

The Messenger

A newsletter of
St. John's Episcopal Church

November 2012

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The Rev Mark Preece, Interim Rector

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

Message from our Interim Rector

Dear Friends:

As you surely know, this is the season when we traditionally talk about stewardship and pledging in the church. Here are a few thoughts:

1. You should have received a letter a couple of weeks ago from the Vestry and me, inviting you to reflect on this entire autumn as a Season of Stewardship. One thing about the transition process you've all been going through is that it's given you lots of opportunities to reflect on your life together at St. John's. And that's important: the Gospels are clear that one of our main avenues to God is the people God sends our way, whether it's the young child we saw a couple of weeks ago in Mark 9 ("whoever welcomes one such as this in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me") or the stranger who turns out to be Jesus on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24): The hearts of the people around us carry God's own gifts to us; caring for one another is a primary act of stewardship.
2. When Jesus told parables about a steward, he meant the person a landowner trusts to care for his property. This view of "ownership" is another model for thinking about stewardship. I didn't make this; I have temporary enjoyment of it, but it's not mine. For example, it's not hard to see here in Vermont that the beauty of nature is a gift from God, and caring for the environment is an act of stewardship of Creation. We're taking care of something we didn't make or earn, something we'll pass along to those who come after us.
3. One kind of stewardship we often lose track of when we talk about the subject in church is the "stewardship of you." A couple of weeks ago, when we heard Jesus call the rich young man to sell his possessions, give to the poor, and "come, follow me," he wasn't saying "look, God has given you all this money as a blessing and you need to share some with the poor as a way of remember that it's all God's property." And he wasn't raising money for a social services agency, either. He was saying that the man's possessions weren't acting as a blessing at all – they were getting in the way of him embracing what he's just a moment before said he wanted above all else, which was "life." In that moment, stewardship required him to get rid of things that were keeping him from seeing the real blessings that were his. We may not be called to give all

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that we have, but the discipline of letting go of some things we own can help remind us that we are more than the sum of our possessions.

All the ways of thinking about stewardship begin here: a good steward is someone who knows the value and source of what he or she has been entrusted with.

Now, there is nothing wrong with giving in support of a budget; it's a sort of "fee for services" model, like Pledge Week on VPR. St. John's really is a wonderful bunch of people, it's good for you and your family and the community, and it needs your financial support. But the real heart of stewardship is rooted in a deep awareness of God, active in our lives. Whatever you decide to do in terms of giving (and pledging), let it grow out of a *prayerful* response to that awareness (#1 and 2 above) and a *spiritual* discipline that helps deepen that awareness (#3).

Gracious God,

you created the world and everything in it;
you loved us into being,
created us needy, created us to care for each other,
and sent your son so that we might live abundantly;
open our eyes to your presence all around us,
open our hearts to each other and to you,
so that we might live the lives you are calling us to,
lives worthy of your beloved sons and daughters,
In Christ's name, Amen

Peace,

FR MARK

News from the MDC

The MDC (Ministerial Discernment Committee) is pleased to report that the Committee has concluded the task of completing the Portfolio. The Portfolio is the instrument in which the Committee provided information and data about our church and community and reflected on our ministry within our worshipping community and in the greater community.

The Diocese will use the information in the Portfolio to post the position of a part-time seminary trained clergy for St. John's. The position will be posted until January 7, 2013, at which time the Diocese will screen the candidates and send us a list of possible candidates.

Committee members welcome any question about the Portfolio or the process.

Respectfully submitted.
Carol Doss, Chairperson

Sr. Warden's Message

If your life was a prayer...

Jane and I headed up to Burlington last night to attend one of the quarterly Taize' services at the cathedral. The meditative chants wove through candle light around a simple prayer service, accented by moments of "city silence" punctuated by the distant roar of jet airplanes and fire engine sirens—making the actual silence that much more startling by contrast. It was well worth the three hours in the car, and I would heartily recommend it.

In the space of silence, a question returned to my mind I'd been mulling recently—If your life was a prayer, what would it be?

A prayer of petition? A prayer of forgiveness? A prayer of dedication? A prayer of thanksgiving? A prayer of blessing?

Would your prayer be whispered, shouted, silent or sung?

Would your prayer take place while grappling with a difficult decision, as a pleas at the bedside of an ill friend, as the warmth of profound gratitude for a gift so wonderful you couldn't have imagined to ask, as a blessing between the joining of two lives?

