinc.com.

Postage Stamps
Batteries—All Sizes
Disposable Cameras
Basketballs/Footballs/Frisbee

Personal Care Items
Socks & T-Shirts
Thermal Underwear
Sweatshirts (All Sizes)

Warm Gloves & Work Gloves
Scarves
Belts—All Sizes
Athletic Wear

OCTOBER—We will collect "**Wish List**" items for **Jackson-Feild Homes for Girls** in Jarratt. See list below. Bring items to the box in the Narthex during October. Learn about Jackson-Feild Homes from their web site: www.jacksonfeild.org.

Book bags/Back packs
Colored Pencils & Markers
Sketch Pads
Clock Radios/Alarm Clocks
Journals
Small Photo Albums (for 4x6)
Stationery & Greeting Cards
Christmas Cards
Stamps
Phone Cards
Crossword puzzles
Word search puzzles
Jigsaw Puzzles
Board Games

Decorative Blankets/Throws
Stuffed Animals
Bathroom Accessories (mats, shower curtains)
Shower Caps
Hair Dryers
Hair Gel
Hair brushes without mirrors
Hair Accessories
Makeup without mirrors (lipstick, foundation, blush, eye shadow)
Clear Lip Goss & Chap Stick
Watches

Jeans (all sizes)
Night Shirts (all sizes)
Pajamas (all sizes)
Black Sweat Pants (all sizes)
Sweaters/Sweatshirts (all sizes)
Tennis Shoes (all sizes)
Flip Flops (S, M, L)
Ankle Socks
Rain Ponchos
Winter Coats, Hats, Gloves (new or gently used)
Handbags & Small Wallets
Crochet Yarn (no wool)
Crochet Hooks (size H only)

NOVEMBER 6—The **Fall Ingathering of the United Thank Offering (UTO)** gives our church family the opportunity to give thanks for their blessings by using the blue UTO envelopes (over and above the regular pledges). Perhaps this would be a good day for everyone to **wear blue!** In October we will supply the Sunday School children with the little blue UTO boxes and a family devotional guide so they can be giving thanks for their blessings every day, and on November 6 they can bring these boxes to church and add them to the offering. The United Thank Offering is a mission ministry of the Episcopal Church USA that grants between \$2.5 and \$3 billion every year for both domestic and global needs.

NOVEMBER—We will collect canned and dry goods for **Thanksgiving Food Boxes** for six families through the **Salvation Army**. Monetary donations will help pay for a turkey and other perishables for each food box. A detailed list of items will be in the Sunday bulletin in November. The deadline for this collection will be Sunday, November 20.

DECEMBER—**ERD Gifts for Life catalogs** for 2012 will be distributed

DECEMBER—**Caroling for Cans**—A Sunday afternoon family activity, fun for all ages

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ONGOING—There is always a basket in the Narthex for collecting canned and dried foods for the **Hopewell and Prince George Food Pantries**.

ONGOING—**The Shepherd's Place**, at 201 East Broadway, is a wonderful place to **donate** your used but useful **clothing**. (Items must be clean and mended.) This 31-year-old non-profit thrift store is run by volunteers from area churches and is sponsored by the Hopewell Ministerial Association. Its objective is to provide free emergency clothing to residents within an 11-mile radius of Hopewell and to make low-cost clothing and household items available to the community. Free clothing is provided upon a referral from churches, social services, schools, the American Red Cross, and the Salvation Army. Funds received from the sale of donated clothing and household items are contributed monthly to the Salvation Army and the Hopewell Food Pantry, among others. Hours are 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

ONGOING—"We Care for Kasey" Campaign. (See separate article)

ONGOING—St. John's sponsors two children through Compassion International: one in Ethiopia sponsored by Outreach, and one in Haiti sponsored by our Sunday School.

What were the results of our previous outreach efforts this year?

*REBUILD HAITI'S CHURCH (BRICK BY BRICK)--\$20.00 collected and sent

*ERD SUNDAY (March 13) "NETS FOR LIFE" Campaign--\$1200 raised and sent for 100 treated mosquito nets and training for malaria prevention in sub-Saharan Africa.

