

The St. John's Journal

May 2010

FRONT AND CENTER

Hi, everyone!

I would like to write about regular church attendance this month but want to do it in a way that is not sending folks on a guilt trip or sounds judgmental...so, here goes!

WE DO IT FOR GOD: As a kid I used to think that God was sort of egotistical in giving us a commandment in which we 'worship' him and set aside one day to rest. As I have grown in my faith, I have come to understand that worshipping God, adoring God and expressing how 'crazy' we are over this fabulous God, has to do with orienting my life around thanksgiving. It is a choice. To see all of life as a gift, full, abundant overflowing with grace and joy from the Lord...it is a choice. When I make the decision to view life this way, my negative stuff around lack, disappointment, fear for the future, and resentment, melts away. The commandment to remember the Sabbath Day is God's way of saying, "Making the choice to take time out from the busy work week and choosing to see life as an abundant gift from my hand will be good for your daily outlook, your health and your joy!"

WE DO IT FOR THE WORLD: Choosing to set aside a weekly time of focusing on fueling our spiritual selves grounds the rest of daily living. We come to church each week to be fed through God's Word and fed through bread and wine, our tangible connection with the Lord Christ, himself. As we know, we are what we eat. We eat and drink the Lord of love and life. Missing a meal is not life-giving for our physical bodies. Missing the Eucharist is not life-giving for our spiritual selves. This feeding, this strengthening, this nourishment is all undertaken so that we might be lavish lovers and impassioned servants to one another and the world. We are Christ in the world!

WE DO IT FOR ONE ANOTHER: The church is not called to be about numbers...you know how many folks show up on a Sunday morning. Spiritual vitality cannot be measured in terms of numbers. And I often have people tell me that they tend to their spiritual lives a part from the church, alone or with the help of tele-evangelists. However, I would like to add the following: I am, personally, really lousy when it comes to living out this Christian life by myself. I need you...your care, your love, your encouragement...I need to hear your faith stories to help me on my spiritual journey. And you need me. Together we are called to be the body of Christ. When we are called into the Christian faith, we are never called to do it alone.

A large part of showing up on Sunday morning has to do with supporting one another as we live out being Christ's body in the world. When the numbers are down, quite frankly, I get bummed out. When a 'critical mass' does not show up, it triggers stuff in me...feelings of disappointment and if I am really honest about what I am feeling, feelings of 'having to go it alone'. I totally understand that from a faith perspective there is no reason to feel this stuff. (As noted above, spiritual vitality is not a matter of numbers.) And before worship gets started, I commend these challenging feelings to the Lord and ask God to 'Cleanse the thoughts of my heart'. Yet, I must admit as a human being, a solid group of worshippers on a Sunday morning lifts my spirit: I experience feelings of encouragement, the feeling that we can do all sorts of things...together in the power of God...the feeling that I am not alone and that we go forward together!

As St. John's experiences new life this Easter season, I invite you to think about weekly, regular church attendance, to remember the Sabbath Day and keep it holy (set a part). Each Sunday let us open our hearts to God, one another and then out into the world!

Pastor Martha

Lectionary

May 2nd

Acts 11:1-18
 Psalm 148
 Revelation 21:1-6
 John 13:31-35

May 9th

Acts 16:9-15
 Psalm 67
 Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5
 John 14:23-29

May 16th

Acts 16:16-34
 Psalm 97
 Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21
 John 17:20-26

May 23rd

Acts 2:1-21 or
 Genesis 11:1-9
 Psalm 104:25-35, 37
 Romans 8:14-17 or Acts 2:1-21
 John 14:8-17, (25-27)

May 30th

Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31
 Psalm 8 or
 Canticle 2 or 13
 Romans 5:1-5
 John 16:12-15

