

**Subject:** News From St. Francis Episcopal Church  
**From:** St. Francis Episcopal Church <vicar@stfrancisva.org>  
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**To:** Larry <lckiddjr@gmail.com>

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October 9, 2013

## **Community Transformation**

*The harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few.  
Luke 10:2*

### ***What's the Focus?***

The teaching that comes forward for Luke 10:2 above usually focuses on the laborers. It is good to have that focus and to equip Christians to be "laborers in the harvest." The more laborers the better. However, I would like to suggest that Jesus is also talking about the harvest here as well. The "harvest" is just as important as the "laborers."

### ***The Harvest***

A crop ready for harvest has come to a very strong and mature point in its life. The sight of a large field filled with a crop ready to be harvested is a beautiful, even breath-taking, sight. That sight is filled with life, growth, power, and hope. Before the reaper comes to bring in the harvest there has been a lot going on with the crop itself. Life has been flowing through each plant. Sun, rain, and nutrients in the soil have been increasing the size of the crop. God has been at work bringing that crop to maturity.

### ***Our Communities***

Just like an agricultural crop will grow into maturity and produce a great deal of fruit, so our communities have life, growth, power, and hope within them. That is because God is at work in our communities. There are great gifts and assets among our neighbors. To "harvest" those gifts is to encourage them, bring them out, and help weave them together with the other gifts in the community. That is what brings community transformation.

### ***Celebration***

This Sunday at St. Francis we gather to celebrate a new season of ministry together. Bishop Goff will be with us along with others from the community to ask God to equip us to move into this new season. One of the great opportunities before us is the prospect of community transformation in Manakin-Sabot, Centerville, and beyond. Community transformation is one of the aspects of the strategic vision of St. Francis.

Wendy McCaig, Executive Director of Embrace Richmond, will speak directly to that as she preaches on Sunday afternoon. I count it a great privilege to be part of a congregation which has as one of its major goals to join in with the transformation of the community God is achieving. It is summed up in this statement from our strategic plan:

Each Sunday, as we say together the Prayer of St. Francis, we renew our vision for going out into the world:

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love.

Where there is injury, pardon.

Where there is doubt, faith.

Where there is despair, hope.

Where there is darkness, light.

Where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled, as to

console;  
to be understood, as to understand;  
to be loved, as to love.  
For it is in giving that we receive.  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
and it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life.

## Coming Attractions

**Sunday October 13** 4:00pm Celebration of a New Ministry (no 10:00am service that day).

The Rt Rev Susan Goff  
Bishop Suffragan of the Diocese of Virginia  
and the people of  
St. Francis Episcopal Church, Manakin-Sabot, Virginia  
invite your prayers and presence at

The celebration of a new ministry  
they share with  
The Rev Dr. John F. Maher, Jr.  
Vicar of  
All Saints' Episcopal Church

Sunday the 13th of October 2013 4pm

1484 Hockett Rd.  
Manakin Sabot, VA 23103

Reception to follow

Clergy: unvested and seated with the people

Please email rsvp by October 9, 2011 to  
[vicar@stfrancisva.org](mailto:vicar@stfrancisva.org)  
or call [804-784-6116](tel:804-784-6116)

**Thank you!!!** to all who took part in the work day on September 28th,  
and the Blessing of the Animals of October 5th. Here are some photos

from the work day:

The Senior Warden on the roof



The Junior Warden hard at work



More photos coming next week for the Blessing of the Animals

***Centerville Circle of Prayer:***

For the Aspire Dance Academy and Lauren Gibson, owner/director /instructor, that more students would enroll and would be equip through dance to dream, believe, and aspire to reach the full purpose of their lives.

***Metro Richmond at Prayer:***

For public, nonprofit, and religious social service work and ministries in Metropolitan Richmond: For all in need of mental health services, all mental health workers, counselors, and treatment facilities.

***The Diocese of Virginia:***

For the ministry of the congregations and clergy of St. Martin's, Richmond; St. Peter's, Arlington; St. Peter's, Oak Grove; Farnham, Farnham; and St. John's, Warsaw.

***Christ Church Men's Group-*** John will be making a presentation at the Christ Church Men's Group on October 19th at 8:00am. all the men from St. Francis are invited to come to this breakfast meeting. The topic is "The Bible in the Episcopal Church."

Grace and Peace,

John Maher

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