

# **MESSENGER**

St. John's Episcopal Church

*Building for the future with Thanksgiving and praise*

November 2009

## **RECTOR'S MESSAGE**

**Dear people of St. John's:**

Those of us who got together to ring our church bell 350 times on Oct 24 performed a moral witness with deep political implications. On the one hand we were alerting our neighbors and ourselves to our shared role as stewards of the "fragile earth" for children yet unborn. On the other hand we were calling on the UN and our own nation to put some teeth into environmental regulations to stem global warming.

Morality implies relationship. Relationship implies political action which is moral. We can't separate the two. I think about this, for instance, reading a review in "the Christian Century" magazine of a book by T.R. Reid, The Healing of America. The author has traveled the world looking at and comparing different healthcare systems. He is quoted as saying "If we want to fix American healthcare, we first have to answer a basic question: Should we guarantee medical treatment to everyone who needs it?" According to the review, the alternative for Reid is to continue to treat healthcare as a commercial commodity where profit and loss dominates all our thinking. There will be no solutions, no winners, in the debate and legislation, he implies, until that moral question is answered.

The same applies for every major issue we face, whether it is climate control, immigration or foreign policy, the death penalty, abortion, you name it. What are our values? What is the basic moral principle we are starting from?

For us as Christians every moral question is spiritual. It is like I cannot use the words "moral" or "stewardship" or "justice" without including God. (In the same way, a humanist must cite some overall principle like the good of all humanity, but I won't get into that discussion here).

In our Wednesday morning book discussion group, for example, we just read the parable of the compassionate employer (Mt 20:1-16), where those who were hired at the beginning of the day resent that those who were brought in on later shifts get the same Rector's message, cont.

compensation as they do. It is an astounding parable about the abundant economy of God's grace. All the way through I kept thinking of its implications in all our wrangling over immigration and healthcare. Are these merely societal, political issues solved by ever new policies and regulations? Do we just build higher fences? Do we avoid universal healthcare because "socialism" is a naughty word? Of course not! These are deeply moral questions in the soul of America, and Jesus has something to say, at least about where we start.

To often, it strikes me, we hold up the screen between church and state not because, rightly, we know that no one is supposed to claim God's will, but more because we're guilty as all heck to admit God has already informed us at the beginning of the day where we should be heading and we know we're going to fall way short; but, just as much we're scared to death of what we'll have to surrender on behalf of our less fortunate brothers and sisters. "Let's leave faith and religion out of this" we tell ourselves. But true morality, Jesus keeps shouting at us, is never based on guilt, fear, or resentment, and true spirituality is not either.

Politically, socially, economically, spiritually, America is in a mess and we're part of that. Maybe instead of shouting at each other, if, say, a "liberal" and a "conservative" Christian could just sit down together with a parable of Jesus and reflect on its moral implications, they might just be a little more ready to work together in whatever field they serve in.

Here we are called to do that every Sunday, aren't we? Then we ring our bell, listen to the Word of God, and tackle our next Kingdom project. We do, don't we?

Rejoicing in Christ,

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### *Ministers Wanted*

The **Altar Guild** needs a leader. Louise Clark has led it for many years, and can answer questions. A calendar for caring for the altar in 2010 is the first task.

Someone to call parishioners to do **Intercessions** each month is needed. See the rector.

Someone to type the **Messenger** each month. See the Rector.

## Pastoral Care

Pastoral Care met Nov 3, with Pat Mayer offering our prayer. Reports were given on cards sent, phone calls made and conversations with various parishioners.

We welcome the Pelletier family and Neil and Mickey Richardson to our parish family.

We encourage all to bring any concerns you may have to our attention.

Betsy Arnold

Tim Eberhardt

Ginny Cantlin

Ellie Streeter

Mary Ellen Bean

Margaret Egerton

Pat Mayer

### ***Episcopal Worship at St. John's***

***The simple fact is that we need more ministers of worship "up front" at St. John's, i.e. acolytes and chalice bearers who are trained by the rector and licensed by the Diocese. Citing this need, the rector has decided to feed two birds with one kind of seed, since what we do on Sunday morning up front is about how we all worship. Thus, beginning Nov 8 and running through Advent (which begins Nov 29), the Rector will be offering a half hour refresher course each Sunday after coffee hour about how and why we worship the way we do in our Episcopal Anglican Tradition. All parishioners are urged to join in, not just potential acolytes and chalice bearers. We will look at such areas as the rubrics of the Prayer Book and how word and sacrament play our tin our Sunday worship. Advent sermons will also tune into these themes.***

***A special feature will be the planning of a full service of Morning Prayer on Advent 2, Dec 6. Communion from the Reserved Sacrament will be available that Sunday after the liturgy.***

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A woman was walking in our St. John's neighborhood. She saw our 'church open for prayer' sign and came in. After, she stopped in the parish hall to thank us for being open!