		USHERS	CHALICE BEARER	LECTOR	COUNTER
5/2/2010	8AM	P.COOMBS/D.OLIVIERO	C.REEVES	C.REEVES	P.MODERACKI (5/3)
	10AM	A.PARADIS/G.PARADIS	P.LINDVALL	P.LINDVALL	
5/9/2010	8AM	J.KNOWLES/J.REIDY	C.KNOWLES	C.KNOWLES	J.VALERI (5/10)
	10AM	R.HEDENBERG/N.TUTTLE	K.LOMBARDI	G.MASON	
5/16/2010	8AM	J.MACARTHUR/KRISSEY	C.MACARTHUR	C.MACARTHUR	L.ROZANSKI (5/17)
	10AM	A.FLOWER/D.CARD	B.PLISKO	T.FLOWER	
5/23/2010	8AM	F.MARKOWICH/P.MODERACKI	C.REEVES	L.BURDELSKI	P.MODERACKI (5/24)
	10AM	A.PARADIS/G.PARADIS	D.DESMARAIS	D.DESMARAIS	
5/30/2010	8AM	R.BARRETT/B.BAKER	C.KASMER	F.MARKOWICH	J.VALERI (5/31) L.ROZANSKI (5/31)
	10AM	R.HEDENBERG/N.TUTTLE	J.BUTLER	M.CORNISH	

OUTING OUTREACH



Join the Outreach Committee
 on
Saturday May 8th
 From
11:00 AM until 2:00 PM

For some Holy Haggling
 Let's bring our outreach activities
 out into the light so they can grow!

Lunch will be served!

BIBLE STUDY FOR EASTER SEASON



You are invited to drop in any
 Wednesday evening at 7:00 p.m. or
 Thursday morning at 11:00a.m. for
 the Easter Season Bible Study...we
 will be looking at the gospel lessons
 for the upcoming Sunday which are
 all from the gospel of John. I am
 preparing the Bible studies so that
 folks can come when their schedules
 allow it. Make bible study a part of
 your weekly spiritual practice!
 Pastor Martha

NEW MEMBERS AMONG US

On Sunday, April 11th, we welcomed the following new faces among us:

Carol Reeves

Carol Reeves joined St. John's parish family in mid-November, 2009. She has been an active member and worship leader in the Aroostook Episcopal Cluster in far-northern Maine for thirty-five years. Before that, she is from Arkansas; before that, California. A widow, she is a proud mother of four and grandmother of four (soon to be five). She is grateful for the sincere welcome she has received from so many here at St. John's.

Mary Budnick

My name is Mary (Wierzbicki) Budnick and I have lived in Bristol for most of my life. My daughter Hope, who is the light of my life, her husband and my 5 year old grandson and 3 year old granddaughter live nearby and keep my life happy and very busy. I have worked in the Credit Union movement for close to 30 years and I am very fortunate to have found work that I am passionate about. Everyone I have met at St. John's has been incredibly and nice and has made me feel very welcome.

Mary Lynch

I grew up in Wethersfield but spent a lot of time in Bristol because my grandparents and cousins were in town. My uncle, aunt and their kids attended St. John's when they lived in town (Bob & Gloria Duval). I moved here in 2002 and started attending St. John's in November 2009, and have very much enjoyed the welcome I have received by the church family. I'm looking forward to becoming involved in various roles here at St. John's.

The Gilbert Family

Michele and Dan Gilbert live in Terryville and have two young children, Olivia and Noah. Olivia and Noah have become a part of our Sunday School and it is a joy to have them with us. Michele is an MRI technician and Dan is an electrician. They report that they are happy to be a part of St. John's!

Dante Oliviero and Monique Thibodea

Dante and Monique are engaged to be married this fall. Monique has three lovely daughters, ages 17-21, and Dante has a seven year old son. Monique is a pricing administrator and Dante is a remodeling contractor. Welcome, Dante and Monique!

Many thanks to the Welcome Committee: Nancy Ryan, Betty Plisko, John Knowles, and Chris Knowles for helping to plan the weekend welcome. A lovely dinner was prepared by the committee the Saturday before at which leaders of the parish were able to meet our newcomers. Two special coffee hours the morning of their welcome were held as well. Please introduce yourself if you have not yet met these new gifts from God!

Fellowship, JOY, and Wrapsody

Women of St. John's...please join us on Tuesday, May 11th at 6:30 p.m. as we gather at Wrapsody Bistro (across from ESPN) for a "dutch treat" dinner and an evening of fun & fellowship. A sign-up sheet is posted in the Narthex. We hope that you will be able to attend.