*CAMP WAKONDA in Norfolk--\$80.00 collected and sent to help sponsor campers to this one-week summer day camp (sponsored by our Diocese) for children with HIV/AIDS

*UTO SPRING INGATHERING (May 22)—\$223.00 collected and sent

*AUGUST P.A.C.S. SCHOOL SUPPLIES DRIVE—Thank you to everyone who contributed.

News from our Sponsored Child in Ethiopia by Carol Hopkins

Through COMPASSION International, St. John's Church has sponsored a child in Ethiopia since 2007. Tariku Asele is now almost 16 years old. (His birthday is Nov. 14.) Through COMPASSION'S partnership with a local church in the city of Awassa, Ethiopia, that church is able to minister to Tariku through their child development center where Christian adults offer him love, guidance, personal attention, guided recreation, and safety.

In a letter to us dated Jan. 2, 2011, Tariku wrote,

"How are you my dear sponsors? I am fine. Our town is very nice. It celebrated its 50 years of establishment very well in joy. I felt happy in this. I knew that our country is growing well because of this celebration.

"I received Christmas gift that was 239.15 BW you sent for me. A blanket in 235 BW was bought for me and 4.15 BW was given for me in hand. Thanks a lot.

"I celebrated Christmas very well in a special way. I celebrated the holiday in eating a cake in joy in our church with my friends and in learning about Jesus' birth in our church. How did you celebrate Christmas?

"Please pray for my family, for my education, and for our country. My education is very nice. I am studying now for I take examinations in the near future. Good-bye till we join in another letter."

In an earlier letter (Oct. 3, 2010), Tariku said, **"Many changes are being seen here in Hawassa. It is growing in many things."** We asked him to tell us more about the changes in his town, and he answered that question in his letter dated June 2, 2011.

"How are you my dear sponsors? I am fine. My family is healthy. My mother was sick last time. Because of her sickness, we didn't celebrate Easter very well. I am very healthy.

"A grand dam is being built here in our country on River Nile. This is what is new in our country. People are supporting this dam project in buying bonds willingly.

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“I received your birthday gift that was 247.40 BW. A pair of trouser in 270 BW was bought for me. My family added 22.60 BW. Thanks a lot for your gift. I sent my picture to you.

“I learnt in Sunday School about the small Samuel.

“How did you find the death of Bin Ladin?

“I am praying for you and for your family. Please pray that the dam that is being built on River Nile will be finished in peace. Please pray for our country’s peace, for my family, for our area, and for our world. Good-bye till we join in another letter.”

Copies of Tariku’s letters are posted on the bulletin board in the Narthex. You will see that both his handwriting (in his native alphabet) and the stationery are very interesting. Notice that he is praying for us and that he asks for our prayers.

Also on the bulletin board is a new Regional Country Newsletter that highlights southern Ethiopia where Tariku lives in Awassa. The Southern Region is the country’s most rural state with almost 90% of its people living in the countryside. Agriculture is small-scale, using primitive methods and tools. Coffee is one of the most important crops grown. The region is plagued by food insecurity and lack of access to safe water. Most schools have two daily four-hour shifts, each with up to 75 students per teacher. Tariku is one of the luckier children because of our sponsorship.

Learn more about Compassion International at www.compassion.com.

2011 Fall Adult Camp—“Discovering Ourselves Anew”

October 24-27 at Shrine Mont in Orkney Springs, VA

The Tri-Diocesan Council on Aging is sponsoring another fun-filled educational opportunity for adults. This conference will be led by Keynote Speaker, Marcus Borg (Biblical and Jesus scholar and author); Chaplain, the Rt. Rev. Edwin Gulick (Assistant Bishop of VA); and Musician, Ed Kilbourne (singer, storyteller, and folk theologian).

