

The Messenger

A newsletter of

St. John's Episcopal Church

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The Rev Mark Preece, Interim Rector

September 2012

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

Message from our Interim Rector

Dear Friends:

It's been a long time since I was a full time student, but in my heart I still live by the school year. I know that the church year begins with Advent and the secular year begins in January, but the first hint of the cool of autumn always feels like the real beginning to me, an invitation to make a new start. Time for new books, new pens, blank paper: anything's possible.

This year, we'll make our new start on September 16th, when worship goes back to 8 and 10am and Sunday school and choir start back up. Then, the following Sunday, we'll celebrate the new program year with a special "all-ages" worship service at 10, and a party in the afternoon hosted by the Pelletiers. Please join us!

The blessing of drawing a line on the calendar and calling it a "beginning" is that it encourages us to take stock of where we are, to give thanks, and to take a new look at where God might be leading us. This is especially true this year at St. John's, where you're approaching the end of your formal "ministry discernment" process. The Ministry Discernment Committee is putting together a profile right now, based on your input and on their own prayer, reflection, and observation. My own observation is that there's a lot to be grateful for, and a strong foundation to build on.

Here's what St. Paul says about the way we should watch for God at work in the church: "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good." Think about that for a

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(Interim rectors message, continued)

moment. To each is given; to *each*. Your role is crucial, whether you're young or old, rich or poor, professor or D- student. Believing that about each other and about ourselves, and acting as if we believed it, is the first step on a Way that leads to....

Well, it leads God knows where. That's the best part. Come find out together.

Peace

Mark

Pastoral Care Committee

Meeting on August 29th. Present: Pat Mayer, Jane Eubanks, Mark Preece and Mickie Richardson.

After two months of "meeting" via phone, we met to discuss the following items:

The people who have been contacted over the past month and what was done for them;

The review of the Grief booklet series we purchased earlier this year;

Our Pastoral Care library

The Grief booklet series is suitable for some and not others so it has been left to the judgment of the committee when its use is appropriate. We are getting a cost on the reproduction of a small booklet that was used in grief situations, quite successfully according to its recipients. We will use them as needed.

A discussion that began in the book reading group about reviewing the needs of the number of elderly who no longer attend church, was reviewed to see what we can do about reaching those folks. More to come on the suggestions from Parish members at a Sunday service.

The topic of a Grief library was taken up again and a handful of books was placed before the group to be used for that project. Parishioners who have books dealing with grief issues who wish to donate to that project should see Mickie or any member of the Pastoral Care Committee. The current library will be reorganized soon and a special spot designated for this purpose.

Respectfully submitted,
Mickie Richardson

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

St. Margaret's Guild

The next Guild meeting will be Saturday, September 29th at 9 am. Coffee, muffins etc will be served as we set the details for our wonderful Christmas Bazaar! Please come and share ideas. If you've never participated, please consider helping this year. We share a lot of laughter as we work!

Thanks, Pat Lawrence

Sr. Warden's Message

"Living into our Calling"

Dear Friends:

Summer seems to have flown by so fast, and by the time you read this school will have started up again, pies (slices) will hopefully be flying from our booth at the New World Festival, and our fall season programs will be starting up shortly. I welcome you all back from your summer adventures.

For some reason, the return of the fall season has me reflecting on the nature of leadership. Typically this includes thinking about those folks I have worked for over the years—their good and not so good traits. It has always struck me that my best employers/supervisors/leaders were those capable of bringing together a disparate group of people with a wide variety of gifts and perspectives, guiding each member in a process of growth and understanding of their role in the team, all the while managing to effectively pass along enough leadership skills as to transform those being led into leaders themselves. From a spiritual perspective this reminds me of both the passage from Corinthians about spiritual gifts and parts of the body, as well as Christ's own relationship with the Disciples.