THE PRODUCERS...A MUSICAL IN TORRINGTON, MAY 16TH

Our own Matt Cornish is one of the stars in the musical, The Producers, in Torrington on May 16th. We are organizing a car pool to attend the 2:00 p.m. matinee. We will head out after the 10:00 liturgy that Sunday. Watch the bulletin for more details.

The Healing Power of Humor

Nine ladies from St. John's joined eight others from Gloria Dei and St. Andrews for a truly enriching event on April 23-25. After a leisurely drive on a lovely afternoon, we gathered at the Blue Gentian Lodge in Londonderry, VT. Friday evening's welcome and Lighting of the Sabbath Candle were led by Sue Allaire of Koinonia of Vermont. An introduction to our theme "The Healing Power of Humor" was followed by a soothing evensong service and time for fellowship and relaxing together.

Saturday morning's breakfast and devotions were followed by Tai Chi relaxation exercises, discussions of the use of humor as teaching in the Bible, sharing of jokes and personal stories. We formed a delightful community of believers with whom we could learn and grow. In the afternoon, there was free "joy time" for shopping, dining, and hiking. The weather was perfect, so we were able to enjoy the out-of-doors with early morning walks and a nice afternoon hike, on which we found wine-red trilliums (blessing of the Trinity), delicate nodding trout lilies, and an amazing variety of mosses, ferns, and tree fungi. At a placid fine-gravel beach, we found a tiny spring, only about two inches in diameter, bubbling up like laughter, and as constant and generous as the love of God.

In the evening we gathered at the Weston Priory, a lovely quiet place which was established 50 years ago as a Benedictine sanctuary. The sung service was so peaceful and moving. We were wrapped in Christian grace as we were enveloped in candlelight, guitar music, and the gentle voices of the monks. The sanctuary is very plain and open, elegant in its simplicity and clean lines. The pillars and roof supports must have originally supported a huge barn in an earlier incarnation. Holes and wedges evidence this earlier purpose. They remain as demonstrations of the precision and workmanship of a time long past. It was heartwarming to see those ancient beams serving such a holy purpose.

Our evening entertainment was a delightful DVD of Christian comedian Anita Renfro, "It's Probably Just my Thyroid."

Sunday morning's worship service, led by Pastor Martha, involved us all in celebration of the Eucharist, inspiring music, and sincere prayer. It sent us to our homes refreshed and filled with blessings. As always, Martha's sermon held personal meanings for all of us.

Thanks to Pam Lindvall for playing the piano and to Chris MacArthur and others involved in the organizing of this event. To those of you who were unable to attend this retreat, do watch for it next year. All participants were so positive that we hope this will become an annual event. Also consider joining us for the Women of Faith activities in Hartford in November. (For information, check with Chris MacArthur.)



May Birthdays

5/2	Richard Cyr, Daniel Burdelski	5/16	Matthew Desmarais
5/3	Jacob Butler	5/18	Richard Gavitt
5/5	Julia Marcy	5/15	Viola Aliano
5/6	David Parziale	5/19	Paul Coombs
5/7	Don Selina, Jon Green	5/20	Ashley Richards
5/10	Robert Chapman, Charlie Kasmer	5/26	Candy Getler
5/11	Roger Barrett		

May 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 JOY Fellowship Scrapbook Event 9am-9pm
2 8:00am and 10:00am Holy Eucharist 9:45 Church School	3	4	5 Pines Service 10:30am	6 Morning Prayer 10:00am	7	8 Outing Outreach 11:00am-2:00pm
9 8:00am and 10:00am Holy Eucharist 9:45 Church School Mother's Day	10 Soup Kitchen	11 JOY Fellowship Dinner at Wrapsody (Bristol) 6:30pm	12 Bible Study 7:00 pm	13 Bible Study 11:00 am	14	15
16 8:00am and 10:00am Holy Eucharist 9:45 Church School	17	18	19 Bible Study 7:00 pm	20 Bible Study 11:00am	21	22
23 8:00am and 10:00am Holy Eucharist 9:45 Church School	24	25	26 Bible Study 7:00 pm	27 Bible Study 11:00 am Vestry 7:00pm	28	29
30 8:00am and 10:00am Holy Eucharist	31 Memorial Day					

The St John's Journal is a monthly newsletter of
Saint John's Episcopal Church
The Diocese of Connecticut
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Bishop Suffragan, The Right Rev. James E. Curry
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