Four different afternoon field trips have been arranged. Free time may also be spent hiking, rocking on the porch with friends, or napping. You will also have the opportunity to work together on an outreach project. The food is great! Morning and afternoon workshops are offered as follows:

- Rocking with Keynote Speaker: Marcus Borg
- Time with the Chaplain: Bishop Gulick
- Construct Graham Cracker Houses: Brooks Harris
- Journaling—Bring your journal or a notebook: Pat Harris
- Genealogy 101—Tracking your family history: Jeannie Brydon
- Healing—Why is it important, and is there a difference between curing and healing?: Charlie Chabot
- Exercise—Restore Balance and Strength: Marian New
- Prayer Beads—What are they and how do you use them?: Van Marsh
- Marbleizing Paper and Making Books—This is an opportunity to get your hands dirty and make something creative and useful: Gina & John Cullen
- Dreams—What are they all about? What do they mean?: Julie Shields
- Getting Your Affairs in Order—This is one of the most loving things you can do for your family: Karen Kucik
- Wreath Making—Make your own wreath with living materials: Barbara & Charles Fischer
- Prayer Shawls—What are they? How are they made?: Sarah Seeley & Susan Summerlin
- GEO Tracking—What is this sport about, and how do you use the handheld GPS equipment in this new version of finding clues and treasures?: John Baldwin
- Sensing Prayer—Using our five senses to enhance our prayer life: Judy Parrish & Marian Windel
- Crafts—Use your creative side and create a work of art: Sharon Bryant
- Meditation—Visit the Shrine and encounter a holy space: Joy Walton
- How to Start a Bible Study—Answers to all your questions about getting one started and keeping it going: Annie Campbell

For more information, see flyers on bulletin board or download a registration form from www.shrinemont.com. Carol Hopkins and Barbara Bean can also give you first-hand reports. Cost is \$250/person for a single room or \$220/person for a double room.

Sunday School News by Lisa Sansone

This summer the Sunday School enjoyed PandaMania: a vacation Bible school program that allowed the youth to explore a bamboo forest in China that even included our own pagoda. PandaMania encouraged youth to participate in Bible-learning activities, sing catchy songs and create Bible crafts that they took home. The youth learned to look for evidence of God all around them, seeing themselves in weekly Bible lesson power points and watching installments of the exciting Mystery of the Missing Pandas. The Bible stories we celebrated included: Creation, Elijah, Jonah, the death and resurrection of Jesus, and Hannah. Special thanks go to Paul Redling for his leadership in decorating China for us and to the parents who contributed special weekly snacks.



Elijah told the people to pour water on the altar three times but they still couldn't figure out how it would burn when it was wet.



God created the moon and stars and a fiery sun to shine during the day.



The people of Nineveh listened to Jonah and stopped their bad ways.

This fall the Sunday School is looking forward to moving into our NEW room! The room next to our nursery has been renovated. Our great big thanks go to Mr. Brian McDonald, Mr. Ned Hopkins, Mr. Keith Hayes, Mr. Cole Winkler, and Mr. Bob Sansone who hauled and installed our new tile floor. It looks great!! We are excited to play and learn more stories about Jesus in this room and hope many parishioners will stop by to see our new space.

On Sunday, September 11th we will begin our new fall session. This will include more great activities, Bible lessons and crafts. On the third Sunday of each month we will continue to join our parents in big church for communion. We look forward to singing for the congregation and God during these visits. Check our bulletin board for upcoming activities such as our annual All Saints' Harvest Party with games and treats for the youth. After that it will be time to start practicing for our annual Christmas Pageant!!

The Sunday School Outreach program has concluded a successful farm unit. This past year we have worked with Carol Hopkins and Episcopal Relief & Development to save for and donate a pig, a goat, a duck, mosquito nets and a bee hive to third world countries in need. This summer the youth have begun to reach out to our immediate church community. We are currently collecting for our very own contribution to the Ribble building. As an ongoing outreach we are collecting school supplies for the local schools and children in need this fall. Contributions will be appreciated.

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ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



Schedule of Services, Meetings, & Events

The following list gives the times for regularly scheduled monthly events.

Check Calendar on Page 1 for Special Events.

Holy Eucharist Rite I—8:00 a.m. every Sunday

Holy Eucharist—10:30 a.m. every 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Sundays

Morning Prayer—10:30 a.m. every 5th Sunday

Children & Youth Sunday School—10:30 a.m. most Sundays

Adult Choir Rehearsal—9:00 a.m. every Sunday, Ribble

Nursery—10:30 a.m. every Sunday

Bible Study—7:00 p.m. Wednesdays, Eppes Hall

Vestry Meeting—7:00 p.m. Thursday after the 3rd Sunday, Eppes

St. Martha's Guild—7:00 p.m. 2nd Thursday, Eppes