One of the other items I've been reading and thinking about recently is the concept of Divinization or Theosis... As a kid I grew up, probably like most folks, thinking that God was, if not residing in some far celestial space, at least out there...some place apart from us. Certainly since then there have been many opportunities to refine that perception to the point of seeing and witnessing divinity, Christ, in each other. But seemingly every time I turn around recently, it's to read/hear that God "became what we are in order to make us what He is Himself." Those who abide in Love, abide in God: and God abides in them. For me, it's one thing to observe "what you have done to the least of these, you have done to me," as challenging as that is; to the concept that God actually resides in me, in the person sitting next to me in the pew, the stranger I meet on the street corner—of everything in God's creation. To really live according to that knowledge can be simply overwhelming.

Perception shifts—if each of us is entrusted to love one another...to really care for each other, to care about their welfare, their needs, their hurts, their joys; it's as if the almighty and all-

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(Senior Warden's message, continued)

powerful God has suddenly become vulnerable enough to fit in the palm of one's hand. We all have been entrusted with a mission to care for a Love beyond all measure. That is the power of the Crucifixion—for something that immense, awesome, and powerful to be so ultimately humble, so ultimately self-sacrificing, so full of love for us. That is different. That is a new standard for leadership, a call to discipleship. That is not conventional thinking. That is not conventional power. That's not what gets you ahead in business or makes you successful by any conventional standards. That's the Kingdom of God.

Each of us is on a journey...a journey of becoming God. It's a path that's rarely clear, usually has many missteps, and always requires help. Next time you meet someone, remember that God dwells in them too...that they are on a journey to become God. They need help just as you do, to become more fully themselves, more fully God. They need your care, your nurturing, your strength as a member of Christ's body. Each of us has a variety of gifts and ministries, some known and some unknown; both to you and possibly themselves. Our job, if we truly take our baptism in Christ to heart, is to help each other in that journey. Our responsibility is to help each other be the best we can, to discover who and what we are meant to be, and as followers of Christ, to help each other find the Divinity that lies within each of us.

In such a Kingdom there are no bullies, there are no power plays, there are no wars, and no one is found wanting. No one is forgotten, no one ignored, no one belittled or criticized. All offer and are offered the grace of God.

“Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, and be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us , a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”
Ephesians 4:31

Peace

Steve

Community Notes

>RANDOLPH COMMUNITY SUPPERS<

The Community Supper for September will be held on Tuesday, September 25th, at White River Craft Center, Randolph Ave - Pot Luck - Doors open at 5 pm

>REQUEST TO GARDENERS<

Please bring any surplus produce you may have during this harvest season to the Food Shelf (hours 3-5 PM on Monday, Wednesday and Friday; 1-5 on Tuesday; and 5-7 on Thursday). Even your extra zucchini will be appreciated by the friends and neighbors who depend on the Food Shelf, especially toward month-end. (From our friend Sharon Rives)

Do You Hear What I Hear?

It has been on my mind lately to ponder the fact that we all like certain sounds in music, and dislike other sounds. Why is that?

Many years ago, I taught a music literature class at a small college. I was handed a curriculum to teach and was surprised to discover no opera on the list. I petitioned the department head and was given permission for a small section on opera as long as the other subjects were not neglected. When I asked the class how many of them didn't like opera, all but one hand went up. When I asked them how many had ever been to an opera, or even heard one on the radio, the same number of hands went up. When questioned further they admitted to believing that opera was for elite rich people, and therefore not for them. Besides people sing funny in operas. In fact, it seemed that most of them felt that way about what is referred to as "classical" music in general. I was more than a little taken aback, because most of the people in the class were music majors. I was very young, and totally inexperienced in classroom teaching, but I tried to make it my goal to show each of those students how to go about learning more about a subject which is very close to my heart. In some cases, I think I managed to at least get a few of them to start looking at other types of music as something to get to know better. Several of them even declared that they were looking forward to going to an opera, just to see what it was all about.

So, back to my original question. Why do we like certain types of music and not others? And even further into the subject; when we don't like certain sounds, why do we get annoyed, or even defensive and declare that what we are hearing isn't even music? We all do it.

I propose the very old concept that music is language, in the same way that speech is language. Within any language are many dialects which convey ideas in very different ways. Some people are lucky to be able to hear and learn more than one language from birth, or pick up more than one language through school or friends. Many of us have not had that experience. And being in a situation where everyone else is speaking a language you don't understand, can be both frustrating and frightening.

