



# *St. Andrew's Tidings*

Sunday, July 28, 2013

## **Message from Margaret ...**

### **Why Cathedral Chairs instead of pews?**

Over the past months I have written quite a few articles preparing us for the architectural renovation of our worship space. To reiterate some of the information-we are called by pastoral care, as well as by law, to have our space accessible for those living with handicaps, for the elderly, and the infirm. It is our Christian duty to do this. Consequently, we will need to remove the choir loft, replace old wiring, etc. Another objective is handicap seating. Our pews are literally falling apart. Because of the long expanse of these pews, due to the large size of the room, and because of the vast change in this climate of moisture and dryness, our pews have all split, cricked, and basically are a danger to all of us who sit in them each Sunday. Just ask the people who have been pinched, prodded, and whose clothes have literally been caught in the cracks! Not easy to stand! Pews have been written up by the orthopedic health profession as not being good for aging backs. This is one of the reasons the Building Commission and the vestry have decided to go with cathedral chairs. They are called cathedral chairs because they have been used for centuries in cathedrals all across Europe. They last forever. They do not crack, and they do not have to be cleaned. But most importantly, the present day chairs are ergonomically designed for people with back problems. The other reason chairs were chosen is that we can form a more intimate worship setting, one in which people can see and hear better. It also gives flexibility for different kinds of liturgies. The setting can be made smaller for Taize services, or larger for weddings and funerals. It also allows easy access for wheel chairs, canes, and walkers. One of the ways we might change the present chair we are offering for you to try, is to use a hassock kneeler, so that you might adjust the space between yourself and the back of the chair, depending you your girth and height. I am including an article by Jerry Ellis, who is a special consultant for church space and architecture.

## **Discovering the Value of Chairs**

By: Jerry Ellis, A.I.A.

In the conduct or worship and full use of the space for worship, a great variety of activities take place, such as communion, baptisms, weddings, funerals, receptions of members, evangelistic meetings, concerts, choir programs, dramas, dance, community meetings, audio-visuals and a host of other special services and programs. Some of these activities have both traditional and contemporary liturgies requiring different space requirements and arrangements. The variety, for example, of liturgies

and arrangements for the sacrament of communion is nearly infinite. Weddings or musical programs might require a variety of arrangements.

A flexible seating pattern will allow a congregation to conduct a variety of traditional or contemporary liturgical settings, which fixed seating could prohibit.

Aside from accommodating different kinds of traditional arrangements, flexible seating can also have a very positive influence over the congregation's attitude. During vacation season and on low-attendance Sundays, nothing is more depressing than sitting in the back and looking across rows and rows of empty seating. With chairs, the estimated attendance can be multiplied by 120 percent, and only that number of seats can be placed in the space, so that for every service during the year, the room can always look and feel well attended (about 80 percent capacity). When more than 80 percent are regularly filled, people feel hurried to get there in time for a choice seat in the rear. By the time attendance regularly reaches 85 to 90 percent of capacity, serious consideration should be given to instituting multiple services. Latecomers get the front rows, and congregations usually have a hard time growing past 80 percent of their seating capacity without multiple services or a bigger building, so that the front rows don't have to be filled every Sunday.

### **Capacity**

By using chairs, one can make small changes in aisle widths and modify the total seating capacity. Last Sunday's capacity could be doubled or cut in half by making such adjustments. In most states, many pew manufacturers and some architects figure pew seating capacity at 18 inches per person. Erect posture and a comfortable relationship to non-family members on both sides will find **that 20 to 24 inches per person is close seating**. People usually do not sit erect in pews, and it is common to find that pews designed to hold seven people seem full when occupied by five.

Adding chairs to the ends of pews for overflow capacity is more conspicuous than moving chairs closer together to increase capacity and maintain aisle widths.

It is also safer in case of a fire than reducing aisle widths with loose chairs. Most chairs suitable for use in churches come equipped with ganging devices that mechanically interlock rows of chairs together so that in case of fire or panic, over-turned loose chairs will not hinder safe passage down clear aisles to an exit.

### **Maintenance**

Cleaning the nave floor under fixed seating has always been difficult. This has contributed to the use of carpet runners in the aisles—which can be more easily cleaned—with wood, brick or tile floors under the pews. With chairs, simplifying the floor maintenance to one system of care and reducing weekly cleaning efforts and costs. Carpet runners are a tripping hazard for the elderly, for people wearing bifocal glasses and for people with physical disabilities.

## **Economy**

In addition to reducing floor maintenance costs, chairs have other economical advantages.

The major economy is not in the chair but in the room. With chairs, the sanctuary can be used more than one hour a week, in more than one way and for more than one purpose. In new buildings, chairs can free up a single-purpose sanctuary and make it into a multi-purpose space for worship and other large-group functions that would otherwise require a separate space. With chairs, a multi-purpose space can be used for worship, fellowship and Christian education.

In new buildings, the use of chairs with the multi-purpose concept for space has reduced the initial cost of construction by as much as 60 percent over the typical church building plan with individual single-purpose spaces for each church program. While the cost to seat a person is roughly the same in a chair as in a pew, the use of chairs and multi-purpose space could easily mean savings for many new church building programs.

The other great economical aspect of chairs is for existing buildings. By replacing existing fixed seating with chairs, an existing sanctuary can become the new fellowship hall or that much-needed extra classroom space without a major building program. Those congregations wanting to provide new programs but lacking the space in their existing building have found the nave to be an untapped resource. Vital church programs can be undertaken immediately without waiting for a building addition to be constructed. Then, program funds will not be needed to pay for a new facility.