Would your prayer take place at your desk, in a field, on a busy street, in a church, late at night gazing at the stars?

Would your prayer appear in a sacred book, a scrap of notepaper, or unbidden from the depths of your soul?

Prayer is often defined as communion with God, then are not our lives prayers? Is it not a matter of our awareness of our actions in the context of God's presence?

There are no right or wrong answers; and our prayers like our lives, take varied twists and turns.

As the German theologian, Meister Eckhart wrote, "If the only prayer you said in your whole life was, 'Thank You', that would suffice."

Thank you

Steve

St. Margaret's Guild

OUTREACH

Christmas Caroling!?! We are going caroling before Christmas. As we did in the past, we will meet and go caroling in the late afternoon, then gather for a low-key soup and bread and potluck at the church. Once we set a date, we will ask the staff at Menig if they would like us to stop by. ALL AGES WELCOME! Books will be provided, no experience necessary. Watch for a date--

BAZAAR

Our Christmas Bazaar is Saturday, December 1st, from 10am to 2pm, with a soup, salad, French bread, pie luncheon from 11am to 1:30pm

Week of November 4th – We are putting the gift Baskets together during this week. Please bring your contributions and put them in the baskets in the kitchen. Themes are: Christmas, baby, kitchen, gardening, crafter. We have more baskets in the closet, so we can rearrange as needed.

WE NEED:

Items for the local/VT products basket

Trinkets and Treasures

items for Penny Social table

crafts and baked goodies

You to come and enjoy the wonderful Bazaar!!!!

Saturday, November 10th, 9:30am to 11:30am – we will be making bows, wiring pine cones and finishing ornaments. PLEASE COME AND HELP!

Wednesday , November 14th, 6pm, wiring pine cones in the kitchen

Monday, November 26th, at 9am, we will be decorating wreaths in the kitchen. We will be setting up for the Bazaar through the week.

Many thanks from the St. Margaret's Guild!!

Poinsettias for the Christmas season

With the approach of the Holiday season, we will be ordering Christmas poinsettias starting November 25th. Along with the order sheet, there will be a manila envelope in which you can place a cash or check payment. When you make a payment, please indicate cash or check and the amount on the order sheet. The order sheet and manila envelope will be at the back of the church during Sunday service, in the parish hall or with me during coffee hour, and in my mail box on Monday through Saturday. Thank you for helping to make our church glorious during the Christmas season.

Carol Doss, St. Margaret's Guild treasurer.

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Do You Hear What I Hear?

A friend asked me the other day how the music for the services gets picked. The most simple answer is that there is an Organist's Handbook kept at the organ which has preselected hymn suggestions for each Sunday, and other Feast Days, according to the Lectionary. Neither Shirley nor I are total slaves to the listings, but much of the time it works out well to not have to reinvent the wheel every Sunday and go through the entire hymnal for music to go with the scripture. The way things are set up at St. John's, the hymn selection and the service music is the responsibility of the organist of the day.

The Rector has influence also, especially if a particular hymn might lend itself to the homily of the day, or seems to go with a specific bit of scripture. Although in many churches the hymn selection is the domain of the minister, at St. John's, the rectors have been happy to let the organist pick the hymns. Don't downplay your influence on the music we sing either. Over the years, several suggestions of favorite music have been incorporated in the service...a favorite hymn or part of the service music. Many things are taken into consideration when picking music for the service. For example, although Reformation Sunday is not part of the Episcopal celebration, we acknowledged it on October 28 with the singing of A Mighty Fortress is Our God, a hymn well known to most of us.

There are other examples of music from other hymnals and traditions which have become either part of the choir repertoire or hymns the congregation enjoys. And don't discount the hymn tunes which we all grew up with which are not in the current Episcopal Hymnal. A few weeks ago we encountered the hymn For the Beauty of the Earth in a Sunday Service. In our hymnal these old familiar words are set to a beautiful tune which is NOT the tune we all know and love. In cases like this one, it has been our tradition to find the tune we know and play it instead of the music in our hymnal.