### ***St. Margaret's Guild***

***If you are a woman who attends St. John's, you are automatically a member of the Guild! All welcome!***

We met Oct 25 after church. We regretfully accepted the resignation of Barrie Rosalinda, our president. Barrie has been a wonderful leader for our group. She is wished the best!

The parish hall carpet, including the hallway, will be professionally cleaned after the bazaar in December. Estimates are being done in early November.

The **Bazaar is Dec 5, 9-2**, with a gourmet soup, bread, salad, pie luncheon from 11:30-1.

Pat gave out patterns for knitted snowmen, fabric birds, and vintage look aprons.

**Moravian Star** making sessions will be led by Jane Eubanks, starting Tues Oct 27 at 2 pm. Jane will also coordinate **fruit garland** making the week of the bazaar.

**Pine Cone wiring** with Ellen will be Tues Nov 10 and 17 at 5pm. We will start **decorating wreaths** Monday Nov30 at 9 am.

We need **Vermont products** for a raffle basket for the bazaar. No alcoholic products please!

Betsy wants **LOTS of baked goods**, and would like some fudge for the bake table this year.

Our next meeting is **Sunday Jan 10** after church. We will **elect officers** (President and Treasurer), and pass our **budget**. Discussion on the budget will include our **mission**.

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## ***DECEMBER SPECIAL DAYS***

### **BIRTHDAYS**

Timothy Eberhardt Dec 4

Cecile Smith Dec 18

Betsy Arnold Dec 13

David Gaston Dec 26

Judy Gardner Dec 15

Marcia Stone Dec 28

### **ANNIVERSARIES**

Matthew Hannon and Linda Nagy Dec 2

Ernie and Nancy Wright Dec 7

## ***THE ST. JOHN'S E-TREE***

Traditionally, we have communicated via the weekly Sunday bulletin, the monthly Messenger and the phone tree. Now, keeping up with "cyber trends", we introduce the e-tree. For those of us

who would like to send and /or receive St. John’s related information via our e-mail we can now do so. Here’s how:

If you’ve not yet signed up to receive information/messages or need to update your email address, please provide your name and e-mail address to Steve Eubanks. Your address will be included on a distribution list for group mailings. If at any time you decide you do not want to receive these mailings, you may withdraw your name and address simply by following the instructions included at the end of every parish announcement e-mail message.

To submit a posting to the St. John’s Parish Announcements, you may e-mail your message to [parishannouncements@stjohnsrandolphvt.org](mailto:parishannouncements@stjohnsrandolphvt.org) or submit a typed announcement to either Fr. Tim or Susan O’Malley for processing.

All announcements must be church related and will be reviewed by church staff prior to release. Announcements promoting personal or business agendas will not be accepted and should be posted via an alternative vehicle.

On behalf of the Vestry, I hope this new communication vehicle effectively promotes the circulation of information within our church family.

Faithfully,

Susan O’Malley

***SUNDAY ROSTER:***

	<b>Nov 8</b>	<b>Nov 15</b>	<b>Nov 22</b>	<b>Nov 29</b>	<b>Dec 6</b>
	<b>10 am</b>	<b>10 am</b>	<b>10 am</b>	<b>10 am</b>	<b>8 and 10 am</b>
<b>Reader</b>	<b>Linda Runnion</b>	<b>Steve and Jane Eubanks</b>	<b>Christine Gilbert</b>	<b>Lee and Anna Sease</b>	<b>Ellen Baker</b>
<b>Eucharistic Minister</b>	<b>Pat Mayer</b>	<b>Bishops visit</b>	<b>Gay Gaston</b>	<b>Bob Sparadeo</b>	<b>Linda Runnion</b>
<b>Ushers</b>	<b>Louise and Lincoln Clark</b>	<b>Gay and David Gaston</b>	<b>Wrights</b>	<b>Susan O’Malley</b>	