## **Comfort**

Although chairs and pews cost roughly the same per inch, chairs costing around a dollar an inch are more comfortable than pews of an equivalent price. Both chairs and pews can cost up to \$120 per person, but you must multiply that by the number of persons on the pew; consequently the chair costs \$120-\$300, but a pew can range \$1,000+. The individual chair provide the most comfort. The issue of comfort is largely a personal matter, however. Another aspect of comfort is crowding. With chairs, each person has a fixed territory that cannot be encroached upon by trying to squeeze another person into the row. If people are crowded or uncomfortable, their attention tends to focus on how uncomfortable they are rather than on worship.

## **Formality**

Formalized seating patterns are a recent innovation in Protestant worship. Traditionally, worship has been a more dynamic experience, and, for centuries, everyone stood. Seating of any kind is limitation to the congregation's ability to participate in liturgies of worship. The easily removed cathedral chair is the contemporary accession to those seeking physical comfort.

If all acts of worship and praise were confined to the chancel and the role of the congregation was passive, then a formalized seating pattern would be desirable.

However, many liturgies in use today require involvement and participation not possible with a static space.

A program with a symmetrical seating pattern is that the action or focus is somewhere in front of the seats and people in the seats are passive observers. When the seating pattern is informal or casual, the action or focus is in the arena where the seats are placed and the people seated are expected to be involved that action.

Chairs give the space for worship the potential for adapting to and enabling any style of liturgy to be conducted.

It is hoped that congregations will discover the value of chairs and experience a new freedom with an old tradition.

*Jerry Ellis specializes in church architecture and served as a special consultant for Church Extension,*

*Blessings and love,  
Margaret+*

## *Jonathan Daniels Pilgrimage*

The 15th annual pilgrimage honoring slain civil rights advocate and Episcopal seminarian Jonathan Myrick Daniels and others who lost their lives during the 1960s movement will take place in Hayneville, Ala., Saturday, Aug. 10, 2013 at 11:00 a.m.

A special chartered bus, limited to 54 passengers, will be provided for anyone throughout the Diocese who would like to attend. The cost is \$20 per person. The bus will leave at 8:30 a.m. on Aug. 10th from St. Simon's on the Sound Church in Fort Walton Beach, Florida (28 Miracle Strip Parkway SW), and return around 5:30 p.m. that evening. Reservations can be made by contacting the St. Simon's church office at 850-244-8621, or email Fr. Mark Fitzhugh at [rector@stsimons-fwb.org](mailto:rector@stsimons-fwb.org).

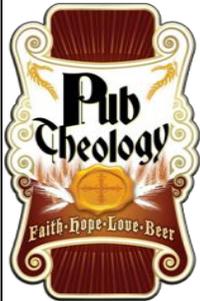
The Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast Commission on Peace and Justice/Racial Reconciliation and St. Simon's Church is pleased to help sponsor this year's special bus trip.

The pilgrimage begins at the Courthouse Square in Hayneville at 11:00 a.m. The procession will go to the old county jail where Daniels and others were detained for a week and then will move to the old Cash Grocery Store where Daniels was killed. The procession will return to the Courthouse Square for a prayer at a memorial erected in his honor by his alma mater, the Virginia Military Institute. The pilgrimage will end at the Courthouse where a service of Holy Communion will take place in the courtroom where the man who killed Daniels was tried and acquitted.

Human rights advocate Dr. Gloria Larry House will be the featured speaker. She worked with Daniels in Selma and Lowndes County in 1965 as a field secretary in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee. She spent a week in the Hayneville Jail with Daniels and others following their arrest for participating in a voter registration demonstration in Ft. Deposit. She was nearby when

Daniels was killed while shielding 16-year old Ruby Sales from a shotgun blast as she tried to enter a store to buy a soft drink.

The old Hayneville Jail where House, Daniels and others were held will be open to visitors throughout the morning. Locally prepared lunch will be available for purchase at the courthouse following the service.

<p><i>Pub Theology Tomorrow Night 6 p.m. "The Place" on Harrison</i></p>		<p><i>Bring a Bible-no experience necessary!</i></p>
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### ***CURSILLO!***

***THE NEXT CURSILLO (#151) IS SEPTEMBER 12-15. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO GO, APPLICATIONS ARE IN BYRNE HALL ON THE RACK. IT IS FREE! AND A CHANCE OF A LIFE TIME!***

*Congratulations to Sarah Reeves who received a substantial scholarship to Florida State, Tallahassee, where she is completing her Masters Degree.*



### **Good Cooks of St. Andrew's!**

Keep those favorite family recipes coming in! Each cook is asked to submit 3-5 recipes. Forms are in Byrne Hall. Please remember to read and follow the instructions on the right side of the form. We are halfway to our goal and need **your** recipes.



**Wanted:** Photos of the Past – We are on the lookout for photos of people/events in the past 100 years at St. Andrew's. Please contact Dick Seeberger if you have photos to share.

*Please keep the following in your prayers, Marcie, Kelli, Gloria Mae, Helen, Michelle, Joni, Sandra, Rosemary, Warren, Iva, Anne, Bev, Martha, Mickey, Emma, Kenzie, Jonathan, Jessica, Lisa, Tina, Con, Niddy, Lora, Nancy, Sandra, Maggie, Kevin, Libby, Russ, Andy, Polly, Frank, Sarah, Jay, Joy, Jane, Colleen, Robbi, Sandra, Lowell, Maggie, Anna, Bob*

*We pray for our men and women in the Armed Forces at home and abroad; Jeff, Bowe, James, Andrew, Kenneth, Evan, Ryan, Joe, Nate, Richard, David, Brian, Jason, Billy, Mike, Joseph, Colin, Todd, Brett, Jordan*