

The Messenger

A newsletter of

St. John's Episcopal Church

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The Rev Mark Preece, Interim Rector

July 2012

“We are committed to building for the future with thanksgiving and praise”

Message from our Interim Rector

Dear Friends:

It can't have been easy being a leader of the Church of England in North America right after the Revolution. It was, after all, the Church of *England*. Faced with the task of inventing a structure for governing the new church, it's not surprising that they chose something not unlike the structure of the new US government: after all, the first General Convention of the church was held at Christ Church in Philadelphia in 1789, where 15 signers of the Declaration of Independence were members.

So, like the Congress of the US, the General Convention of the church has two chambers, a House of Bishops and a House of Deputies, which work and vote independently of each other but have to agree before much of anything can happen. Unlike Congress, the General Convention of the Episcopal Church meets only once every three years. It's probably meeting as you read this: from July 5th through July 12th of this year.

I've never been a delegate to Convention, but I've always been curious about it. A few years back, when I was serving a parish outside Philadelphia, Convention met in Columbus, Ohio, around seven hours away by car. So I drove over after church one Sunday and slept a couple of nights on a couch in an old seminary friend's hotel room.

The first thing you notice is the size of the gathering. Three huge meetings are going on simultaneously – legislative sessions for the House of Deputies (clergy and lay people elected from 108 dioceses –about 850 people altogether), the House of Bishops (both active and retired from the dioceses – about 200), and the Episcopal Church Women representing all the dioceses.

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(Interim rectors message, continued)

In addition, there are gatherings of young people, children, various interest groups (from almost every perspective), and international guests. Thousands of people attend at least part of the GC: it's one of the largest assemblies of any kind in the world.

Then, of course, there is the shopping. In a large exhibit hall, church publishers, liturgical supply companies, and many other vendors and lobbying groups set up stalls for the sale and distribution of their wares.

Each day begins with a celebration of the Eucharist in one of the large convention halls. Over 2000 people each day gather for these liturgies – a logistical miracle. The year I went, everyone was assigned randomly to a table for the whole 9 days of convention, and each homily ended with time for discussion in these small groups. I was only there for two of them, but it was obviously very moving for people to get to know each other over time – in spite of whatever disagreements might divide them otherwise – in the context of prayer and Holy Communion. The liturgy is eclectic (one morning a member of the Trapp family led us all in singing “Edelweiss” from “The Sound of Music” as the closing hymn.)

The morning Eucharists are followed by the legislative sessions. It is a complex and sometimes confusing legislative process – there's nothing informal about how Robert's Rules of Order are enforced. There are well over 200 resolutions that have to be dealt with, concerning a huge range of issues. Most days have over five hours of legislative sessions, not counting the committee meetings (which begin at 7 most mornings).

It's hard to describe the atmosphere. The people there are in a complete bubble for over a week: every minute is about church business. Like any gathering of human beings trying to figure out what they can agree on, there's a certain amount of “sausage making” going on: it isn't always pretty. And it's fair to ask whether the Episcopal Church really needs such a big and expensive process to do its business. One of the topics this year will be about how to reinvent the way the church does this. But my experience of the people I met there was that they were passionately devoted to leading the church in the right direction, and that figuring out how to follow Jesus in a very complicated situation was never far from their minds. These are committed people, many of them using up all their vacation time to attend meetings for 10 hours a day in a big faceless hotel, this year in Indianapolis, Indiana.

If all goes well, we won't hear a thing about it in the mainstream press, and we – nationally and locally – can simply continue to do the work we are given as the Spirit leads us. But, in the meantime, please keep our Bishop, diocesan delegation, and all the leaders of our church in your prayers!