The Episcopal Service has a lot of music in it. Usually we sing four and sometimes five hymns: there are three and sometimes four selections from the mass i.e. The Gloria or Kyrie, The Sanctus, the Agnus Dei and sometimes the Lord's Prayer. Then there is the special music: the choir, a soloist or an instrumentalist, sometimes an organ interlude before the Doxology, and the Doxology. Just to round things out, there is also the Prelude music before the service begins...the walking in, and hopefully meditation and prayer background music, and the nice finish after announcements, the Postlude or walking out music.

Please do let the organists know what music you'd like to hear in the service, and we will do our best to make it happen. Sometimes it works to add new things, sometimes it doesn't work, but be assured that we always listen and take everything into consideration.

As always, Enjoy the Music!

Jane

(St. Margaret's Guild – continued from Page 4)

SWEETS FOR YOUR SWEETIE

An all church fundraising event is proposed for the Saturday before Valentine's Day, February 9th. A bake or pie sale is being thought of. If you have ideas for this, see Pat Lawrence or Linda Runnion. We will need lots of help to have a successful sale.

UPHOLSTERY?

The St. Margaret's Guild is looking at redoing the kneelers with cushioned upholstery. Do you know someone you can recommend who does this work? If so, please let Pat Lawrence or Linda Runnion know. Thanks.

Pastoral Care Committee

The month of October was a month of sadness for those of us at St. John's. The Committee did not meet at its regular time as a result of two funerals. First we saw the death of Burt Ulrich, who had suffered for a long and painful time, followed two weeks later by the sudden death of Marshall Bonney, our long-time eight-o'clocker.

As in every case of the death of one of our beloved members, The Pastoral Care Committee takes charge of providing a repast once the funeral service has ended. We know this could not happen without the additional support of so many church members. Our thanks go out to all who provided enough refreshments to take care of the families and their relatives and friends.

We look forward to welcoming anyone who is interested in joining the Pastoral Care Committee. We certainly can use more members on the Committee!

Respectfully submitted,
Mickie Richardson for the Pastoral Care Committee

The members of the Pastoral Care Committee are:
Mark Preece, Jane Eubanks, Pat Mayer, Mickie Richardson

Community Notes

RANDOLPH COMMUNITY SUPPERS

The Community Supper for November will be held on Tuesday, November 27th, at White River Craft Center, Kimball House, Randolph Ave, Randolph -
By RTCC Students - Doors open at 5 pm

Anniversaries –November 2012

Birthdays:

Nov 1 **Emiline Pelletier**
Nov 1 **Maeve Kennedy**
Nov 6 **Barbara Bonney**
Nov 8 **Linda Runnion**
Nov 11 **Gay Gaston**
Nov 15 **Myrt Seymour**
Nov 29 **Beth Osha**

Baptisms:

Nov 2 **Harrison Plavin**
Nov 2 **Oliver Plavin**
Nov 14 **Lee Sease**

Sunday Support Ministries

	Nov 4 10:00am	Nov 11 10:00am
Eucharistic Minister	Gay Gaston	Steve Eubanks
Readers	Linda Runnion	Jane Eubanks
Ushers	Lincoln & Louise Clark	Mickie & Neil R
Oblations	Pat & Ray Mayer	Susan O'Malley
Intercessions	Susan O'Malley	Pat Mayer
Coffee Hour	Louis Clark	Susan O'Malley

	Nov 18 10:00am	Nov 25 10:00am
Eucharistic Minister	Bob Sparadeo	Linda Runnion
Readers	Anna & Lee Sease	Mickie Richardson
Ushers	Susan O'Malley	Ellen & Phil Plumb
Oblations	Anna & Lee Sease	Mickie & Neil R
Intercessions	Lee Sease	Ellen Baker
Coffee Hour	Sunday School	Mickie Richardson

Thoughts on being in church

*“Be reverent, be silent, for this is the house of God. Before the service, speak to God.
During the service, let God speak to you. After the service, speak to each other.”*

(From the weekly bulletin of First United Presbyterian Church, Richmond, Virginia.)

Vestry of St. John's

Steven Eubanks, Senior Warden

Ray Mayer, Junior Warden

Linda Nagy

Treasurer, William Arnold

Nancy Wright

Susan O'Malley

Ellen Baker

Receipts Treasurer, Jane Eubanks

Clerk, Pat Mayer

Delegates to 2012 Diocesan Convention – Mickie Richardson, Neil Richardson

Alternate Delegates – Gay Gaston, Susan O'Malley, Nancy Wright

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