Our first reaction is to shut out the noise! To get out of that situation as quickly as possible. To seek the comfort of a language we know. If we have to continue living among those who speak a language we don't know, our choice is to become totally isolated and alone, or to open our ears to what is being said and to try to make sense of it. So it is with music. And after the first assault, if we truly listen to what is going on around us we can usually come to some kind of terms with it and even begin to understand it, perhaps to speak it, and eventually enjoy all of the nuances.

I leave you with a self indulgent memory. When I was right out of Conservatory, full of the self righteousness of my high learning, I took it upon myself to teach a congregation where I was choir director just why they shouldn't like those sentimental, mushy, Victorian hymns which had been their mainstay since childhood. To do this I set myself up to give a small class after Coffee Hour to go over a few select hymns. Of course, in order to do this properly, I had to learn to play these hymns very well, no stumbling. In the process of learning the hymns I made a horrifying discovery...I liked them. It was humbling to say the least, but a huge lesson to me. Training and experience are both necessary to grasp a subject, but the ability to remain open to new ways of approaching that subject is essential. Doesn't mean you won't still like the old ways better, but it does help to see possibilities. More on this subject and other aspects of music later.

Jane

St. Nicholas Day

The American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem in inviting parishes to celebrate *St. Nicholas* on or near December 6th (his feast day), and to make a financial offering in support of the educational needs of the children of the Holy Land.

This year the St. Nicholas ingathering will support educational needs of children throughout the Holy Land by means of scholarships, teacher training, books, and supplies.

Good education is the ticket to success. It is a primary means by which children can grow to be creative and responsible citizens in this emerging society committed to peace. The Episcopal Diocese provides quality education grounded in Christian values. Its doors are open to all children regardless of religion, ethnic, or economic background.

Our holiday offering is a tangible way of supporting these faithful custodians of the Holy Land. Christian presence depends on you, and the children of the Holy Land will be grateful.

The Friends (AFEDJ) have a wonderful program to use as a resource. These include histories of the life of St. Nicholas, and the origin of Santa Claus, and the culture of gift-giving at Christmas time. The program further provides materials and suggestions for crafts, recipes, stories, games and many other activities to provide a pleasure filled learning and giving experience for our Sunday school community.

Anniversaries –September 2012

Birthdays:

Sept 2	Linda Nagy	Sept 22	Carol Doss
Sept 13	Steve Eubanks	Sept 24	Burt Ulrich
		Sept 29	Shirley Baumann

Wedding:

Sept 7	Maury and Adele Smith	Sept 12	Adam and Beth Osha
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Sunday Support Ministries

	Sept 2 9:00am	Sept 9 9:00am	Sept 16 10:00am
Eucharistic Minister	Pat Mayer	Ray Mayer	Gay Gaston
Readers	Neil Richardson	Louise Clark	Ellen Baker
Ushers	Mickie & Neil R	Ellen & Phil Plumb	Anna & Lee Sease
Oblations	Barbara & Steve Springer	Lincoln & Louise Clark	Pat & Ray Mayer
Intercessions	Susan O'Malley	Linda Nagy	Ellen Baker
Coffee Hour	Mickie Richardson	Carol Merrill	Susan O'Malley
		Sept 23 10:00am	Sept 30 10:00am
Eucharistic Minister		Steve Eubanks	Bob Sparadeo
Readers		SUNDAY SCHOOL	Mickie Richardson
Ushers		Pat Lawrence	Susan O'Malley
Oblations		Anna & Lee Sease	Mickie & Neil Richardson
Intercessions		SUNDAY SCHOOL	Nancy Wright
Coffee Hour		Anna Sease	Ellen Baker

Vestry of St. John's

Steven Eubanks, Senior Warden	Nancy Wright
Ray Mayer, Junior Warden	Susan O'Malley
Linda Nagy	Ellen Baker
Treasurer, William Arnold	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>

Our e-mail info@stjohnsrandolphvt.org