Peace

Mark

Vestry of St. John's

Steven Eubanks, Senior Warden
Ray Mayer, Junior Warden
Linda Nagy

Nancy Wright
Susan O'Malley
Ellen Baker

Treasurer, William Arnold

Receipts Treasurer, Jane Eubanks

Clerk, Pat Mayer

Delegates to 2012 Diocesan Convention – Mickie Richardson, Marcia Stone, Neil Richardson
Alternate Delegates – Gay Gaston, Susan O'Malley, Nancy Wright

Please visit our website <http://stjohnsrandolphvt.org>

Our e-mail info@stjohnsrandolphvt.org

Pastoral Care Committee

Meeting held June 13, 2012

Present: Pat Mayer, Jane Eubanks, Lee Sease, Mark Preece and Mickie Richardson

There being no urgent matters before us the committee adjourned for a surprise visit to Ginny Cantlin at her home. The Committee decided that her years of service were just too important to remain unrecognized.

Helping us to pull off this surprise visit was Ginny's daughter-in-law, Betsy Cantlin. The look on Ginny's face when she opened the door to this gang was as rewarding as a surprise can ever be! "What's all this about?" she asked. So she soon learned that she couldn't just slip away. Bob was happy to be included in the festivities and promptly made coffee for the group.

Mark provided a beautiful blessing that recognized Ginny's devotion to our mission. Ginny had served from the inception of the Pastoral Care Committee.

Now with two valuable and dedicated members retired from our Committee we are still seeking more members. Our gratitude goes to Jane and Lee for joining our ranks and they are not meant to be overlooked. We've lost Beth Pelletier's monthly presence due to her work and after this summer we will also lose Lee's monthly presence due to his work schedule.

The fewer the members, the greater the load each remaining member bears, not to mention the fact that the larger the involvement, the more likely we are not to miss some important folks who

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(Pastoral Care Committee report – continued from Page 3)

could use our support. So please, I'm imploring once again, give serious thought to joining the Pastoral Car Committee. Our work is not difficult and it is not terribly time consuming, but it is so important to the parish that we take good care of our own. Won't you consider offering your time?

Respectfully submitted,
Mickie Richardson

The members of the Pastoral Care Committee are:

Mark Preece

Beth Pelletier

Lee Sease

Pat Mayer

Jane Eubanks

Mickie Richardson

Pie sale at St. John's booth at New World Festival

Again this year we will have a pie sale booth at the New World Festival on Sunday September 2nd. We will need many pies, and will need sellers to staff the booth.

St. Margaret's Guild

St Margaret's guild will meet on Saturday, September 15th at 9:30 am over muffins and coffee. Please come with your Bazaar (bizarre?) ideas!

Thanks, Pat L

Community Notes

>RANDOLPH COMMUNITY SUPPERS<

The Community Supper for July will be held on Tuesday, July 24th, at Green Mountain Gospel Chapel, Rte 66, Randolph – Barbecue Dinner - Doors open at 5 pm

Anniversaries – July 2012

Birthdays:

July 1	Ellie Streeter	July 11	Elena Preece
July 4	Christine Gilbert	July 13	Nancy DuBois
July 4	Beth Pelletier	July 29	Fritz Hauser

Wedding:

July 11 **Lincoln and Louise Clark**

Sunday Support Ministries

	Eucharistic Minister	Readers	Ushers
9:00 am			
July 1	Pat Mayer	Ray Mayer	Susan O'Malley
July 8	Gay Gaston	Anna/Lee Sease	Ellen/Phil Plumb
July 15	Ray Mayer	Christine Gilbert	Carol/Ken Merrill
10:00 am (at Old Christ Church)			
July 22	N/A	Nancy Wright	Dave/Gay Gaston
July 29	note 1	note 1	note 1
	Oblations	Intercession	Coffee Hour
9:00 am			
July 1	Dave/Gay Gaston	Gay Gaston	TBA
July 8	Anna/Lee Sease	Nancy Wright	Ellen Baker
July 15	Mickie/Neil R	Neil Richardson	Mickie Richardson
10:00 am (at Old Christ Church)			
July 22	TBA	TBA	Louise Clark
July 29	note 1	note 1	note 1

Note 1 – on the July 29th service the parishioners from Christ Church, Bethel will be responsible for support ministries